



The Porthole

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The newsletter of
the Company of Master Mariners of Australia,
South Australian Branch

PO Box 1, PORT ADELAIDE, SA 5015

Branch Patron: His Excellency the Honorable Hieu Van Le AC



Branch Master's Comments

Good Day to all our readers,

I trust that by now, we are all inured to the slings and arrows of this outrageous pandemic (as The Bard would say), but the final outcome of this latest lockdown is that our meetings for July have been cancelled, mainly due to the uncertainty of what is happening next week. At our age, and with some of us still only being half vaccinated, it is too much of a risk.

Amongst all the Covid 19 hoo-ha, I have been occupied arranging the sale of my property to a Victorian who is not only trapped by border closures but is also in quarantine. On top of this I have been agonising over how the hell I am going to move all the paraphernalia that has accumulated over the past 20 years to a downsized dwelling that my bride insists is all we need as we slowly succumb to the ravages of time.

I noted a small article on the web to the effect that the old liner, the 'Queen Mary', was starting to be viewed as a safety issue, and urgent remedial work was required to prevent her from capsizing. I believe the sum of \$23 million was mentioned, with a further \$150 million for an extensive drydocking renovation. I can't see the City of Long Beach coming up with that sort of money, and so unless they can persuade the U.S. Government to declare the old lady a national monument and take over her care, it seems likely that she will be scrapped or sunk as a man-made reef. I am interested in this as, when the Queen Mary was berthed in Long Beach, I happened to be serving on the 'Brecon Beacon', tied up across the harbour and I watched with great interest all the attention she garnered. That was in 1967. It is a shame to think that her end is near when you consider she was built in 1936 and served the transatlantic passenger trade for all the years that she did, and not to mention her sterling service as a troop ship during the war. Entropy gets us all in the end, even a magnificent ship like her.

And so I look forward to seeing you again at our August monthly, the plague permitting of course. Until then, stay safe.

Happy sailing

Bob W (SABM)

Due to uncertainty created by the current COVID-19 restrictions, it has been decided to cancel the July Branch meeting.

COVID-19 restrictions permitting, the next Branch meeting will be held at The Largs Pier Hotel. 198 The Esplanade, Largs Bay, on Wednesday, 25th August 2021, at 1145 for 1200.

Please confirm your attendance at the lunch or register your apology before 1200 on Monday, 23rd August 2021

**with Bob Westley (0427 644 947)
or Ian Dickson (0418 807 788)**

In this issue

<i>Justifying the Unjustifiable</i> by Michael Grey	2
<i>Prevention and Cure</i> by Michael Grey	2/3
<i>Supporting Seafarers: a response to Michael Grey's article in MA780</i>	3
<i>'Crazy' Canal</i>	3
<i>World's Largest Hospital Civilian Ship delivered to Mercy Ships</i>	4
<i>Comment Sought on Macquarie Island Station Renovation</i>	4
<i>Green Hydrogen in a Box?</i>	5
<i>New Jones Act Enforcement Vessel</i>	5
<i>China Challenges Singapore as Asia's Top Bunker Supplier-</i>	6
<i>CCPC Found Moving Iran, Venezuela Oil to Chinese Refineries</i>	6/7
<i>NYK Finds Air Bubbles Reduce Ship Resistance</i>	8
<i>Court Hears of "Hundreds" of Dead Turtles Consequent upon the sinking of X-Press Pearl</i>	8
<i>Shell to appeal Dutch Court Ruling on Emission Cuts</i>	9
<i>Floatel International Wins Inpex Contract in Australia</i>	9
<i>Lawyer's Gift</i>	9
<i>MIAB Report on "Stolt Groenland" Explosion in Korea</i>	10
<i>And Finally...</i>	10
<i>Branch members only</i>	
<i>Branch meeting 30/07/21, Minutes</i>	11



Justifying the unjustifiable

By Michael Grey

The UK, it seems might be getting another Royal Yacht, to replace the elegant *HMY Britannia*, which was retired in 1997 as the new barons of Blair's Britain showed us who was in charge. It is not entirely certain whether HM actually wants another vessel, so the scheme seems to be to designate it as a "government ship", available for ministers and other important folk to project commercial and diplomatic power abroad – a sort of "Seaforce One" - run by the RN. It is by no means certain that the RN, with two aircraft carriers to man, three store ships to buy, besides managing all their other grey ships, want a yacht either. But the RN does what it is told.

Some £200m has been plucked from a money tree and allocated to the purchase, and an artist's impression has been published, to a certain amount of derision, one distinguished ship designer suggesting that it looked a bit like a trawler. That, I considered, did trawlers something of a disservice, as there are some really elegant fishing craft around these days. I just thought it looked boring, small and old-fashioned and would be unlikely to generate the same frisson as was produced in the past by *HMY Britannia* entering port, with flags flying and band playing. At best, they could manage a small ensemble on the mooring deck, albeit with amplification.

The current edition of Naval Architect journal offers a sort of alternative Britannia reimagined by the institution's former President Stephen Payne, who was, it will be recalled, the designer of *Queen Mary 2*. And while the government's option looks a bit of a "back of the envelope" job, to give Boris a diverting bit of positive press as the Irish bridge looks a non-starter, this is a more substantial vessel, accompanied by a thoughtful commercial proposal for the ship's employment. A true national flagship, capable of generating its keep in a continuous trade promotion role around the world, he envisages a ship with exhibition spaces, conference facilities, shops, restaurants (and a British pub), state and VIP apartments and business centre. The ship would also be a floating British Embassy.

