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: Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year
to All

COVID-19 restrictions permitting, the next Branch meeting and the Branch AGM will be held at The Largs Pier Hotel. 198 The Eplanade, Largs Bay, on Wednesday, 19th January 2022, at 1145 for 1200. Please confirm your attendance at the lunch or register your apology before 1200 on Monday, 17th January 2022 with Bob Westley (0427 644 947) or Ian Dickson (0418 807 788)

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Will there be any sea left?

By Michael Grey

As the governmental delegates to Cop26, safely delivered home after their Scottish excursion, start to work out how they can deliver their extravagant zero-carbon pledges by the due date, it is becoming manifestly clear that it will be neither cheap, nor easy. It is very easy for politicians and environmental interests to talk about "clean, renewable energy" but providing it in sufficient quantities to power up our technological world is a colossal task that puts a strain on our imagination, as only a tiny proportion of what will be needed currently exists.

It has been suggested that green ammonia or green methanol, or perhaps even synthetic LNG will end up as the fuel of choice to power the world fleet, assuming we see a value in maintaining world trade. But has anyone really considered the amazing amount of "renewable" electrical power that will be required to provide the hydrogen feedstock from electrolysis to produce this quantity of bunkers? And bear in mind that, just as the marine industry has been accustomed to fuel its ships using the "bottom of the barrel" filth nobody else wanted, it will probably be at the back of the queue for all this lovely green fuel, as others will be better able to pay for it.

But let's not be too depressed. The immediate future is blowing in the wind and it is clear that anyone involved in the offshore (or even onshore) wind business can look forward to plenty of activity. Old-fashioned folk, who drive ships around for a living, have long become used to being diverted from their traditional tracks from A to B, because somebody has insisted on planting a huge windfarm array on the seabed over which they used to track. We might expect a lot more of this activity as the number of turbines grows tenfold, or twentyfold, depending on what you might have been reading.

It is probably not much use protesting about all the additional miles you are going to have to steam to circumvent these obstacles safely, because the rights of those who want to obstruct your passage will invariably trump the needs of navigation. It's a habit the energetic energy lobby got into all those years ago, when they wanted to plonk oil rigs in your way, and the precedent will live on into the renewable era.

While the North Sea is affording a delightful planting spot for wind turbines, with the Dogger Bank field soon to be the world's biggest array, where once only herrings throve, and the Heligoland Bight affording only narrow channels between the windmills into the German ports, the rest of the world is intent on catching up. If you have been reading your maritime press assiduously, you will have been aware that the coasts of California have been swarming with anchored or drifting containerships impatiently awaiting their berths.

They had better sort out their stevedoring soon, because those "advancing clean energy development" are seeking to fence off a huge area of sea, twenty miles off the coast upon which it is hoped to plant a giant wind farm. According to the useful Millers' Maritime Newsletter which keeps us informed of US developments, the proposed Morro Bay Wind Energy Area of 240,898 acres or 376 square miles (it is so much more user-friendly than horrible hectares) is now seeking permission to start planting. And if we are going to even partly match the ambitions of those requiring clean, green fuel for power, industry and transportation, many more acres of sea are going to be converted to electrical production, with all their turbines, underwater cables and associated paraphernalia. There is not even a need for shallow water, either, as floating devices have been trialled and found perfectly practical, only requiring a decent mooring.

I was reading that the coasts of China will soon have the largest conglomeration of offshore turbines in the world, which will make the sanity of those navigating the South China Sea, whose lives are already traumatised by gigantic fleets of suicidal fishing boats, problematical. It is enough to push them over the edge.

But the ambitions of the renewable energy interests are only half of the story, as hundreds of square miles of once usable sea are fenced off for "marine parks" or environmental reserves, where marine life will not be troubled by propeller noise, or people dropping anchors on the sea bottom, trawlers or worst of all – dredgers. There was once a sort of freedom that you felt when the last mooring line had been cast off and the bow of the ship was turned seawards. The next generation, one suspects, as they weave their way around all the obstructions in their tortuous way to what bits of open ocean that remain, are going to feel rather like trespassers.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.

Source: Maritime Advocate 792

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First Look at Maersk's New Green Methanol-Powered Containerships

Mike Schuler December 8, 2021

Shipping giant Maersk has unveiled its design for a series of eight 'carbon-neutral' methanol-powered ultra-large containerships currently on order.

Photo credit: A.P. Moller-Maersk

The 16,000 TEU capacity ships will be built by Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) with delivery planned in the first quarter of 2024.

The design of the vessels was presented today during a virtual presentation that included Morten Bo Christiansen, our Head of Decarbonisation, along with Ole Graa Jakobsen, Head of Fleet Technology, and Emiliano Austi, Head of Naval Architecture.

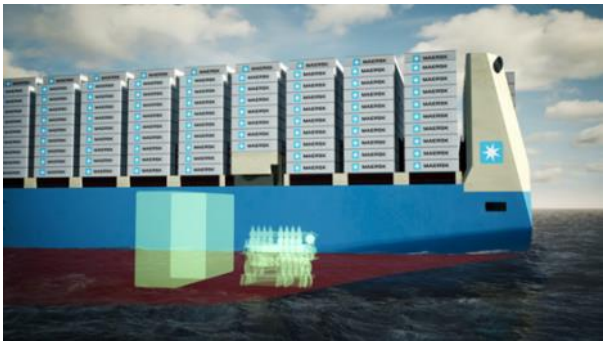
Most striking is the forward accommodation that Maersk says will enable greater container capacity and improved port efficiency by separating the accommodation and funnel. The funnel is also designed with a reduced footprint and will be located at the stern to maximize cargo capacity.