He suggests that while it would be commanded by a RN officer, the ship's manning would be mixed RN and Merchant Navy, offering a substantial training role for both and a rather more practical manpower solution. He also offers a concept painting of the ship, which certainly looks rather more imposing than the government offering, although it could be argued that these days it probably needs to be festooned with Flettner rotors, collapsible and fixed sails, solar panels, kites and is propelled by a fuel cell consuming hydrogen produced from recycled plastic.

Stephen Payne produces a convincing case for a "cost-neutral" build and operation, but would it really work? Would British industry be willing to rock up and shell out, not just for an inaugural cruise but for the twenty years or more after the ship is commissioned. You might argue that the old Britannia did very well, but those who sat in her elegant dining room flogging widgets to foreigners, did not actually have to pay for the privilege.

In the 1970s, I seem to remember going on board the Japanese exhibition ship *Shin Sakura Maru* in London's Millwall Dock, when she was on a world cruise, selling Japanese technology and being very impressed. But she only came once and it wasn't that many years had elapsed before she had been converted into a cruise ship. I suppose that before too long Japanese goods were seen for what they were and didn't need ships to promote them.

One shouldn't be cynical and part of me says that we ought to harness the genuinely world-class design skills available in the UK and produce something that would have even the Prime Minister lost for words. But as somebody old enough to have seen the whole of this nation's maritime decline, I am bound to feel pessimistic about the possibilities in this "post-maritime" UK. Could we build something like this, without bankrupting the builder? Can we make it work with a multiplicity of roles, year in, year out, with a design that can evolve to incorporate future innovation? I would love to see us try, but feel in my aged bones that yachting is probably a bit "yesterday".

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.

Source: *Maritime Advocate* 781

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Prevention and cure

By Michael Grey

These are tough times for the professional salvor, with concern being expressed about weak revenues and worries about capacity. To the casual inquirer about salvage matters, it might seem that marine casualties have been both frequent and spectacular of late, what with containership fires, blazing tankers and car carriers that won't stay upright. Then there was the *Ever Given*, which true to her name, was giving us all a couple of months of headlines but, more importantly, a spectacular reason for salvage expertise being always available.

But professional salvors, who no longer sit around aboard powerful tugs waiting for something to happen, just have not been earning the rewards they need to maintain their investment. There is, these days, no compulsion to stay in an unrewarding sector, so there can be no surprise that a number of famous names, notably under the Ardent label, went off to more lucrative non-salvage business. They probably won't be back.

Despite the various maritime casualties that make it into the mainstream media, the maritime world is a safer place, so there are fewer opportunities for the professional salvor to make a decent crust. The Annual Report of the International Salvage Union emphasises the economic pressure being faced by the sector, with revenue both from salvage itself and wreck removal declining.

Now it might be suggested that while the salvage specialists are having a hard time, there is plenty of hardware that can be pressed into use when something nasty happens. There are powerful anchor handlers available just about anywhere there is offshore drilling or construction and gigantic cranes and barges with lifting capacities that would have been thought impossible only twenty years ago.

To a certain extent that is true, but salvage is not just about hardware but expertise, which will always be the crucial element that intervenes between success and failure. The craft of the professional salvor is based on experience and without this component, all the tugs and cranes, pontoons and barges will be useless. Without resources, can this expertise be preserved, with a new generation of salvors

coming along to carry the torch? It was interesting to read in salvor Alan Loynd's recent biography "All at Sea", that concern about the age of available expertise in Hong Kong has led him to start what can be described as an apprenticeship scheme, to encourage younger professionals in the field.

There is a tempting analogy that can be made between marine salvage and the fire brigade, which these days is more about prevention than cure. The ISU figures show the value of the work of its members in the amount of pollution that doesn't end up in the sea. It is also worth considering that pollution comes in many forms these days, with the menace of oil pollution seemingly being less severe than the mess that can come from plastics, where container ships have come to grief.

It seems that vast quantities of plastic beads are being carried around the world at present, as raw materials, which, as seen recently in the case of the *Xpress Pearl* casualty off Sri Lanka, can be devastating to the environment. We learned about this new curse some years ago, when the plastic bead cargo from the ship wrecked off Tauranga was washed far and wide up and down the New Zealand coast. Sadly, this menace, it seems, has yet to register more widely.

You might think that a well-resourced salvage sector, with its vital elements of experience and expertise is as essential now as it has ever been. Container ship design and construction has focussed more about the unit costs of carrying boxes around and has largely ignored what might be done with these monsters when they ground, are wrecked or as seems obvious, about once a month, catch fire. People probably never saw, or don't remember the totality of destruction in the fore part of the *Maersk Honan*.

But after the *Ever Given*, when the public at large was given some idea of the sheer scale of a modern salvage operation, it might be thought that there will be some pressure on ship operators to consider the "what if...?" question rather more responsibly. But more likely, they will just hope for the best and expect professional salvors to pull the rabbit out of the blazing hat and clear up the mess they have made. *Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.*

Source: *Maritime Advocate* 782

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Supporting seafarers

Charles Barton, formerly with Jo Tankers, has kindly sent the following comment as a follow-up to Michael Grey's opinion piece in *Maritime Advocate* 780

"I would just like to say how much I enjoy Michael Grey's opening article each time. This one is especially good and I share his feelings that seamen, being out of sight and out of mind are so badly treated.

This is nothing new, just exacerbated by Covid-19. Soon after 9/11 one of our seamen was taken very ill about 4 days out of Houston. He was treated under radio advice from a doctor ashore. When the ship berthed, the doctor was waiting with an ambulance. The authorities would not let the seaman off the ship because he was Indonesian and Muslim.

After negotiation, the police provided two cars, one in front of the ambulance and one behind. The whole time he was in hospital, fighting for his life and unable to move, there was an armed guard on his door. After some weeks, the doctor said he could go home but must rest for a minimum of three months.

A flight to Jakarta was booked and when about to leave, the authorities said he was not allowed to fly.

"He came on a ship so must leave on a ship" was the excuse. In spite of the doctor's protest, they would not change their attitude. The ship therefore left port and he had to be flown home from the Bahamas. Luckily, the charterers were sympathetic and did not make any claims. Following that, all our Indonesian crews had to be paid off and replaced by crews from the Philippines. Luckily, we could find an Indonesian owner who was glad to give them jobs as they were so well trained.

Congratulations to Michael Grey."

Source: *Maritime Advocate* 781

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"Crazy" Canal

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has just launched a \$15 billion canal project with the aim of reducing pressure on the Bosphorus Strait, laying the foundation of a bridge to form part of the development.

The president, who has described the plan in the past as a "crazy project" said that Canal Istanbul represented a new page in the country's history. The project, which has come in for criticism, includes a waterway running 28 miles through marshland and farms on the western edge of Istanbul.

Construction workers poured cement into the foundations of the 1.6 km bridge which forms part of the development recently. The canal is expected to take six years to complete.

Estimates suggest that 43,000 ships pass through the strait each year, and by 2050, that number will have risen to 78,000. It remains to be seen how the project will overcome criticism both on environmental grounds and because of the investment risk.

Source: *Maritime Advocate* 781

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World's Largest Civilian Hospital Ship Delivered to Mercy Ships

Mike Schuler - June 30, 2021

Mercy Ships has taken delivery of the world's largest civilian hospital ship, *Global Mercy*. The ship was delivered to the international charity at the Tianjin Xingang shipyard in northern China, where the purpose-built hospital ship was constructed.



Mercy Ships has been working on the project for more than eight years, with the first contracts signed in 2013 and keel laying in 2015. Sea trials were successfully completed this past April. "This day is a dream come true – not only for us, but for those we serve," said Don Stephens, Mercy Ships founder. "African heads of states and ministers of health have often expressed a desire for more of their healthcare professionals to be trained in-country. This ship will do exactly that. Many who suffer from disability and disfigurement will have access to surgical treatment and whole-person care in healthcare systems that will enable them to reach their God given potential. We hope that this new vessel and the volunteer crew who serve on her will bring hope, healing and transformation for the next 40-50 years."

Stena RoRo has been working on the project since the beginning and was responsible for the design, contracting and execution of the project.

"We are very proud to take delivery of this special ship," says Per Westling, managing director for Stena RoRo. "The activities to be carried out on board have placed certain special and stringent demands on shipbuilding. For the shipyard, it was the first time they had built a vessel of this type – a challenge they have managed extremely well. For Mercy Ships, the delivery means that their capacity to provide care has more than doubled, and at Stena RoRo we are happy to be a part of their fantastic work through the construction of the *Global Mercy*."

At 37,000 tonnes, the ship is largest civilian hospital ship in the world and can accommodate 950 people including a crew of 641. With 12 decks, it features six operating "theatres", beds for 200 people, a laboratory, and eye clinic.

Global Mercy will now set sail on its maiden voyage to Belgium, under the command of Captain Taylor Perez, where the vessel will be staffed with volunteers and have the last of the medical equipment installed. It will then continue to Rotterdam to be presented to sponsors, future volunteers, the media and other interested parties. After that, the *Global Mercy* will be ready to sail to West Africa for service at Dakar in Senegal.

Global Mercy joins the 1980-built *Africa Mercy*, which has been Mercy Ships' sole operating hospital ship since joining the fleet in 2007. Founded in 1978, Mercy Ships has had between 1 and 3 ships in service at any given time.

France-based Barry Rogliano Salles (BRS) served as the broker in the *Global Mercy* project, while detailed design was provided by Finnish Deltamarin. The ship is classed by Lloyd's Register and will sail under the Maltese flag while operating along the coast of Africa.

Global Mercy Particulars:

Length: 174 meters

Beam: 28.6 meters

Draught: 6.15 meters

Gross tonnage: 37,000 tonnes

Deadweight: 5,448 tonnes

Total area, interior: 30,000 square meters

Source: *The Pulse* 2021 #11

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Public Comment Sought on Macquarie Island Station Renovation

A plan to renovate Australia's ageing research station on remote sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island has been sought for public comment.



The renovation will include reducing the station area and number of buildings, refurbishing three of the six field huts and looking at ways to protect the station from ocean inundation.

The Australian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PWC) is now assessing the proposed rebuild in accordance with the Public Works Committee Act 1969.

The plan to renovate rather than replace the station on Macquarie Island was the result of a detailed study, which found a rebuild provided the best value for money within the budget. It will also ensure the station is functional and able to support long-term science, including key stakeholders BOM, ARPANSA, Geoscience Australia and the Tasmanian Government. The

project to upgrade the sub-Antarctic island's station began in 2016, when the Federal Government committed \$50 million to secure the future of the facility and scientific research on the island. The island is an important global site for scientific research including monitoring Southern Hemisphere weather and climate. The existing research station was built in 1948 and has been operating continually ever since.

Source : antarctica.gov.au/The Pulse 2021-11

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Green hydrogen in a box – is this shipping’s future fuel?

Sam Chambers July 22, 2021

Green Hydrogen Systems

Could the humble container house shipping’s fuel of the future? Germany’s Wenger Engineering is pursuing a novel green hydrogen project on land at Bremerhaven with the kit for the fuel packed in a teu and a feu.



The complete test field led by Wenger Engineering will consist of a pressurised alkaline electrolysis equipment from Green Hydrogen Systems, a PEM electrolyser, compression unit, storage system and fuel cells. The test fields’ purpose is to systematically compare the effectiveness of those two different technologies. The electrolysers will also be connected to a virtual electricity network to determine what stabilising effects the connection of multiple decentralised generation units has on the grid.

Another part of the project will test applications in the logistics and transport sector as well as the food industry.

The test results from the test field and operational experience should pave the way for larger-scale hydrogen application in the future.

Wenger Engineering is working with a partner university on the topic of sustainable maritime mobility. It is also carrying out the testing of sub-systems for use in ships, a spokesperson for the company told *Splash*.

“The insights from this project will not only have a significant scaling effect on the hydrogen economy in Germany, but the results can potentially be valuable for all of Europe’s green energy transition,” said David Wenger, CEO of Wenger Engineering.

Wenger Engineering has been a globally sought-after simulation and development partner for leading companies in hydrogen technology such as Daimler, Toyota, Honda and Linde.

Germany has announced an ambitious National Hydrogen Strategy, determined to become a global leader in the associated green hydrogen technologies.

Source: *Splash247 210722*

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New Jones Act Enforcement Vessel Looks to Bust Foreign-Flag Rule Breakers

Mike Schuler July 20, 2021

Sick and tired of foreign vessels taking advantage of loopholes in the Jones Act, the Offshore Marine Service Association (OMSA) says it is taking the unprecedented step of launching a vessel tasked with documenting and reporting Jones Act rule breakers.

The Jones Act serves as the bedrock of American maritime policy with broad support in Washington and requires that seaborne cargo shipped between two U.S. points is carried on U.S.-built, crewed and owned vessels. But over the years, OMSA says various rulings by the Customs and Border Protection, the agency responsible for Jones Act enforcement, have created “dozens” of loopholes that have allowed foreign-flagged vessels to participate in offshore energy projects in U.S. waters.



MV Jones Act Enforcer. Photo courtesy Offshore Marine Service Association

According to OMSA, these loopholes have opened the gates for foreign-flag vessel operators to “repeatedly” exploit the rules to the detriment of American mariners and national security.

“The Act is not being implemented in a manner that is correct under the law and as a result, American security is being threatened and American workers are losing jobs to foreign vessels,” said Aaron Smith, OMSA President and CEO. “It’s time that someone takes a stand and that’s exactly what we’re doing.”

OMSA and over 140 of its member companies have decided to take action with the launch of the *Jones Act Enforcer*, a first-of-its-kind vessel that will be used to gather video and photographic evidence of Jones Act violations to be submitted to the authorities and shared with media.

“The Jones Act is very simple, if a foreign vessel picks up cargo at one point in the United States, and takes it to another point, it has broken the law,” Smith said. “Foreign vessels have succeeded in confusing this issue for a long time. Now, we’re going to shine a bright spotlight on their actions and show everyone just how many foreign mariners are taking money out of U.S. mariners’ pockets. If foreign vessel owners or the companies they work for don’t like this scrutiny, I suggest they hire U.S. owned, U.S. crewed, and U.S. built vessels.”

Source: *gCaptain 210721*

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China Challenges Singapore as Asia's Top Bunker Supplier

Bloomberg July 20, 2021

By Bloomberg News (Bloomberg)

Singapore is facing the greatest competition yet to its status as the dominant marine fuel supplier in Asia, with China luring more ships to its shores following a rapid expansion of its port and refining facilities.

China's marine fuel sales — known in the industry as bunkering — have almost doubled over the past five years and the nation is banking on attracting ships that travel to nearby ports in major economies such as South Korea and Japan. Singapore still has a commanding position as the top supplier to a sector valued at over \$30 billion in Asia, but Chinese growth is accelerating.

The epicentre of China's bunkering is Zhoushan, an archipelago to the south of Shanghai on the east coast. Some of the nation's newest and biggest crude oil refineries are being built in the area, while the government has introduced tax incentives that make Chinese fuels more competitive.

"Singapore has had an edge over other Asian ports on all parameters," said Jayendu Krishna, director at Drewry Maritime Advisors. "It continues to be so today, however, slowly other ports have been trying to catch up. Zhoushan will certainly capture a share of the vessels from other north east Asian ports."

Singapore — also the world's biggest ship refuelling hub — sold about 50 million tons of bunker fuels last year, or a fifth of the global total. Industry consultant OilChem estimates Chi-

na's sales rose for a fifth straight year to 16.9 million tons. SeaCred, a marine intelligence agency, valued the Asian bunker fuel market at \$31 billion to \$32 billion in 2020.

The world's busiest ports are in China thanks to its massive manufacturing industry, and boosting its bunkering capabilities adds clout to supportive businesses. The local government is spending 520 million yuan (\$80 million) to expand the anchorage and build new shipping channels at Zhoushan, while refiners are pumping out higher volumes of low-sulphur fuel oil, now essential under new global rules that mandates ships use cleaner fuels.

"China's bunkering business is closely catching up with that of Singapore," Zhang Xiaoli, a former official with the customs authority in Zhejiang province, which includes Zhoushan, told an industry conference last month. She predicted the nation's marine fuel sales will be 40% of Singapore's this year — or about 20 million tons based on 2020 data.

China has issued more than 10 bunkering licenses to companies operating in the free-trade zone of Zhoushan and has also introduced a low-sulphur fuel oil futures contract to the Shanghai International Energy Exchange to improve transparency on pricing. The actual LSFO fuel being sold at the port was at \$546 a ton on Monday, \$3 higher than Singapore, after being cheaper than the city-state in April, according to data from the Marine Bunker Exchange.

Zhoushan has been more competitive with its prices this year and Stena Bulk vessels traveling to China will likely utilize the port for refuelling more often, said Yvonne Rittfeldt, head of bunker procurement at the shipping company, which transports crude and refined products. However, Singapore is more reliable with its efficient and timely delivery of fuel, she added.

Singapore has geographical superiority where it counts. It sits at the crossroads of a centuries-old trade route that links the region to Europe, the Middle East and the U.S. Gulf Coast. The construction of Southeast Asia's first container port in 1972 helped the city-state map a path to the top marine fuel supplier spot, and it's planning for the world's biggest automated terminal.

Singapore has a vast refining and storage network to keep the steady stream of vessels refuelled, and it's also bolstered its credentials around transparency recently. Strict measures for monitoring bunker fuel deliveries were introduced last year, following on from the addition of flow meters in 2017, which gives shippers assurance the quantity of fuel they purchased will be delivered.

"The regional bunker fuel pie is big enough to support growth for key ports, but Singapore will remain the main bunkering hub in the foreseeable future," said Victor Shum, vice president of energy consulting at IHS Markit.

—With assistance from Takaaki Iwabu. © 2021 Bloomberg L.P.

Source: gCaptain 210721

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CCPC Found Moving Iran, Venezuela Oil To Chinese Refineries

By Jonathan Saul (Reuters) July 22, 2021

A Chinese logistics firm has emerged as a central player in the supply of sanctioned oil from Iran and Venezuela, even after it was black-listed by Washington two years ago for handling Iranian crude, seven sources with knowledge of the deals told Reuters.

The more prominent role of China Concord Petroleum Co, also known as CCPC, and its expansion into trading with Venezuela, have not previously been reported and highlight the limitations of Washington's system of restrictions, analysts say.

The details of the deals were described to Reuters by a range of individuals including one China-based source familiar with CCPC's operations, Iranian officials and a source at Venezuela's state-owned oil company PDVSA.

CCPC got involved in the Venezuelan oil trade this year through deals with small independent Chinese refineries known as teapots, according to monthly loading schedules, export schedules and invoices from April and May this year from PDVSA, as well as tanker tracking data and the PDVSA source.



A bunker vessel prepares to supply fuel a VLCC supertanker in the waters off Jurong Island in Singapore July 11, 2019.

Reuters/Edgar Su

The Hong Kong-registered firm has quickly become an important partner for Caracas, chartering ships in April and May carrying over 20% of Venezuela's total oil exports in that period or nearly \$445 million worth of crude, the PDVSA documents and tanker tracking data showed. CCPC did not charter any ships carrying Venezuelan oil in June, according to the documents.



An oil tanker loading oil at the ships' terminal of PDVSA's Jose Antonio Anzoategui industrial complex in the state of Anzoategui April 15, 2015.

Reuters/Carlos Garcia Rawlins

Many refineries worldwide, including state-run players in China, stopped buying crude from Iran and Venezuela after the U.S. imposed sanctions, cutting millions of barrels per day from exports and billions of dollars from their income.

Dependent on oil revenues to run their countries, Tehran and Caracas have since engaged in an elaborate game of cat-and-mouse with Washington to keep exporting crude, employing numerous techniques to avoid detection, including ship-to-ship transfers, shell companies and middlemen who operate outside

the U.S. financial sphere.

In the past year, CCPC has acquired at least 14 tankers to transport oil from Iran or Venezuela to China, two of the sources said.

A person reached by Reuters on CCPC's registered phone number said she was unaware of any business activities of CCPC. She declined to be named. An email sent to an address for the company listed on the U.S. Treasury's website did not get a response.

PDVSA and Venezuela's oil ministry did not respond to a request for comment. Iran's oil ministry also declined to comment.

"China maintains normal, legitimate trades with Iran and Venezuela under the framework of international law that shall deserve respect and protection," a spokesman for China's foreign ministry said in response to questions about the role of Chinese companies in the trading of sanctioned oil.

"China strongly opposes unilateral sanctions and urges the United States to remove the 'long-arm jurisdiction' on companies and individuals."

'AXES OF RESILIENCE'

U.S. officials, typically, do not move to interdict Iranian or Venezuelan oil shipments bought by Chinese or any international customers. But they can make it difficult for those involved in the trade to operate by barring U.S. citizens and companies from dealing with them, making them pariahs for western banks.

In 2019, Washington added CCPC to a list of entities under sanctions for violating restrictions on handling and transacting Iranian oil. The company has not commented publicly on the sanctions and Reuters could not determine what impact the U.S. blacklisting has had on CCPC.

CCPC supplies half a dozen Chinese teapot refineries with Iranian oil, three China-based sources said.

The sources declined to disclose the identities of these refineries or to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter. The documents reviewed by Reuters did not include the names of the refineries.

Iranian officials familiar with the matter confirmed that CCPC was a central player in Tehran's oil trade with China.

China received a daily average of 557,000 barrels of Iranian crude between November and March, or roughly 5% of total imports by the world's biggest importer, according to Refinitiv Oil Research, returning to levels last seen before former U.S. President Donald Trump re-imposed sanctions on Iran in 2018.

China's imports of Venezuelan crude and fuel averaged 324,000 barrels per day (bpd) in the past year to end-April, according to cargo-tracking specialist Vortexa Analytics, below pre-sanctions levels, but still more than 60% of Venezuela's total oil exports.

The sanctions on Venezuela's PDVSA were introduced in 2019 as part of a bid to topple that country's socialist president, Nicolas Maduro. The U.S. Treasury declined to comment when asked about CCPC's critical role in facilitating oil trade from Iran and Venezuela, but said that the agency pursues actions on an ongoing basis.

Julia Friedlander, a former senior sanctions official with the U.S. Treasury, said the growing trade in blacklisted oil showed how those opposed were getting better at evasion.

"It shows there are limitations as to what U.S. sanctions can do especially when you target multiple like-minded or selectively like-minded actors like oil traders. So, you incentivise these alternative axes of resilience," said Friedlander, who is now a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council's GeoEconomics Center.

The sanctions have battered the economies of Iran and Venezuela and dealt a serious blow to their tanker fleets, which are overstretched and in need of an overhaul, according to analysts and publicly available data on PDVSA's fleet.

The 14 tankers acquired by CCPC have a capacity of around 28 million barrels of oil. At least one other tanker is also linked to CCPC, boosting their capacity to some 30 million barrels, the two sources said.

Iran exported more than 600,000 bpd of crude in June, a Reuters survey showed. That compares with a high of 2.8 million bpd in 2018, before sanctions were imposed, but up from 300,000 bpd in 2020, according to assessments based on tanker tracking data.

(By Jonathan Saul, Chen Aizhu and Marianna Parraga Additional reporting by Beijing newsroom, Parisa Hafezi in Dubai and Daphne Psaledakis in Washington; Editing by Simon Webb, Veronica Brown and Carmel Crimmins)

Source: gCaptain 210723

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NYK Finds Air Bubbles Significantly Reduce Ship Resistance

gCaptain July 11, 2012

Post World War II, warships began to experiment with a system called Prairie-Masker which expelled bubbles through the hull and propeller blade tips in an effort to mask the acoustic signature of the ship's machinery as a defence from submarines. In the process, they also found that these bubbles increased the efficiency of the hull as it moves through the water.

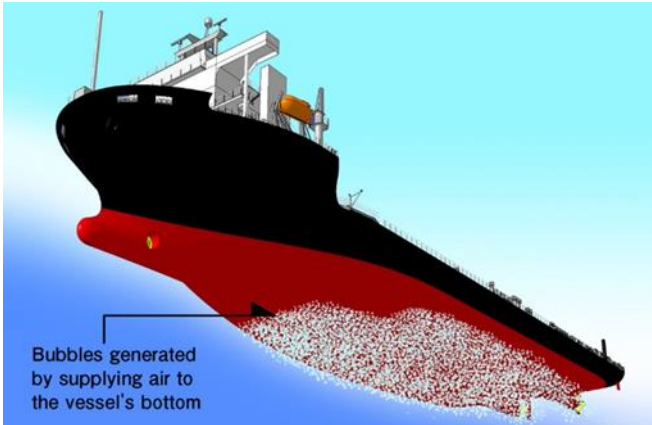


Image courtesy NYK Lines

Japan's Nippon Yusen Kaisha and two NYK Group companies, the Monohakobi Technology Institute (MTI) and NYK-Hinode Line Ltd., have completed two years of experiments on the air-lubrication systems installed on two of the group's module carriers, Yamato and Yamatai, and resultantly confirmed an average 6% reduction in CO₂ emissions during actual sea passage.

The air-lubrication system effectively reduces the frictional resistance between a vessel's bottom and the seawater by means of bubbles generated by supplying air to the vessel's bottom. In fact, this was the world's first permanent installation of a system using an air-blower. The system was installed on the two vessels when they were built, and the experiments were conducted during actual sea passage. This project has been subsidized through Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's "Support for Technology Development from Marine Vessels for Curtailing CO₂" project from fiscal 2009 and has also been supported by the ship classification society Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK).

The experiments were designed to verify fuel reduction, examine the behaviour of the air bubbles supplied to the vessel bottom under various operational and sea conditions, confirm the relationship between the amount of air supplied and its effect, and validate CO₂ reduction. After reviewing the data obtained by the two vessels for two years under various weather and sea conditions, the optimal control mode of how the bubbles behave in actual sea conditions was confirmed. Compared to the 10% reduction measured during sea trials, the reduction of CO₂ emissions was confirmed to average 6% under various weather and sea conditions. This project was done as a challenge toward the world's first permanent installation of such a system, and we are proud to have confirmed such meaningful energy savings during actual sea voyages.

The project has been completed, but NYK, MTI, and NYK-Hinode Line will continue to conduct performance analyses on actual vessels and device reviews during dry docks to achieve optimal operation. At the same time, the NYK Group will strive to install the system on other types of vessels for greater energy-saving operations.

Source: gCaptain 210702

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Court Hears of 'Hundreds' of Dead Turtles as X-Press Pearl Captain Appears at Hearing

Reuters July 1, 2021

Hundreds of turtles have washed ashore after a ship caught fire and sank off the west coast of Sri Lanka in June in the country's worst-ever marine disaster, a court in the capital, Colombo, heard this week.

A fire erupted on the Singapore-registered *MV X-Press Pearl* on May 20, carrying 1,486 containers, including 25 tonnes of nitric acid along with other chemicals and cosmetics. It sank on June 2, even as salvage crew tried to tow the vessel away from the coast.

The Russian captain of the ship appeared in court on Thursday but has yet to be charged in a case environmental experts say is Sri Lanka's worst man-made environmental disaster.

The toxins released from the ship have killed 176 turtles, 20 dolphins and four whales, Deputy Solicitor General, Madawa Tennakoon, said at an initial court hearing on Wednesday.

A video by a local television station seen by Reuters showed carcasses of dead sea turtles and countless plastic pellets scattered over the shore with several volunteers working to clear them.

"There were more than 190 items of cargo (on the ship) and most of it was plastic-based," Environment Minister Mahinda Amaraweera told reporters. "During the south-western monsoon season, sea creatures never die in this way. Most of these carcasses are found on the west coast directly affected by the shipwreck."

The government has named 15 people — including the captain, Tyutkalo Vitaly — as co-accused in cases over the damage caused. Vitaly made no comment when leaving the court on Thursday after the procedural hearing and could not be reached for further comment. He has been barred from leaving the country.

Authorities said last week they had lifted a ban on fishing in parts of the affected coast, though experts say risks to marine life from the disaster remain.

(Reporting by Waruna Karunatilake in Colombo and Bhargav Acharya in Bengaluru; Editing by Alasdair Pal and Emelia Sithole-Matarise)

(c) Copyright Thomson Reuters 2021.

Source: gCaptain 210702

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Shell to appeal landmark Dutch court ruling on emission cuts

Adis Ajdin July 21, 2021

Anglo-Dutch supermajor Shell said it will appeal a ruling by a Dutch court that ordered it to significantly slash its carbon emissions over the next decade.



A landmark judgment issued in May by the district court in The Hague said that Shell and its suppliers must cut CO₂ emissions by 45% by 2030 from 2019 levels.

Shell's CEO Ben van Beurden said the company would speed up its energy transition plans in response to the order, but it will also appeal the ruling, noting that the move to single out Shell does not help reduce global CO₂ emissions.

"We agree urgent action is needed and we will accelerate our transition to net zero. But we will appeal because a court judgment, against a single company, is not effective," van Beurden said.

In April this year, Shell published its energy transition strategy and in May became the first energy company to put that scheme to a vote of shareholders. Shell said the decision did not consider its detailed updated energy transition strategy.

The lawsuit against Shell, filed in 2019, was led by Milieudefensie, a Dutch arm of Friends of the Earth, alongside six other bodies and 17,000 co-plaintiffs.

Roger Cox, a lawyer for Milieudefensie, stated: "The judges have passed a well-considered judgment on Shell in the verdict. We are confident that this judgment will be re-affirmed on appeal. The science is clear on the consequences of and solutions to dangerous climate change."

Source: *Splash 247 210721*

—oo00oo—

Floatel International wins Inpex contract in Australia

Adis Ajdin July 2, 2021

Offshore accommodation platform operator, Floatel International, has been awarded a contract by Inpex to provide offshore accommodation and related services at the Ichthys field in Australia.

The contract is for the 2016-built semisub vessel *Floatel Triumph*, which was also recently chosen by energy majors Shell, Chevron and Ørsted for their operations in the Philippines, the US Gulf of Mexico and Taiwan, respectively.

The charter will commence in mid-2022 and will last for up to approximately two months. The company anticipates the work will involve some 40-55 Australian offshore positions with a locally provided marine crew and catering services during the execution of the work.

Source: *Splash247 210702*

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Lawyer's gift

One day in Contract Law class, a professor asked one of his better students, "Now, if you were to give someone an orange, how would you go about it?"

The student replied, "Here's an orange."

The professor was livid.

"No! No! Think like a lawyer!" the professor instructed.

The student then recited: Okay, I'd tell him, "I hereby give and convey to you all and singular, my estate and interests, rights, claim, title, claim and advantages of and in, said orange, together with all its rind, juice, pulp and seeds, and all rights and advantages with full power to bite, cut, freeze and otherwise eat, the same, or give the same away with, or without the pulp, juice, rind and seeds, anything herein before or hereinafter or in any deed, or deeds, instruments of whatever nature or kind whatsoever to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding, domestically or internationally."

X _____ sign here

(With thanks to Paul Dixon)

Source: *Maritime Advocate 782*

—oo00oo—

MAIB Issues Investigation Report on ‘Catastrophic’ *Stolt Groenland* Explosion in Korea

Mike Schuler July 20, 2021

The UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch has issued its investigation report on the 2019 explosion and fire on board the chemical tanker *Stolt Groenland* in Ulsan, South Korea.



Fire from the *Stolt Groenland* is seen at the port of Ulsan, South Korea, September 28, 2019. Photo: Yonhap via Reuters

Footage of the explosion was captured on video that went viral online.

On 28 September 2019, a cargo tank containing styrene monomer on board the Cayman Islands registered chemical tanker *Stolt Groenland* ruptured due to runaway polymerisation, a type a chemical reaction.

At the time of the accident, the tanker was moored alongside a general cargo berth in Ulsan, and the Singapore registered chemical tanker *Bow Dalian* was moored outboard. The catastrophic rupture released a large quantity of vapor to the atmosphere, which subsequently ignited in a large fireball that reached the road bridge above.

Both vessels were damaged, and two crew suffered minor injuries. Fire-fighting efforts by the emergency services took over six hours and involved more than 700 personnel and 117 units of fire trucks, pumps and fire tugs. Fifteen emergency responders were injured during the fire-fighting.

The MAIB previously issued an interim report pointing to the chemical reaction involving the ship's styrene monomer cargo as a main focus of the investigation. The interim report also alerted the chemical tanker industry to the circumstances of the accident and requested information about previous similar accidents or incidents.

In the *Stolt Groenland* report, the MAIB revealed a similar dangerous styrene monomer polymerisation incident occurred a couple of weeks prior on board another Stolt Tankers ship, *Stolt Focus*. In that case, the heat generated by the polymerisation process was noticed before the critical runaway temperature was reached.

The MAIB investigation found that the styrene monomer cargoes on board both tankers were loaded at a similar time from the same tank in Houston and were exposed to similar environmental conditions.

Although the *Stolt Focus* incident was not reported to the ship's Flag State, Korea's Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries learned of the incident and prohibited ship-to-ship transfer operations for dangerous cargo on general cargo berths in Ulsan. The MAIB said Stolt Tankers took immediate action to ensure that the temperatures of all cargoes carried on board its ships were monitored and reported to its shore management, and it also took steps to enhance crew awareness on the hazards of inhibited and heat sensitive cargoes.

Safety issues identified in the MAIB's *Stolt Groenland* investigation included that the styrene monomer was affected by other heated cargo tanks; heat transfer from other cargoes was not fully appreciated; and the styrene monomer temperature was not monitored.

The MAIB has made **six recommendations** as a result of the investigation:

A recommendation (2021/122) has been made to Stolt Tankers B.V. aimed at ensuring the wider marine chemical sector benefits from the lessons learned from the *Stolt Focus* incident and research initiatives that were carried out as a result of this accident.

The International Chamber of Shipping and INTERTANKO have been recommended (2021/118 and 2021/119) to promulgate our report to their members.

Recommendations (2021/117, 2021/120 and 2021/121) have also been made to the Cayman Island Shipping Registry, the Chemical Distribution Institute and Plastics Europe (Styrene Producers Association). These are intended to assist in ensuring that the guidance provided in certificates of inhibitor and styrene monomer handling guides is consistent and achievable given the limitations of equipment and testing facilities on board ships.

The MAIB notes that the investigation was carried out on behalf of the Cayman Islands and is the first investigation report the agency has published as part of its Memorandum of Understanding with the Red Ensign Group Category 1 registries of Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar and the Isle of Man, under which MAIB agreed to carry out investigation for Very Serious Marine Casualties involving ships in those registries.

Source: *gCaptain* 210721

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And finally...(With thanks to Paul Dixon)

A father and son went fishing one day. After a couple hours out in the boat, the boy suddenly became curious about the world around him. He asked his father, "How does this boat float?"

The father thought for a moment, then replied, "I don't rightly know, son."

The boy returned to his contemplation, then turned back to his father, "How do fish breath underwater?"

Once again, the father replied, "Don't rightly know, son."

A little later the boy asked, "Why is the sky blue?"

Again, the father replied. "Don't rightly know, son."

Worried he was going to annoy his father, he says, "Dad, do you mind my asking you all of these questions?"

"Of course not, son. If you don't ask questions ... you'll never learn anything!"

Source: *Maritime Advocate* 781

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The Company of Master Mariners Ltd S.A. Branch
Minutes of Branch Meeting at the Largs Pier Hotel, Largs Bay, on Wednesday 30 June 2021 at 1200

1. Meeting opened at 12:00 with the members being welcomed by the Branch Master, R. Westley.
2. Attendance: R. Westley (Branch Master), R. Buchanan, E. Carr, I. Dickson, I. Fraser, M. Hehir, M. Parsons, H. Pronk and A. Wynne.
3. Apologies: Sir E. Neal, M. Carrington, N. Ganesan, H. Jayasuriya, D. Kemp C. Marshall, P. Phillips, and R. Ratnathurai.
4. Minutes of last meeting 26 May 2021: (circulated in Porthole): M. Hehir proposed that the minutes represented a true and correct record of proceedings. Seconded by A. Wynne and carried.
5. Business arising from the minutes:
 Speakers: None scheduled.
 Visits: None scheduled.
6. Treasurer's Report:

Westpac Balance at 21/05/2021	2,689.15	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit at 23/04/21	8,228.35
Income	0.00	Re-invested for 12 months from 1/08/20 @ 0.90%	
Expenditure	0.00		
Westpac Balance at 25/06/2021	2,689.15		

The Treasurer proposed that the report be accepted. Seconded by H. Pronk and carried.

7. Membership:

Applications: Nil

Ratifications: Nil

Branch Members:

Category	Financial	Number Unfinancial	Total
Ordinary Members	4	0	4
Seagoing members (incl. tug crews & pilots)	3	0	3
Retired members	15	0	15
Associate members	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Total paying members	24	0	24
Honorary members	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Levied Members	<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>	25
Life Members			<u>2</u>
Total Branch Membership			<u>27</u>

8. Correspondence: 22/05/2021 to 25/06/2021 Sundry emails, of an administrative nature only, exchanged between the Branch Master and the Federal Court.
9. Federal Matters: The Branch Master advised that he had received from the Federal Secretary a formal proposal for amendments to the Constitution, and that it had been circulated by email to all Branch members for their consideration.

The Acting Branch Secretary advised that he had received emailed responses from the following 7 Branch members, all of whom had accepted all the amendments:

Barnes, Carr, Dickson, Hehir, Phillips, Pronk and Wynne.

A further 4 Branch members attending this meeting, Buchanan, Fraser, Parsons and Westley, stated formally that they also accepted all the amendments, bringing the total number of responses to 11, all in favour of accepting all of the proposed Constitutional changes attached to the Federal Secretary's email to Branch Masters, dated 21 June 2021 at 11:18.

There were no other Federal Matters.

10. General Business:

Articles for the Porthole: Always required.

R. Westley advised that he had recently heard from Chris Keys, who had enquired into the whereabouts of Keith Le Leu's collection of figureheads. No-one present was able to provide an answer.

R. Westley noted that Keith Ridgeway had died.

Any other business: None.

11. **The next Branch Meeting will be held at 1200 on Wednesday 28 July 2021 at the Largs Pier Hotel, Largs Bay.**
12. The meeting closed at 12:20