"The making of this took nearly five years, and all while crossing uncharted naval design territory," Maersk said in a statement. "To enable this new design, several challenges had to be addressed. Firstly, crew comfort had to be ensured with the accommodation placed in this more exposed location. Moreover, adequate hull strength was also a key parameter to safeguard, with the accommodation block normally working as a hull "stiffener" when placed further aft. New arrangements for lifeboats and navigational lights had to be developed, plus new cameras to support the captain's view when navigating."

Credit: A.P. Moller-Maersk

The vessels, measuring 350 meters long and 53.5 meters wide, will come with a dual fuel engine setup that will enable operation on carbon-neutral green methanol as well as conventional low Sulphur fuel. A 16,000 cubic meter fuel tank means the ships can complete a full round trip (from Asia to Europe, for example) running on green methanol without having to refuel.

Renewable methanol, aka green methanol or e-methanol, is an ultra-low carbon chemical produced from sustainable biomass (called bio-methanol) or captured carbon dioxide and hydrogen produced from renewable electricity, according to the Methanol Institute. By using green methanol as a fuel, Maersk says the vessels will achieve 20% improved Energy Efficiency per transported container compared to the industry average, saving around one million tons of CO_2 emissions each year across the eight-ship series.



Credit: A.P. Moller-Maersk

According to an earlier announcement, the methanol propulsion configuration has been developed in collaboration with MAN ES, Hyundai (Himsen), and Alfa Laval, and represents a scaled-up version from the previous size limit of around 2,000 TEU. The vessels will be classed by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) and sail under Danish flags.

The shipbuilding order at HHI was placed in August, and followed an order in February for a single 2,100 TEU methanol-powered dual fuel feeder ship to be built at Hyundai Mipo Dockyards. With delivery planned by 2023, the 172-meter-long ship will become the first in the sector to be powered by carbon neutral methanol, sailing for Sealand Europe (a Maersk subsidiary) on the Baltic shipping route between Northern Europe and the Bay of Bothnia.

In August, Maersk announced a partnership with REintegrate and European Energy for a new facility in Denmark, that will produce approximately 10,000 tonnes of e-methanol annually for the feeder. The facility will use renewable energy provided by a solar farm in Kassø, Southern Denmark, and "biogenic CO_2" to produce the fuel. Fuel production is expected to start in 2023 to coincide with the ship's delivery.

Maersk in 2018 set a goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050, which included a promise to develop a commercially viable net-zero $C0_2$ vessel by 2030, so it seems with these vessels it could be well on its way to that goal. Also, the order with Hyundai Heavy Industries included an option for four more vessels due in 2025, so more could be on the horizon.

Source: gCaptain 211209

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Ship shapes

By Michael Grey

In the compromise that dictates the design of a ship, you don't have to be cynical to observe that the needs of the crew come last, after the cargo, machinery and anything else that might remunerate the owner. The crew, it might be said, "just fit in where they can". It has been the same throughout history, and you might think of Vikings crossing the Atlantic, sheltering under the thwarts, or sitting in the lee of their captives, to the grim dormitories of stokers and stewards in the trans-Atlantic liners, in the eyes of the ship or below the waterline, far from the madding crowd of happy passengers upstairs.

I sailed in a few old ships that were built in the 1920s, with forecastle accommodation for the ratings, and it was a fact that thirty years on, very few of the best seafarers were willing to sail in them. They knew that they could find some more desirable residence aboard vessels with pleasant and spacious accommodation amidships, where you didn't have to cope with damp, foul air and violent motion in heavy weather. And for some years, no sensible designer would think of sticking human beings in such locations aboard ship.

It's funny how expediency changes convention. Until about the 1970s naval architects had been trained to design ships with certain unarguable characteristics, like a rise of floor that differentiated between a ship and a barge, a shapely sheer, or camber that helped to shed boarding water, a cruiser or counter stern, a forecastle and poop to help to keep the sea stay where it should. Ships had to be manoeuvred in restricted waters and it was thought that the bridge ought to be around amidships, near the longitudinal centre of gravity or "pivot point". Even tankers in those days, with the machinery aft, still retained a midship bridge.

Then, almost without anyone noticing, all these conventions were swept away. It was found far easier by shipbuilders to forget about the rise of floor or sheer and construct the ship on a flat building dock, and camber was dismissed as unimportant. Three-dimensional curved plate was judged to be far too expensive and we saw ships emerging with a great flat backside, which only an imaginative naval architect would consider an improvement to seakeeping. There were flares that wouldn't have disgraced an angle-decked aircraft carrier, both forward and aft, such was the demand for deck space to park boxes.

And just like the old days, the crew found themselves having to "fit in where they can", away from the revenue-earning locations. A shipmaster of some experience summed it up really quite well, describing various ships he had sailed where, within a few years, he lived amidships aboard a reefer; so far aft on a container ship that he actually resided abaft the stern frame in a towering steel island, and then right forward in a car carrier, where he overlooked the windlass.

Old sailors used to say about a ship – "if it looked right, then it probably was seaworthy", but I have often wondered what their reaction might have been to some of the strange designs that have emerged in recent years. "X-bows", extreme bulbs, "ram-bows", wedges and other strange shapes have emerged from the hydrodynamic box of tricks, competing for the owners' attention. There was a rather good cartoon a few years ago, the caption noting about one of these funny looking ships – "I can't tell whether she is going ahead or astern, or submerging!" I suppose you can only tell whether these designs live up to their extravagant claims when they get to sea and you ask those who have served in them.

Now we have an exciting video from Maersk in which they reveal the design of their latest ultra-sustainable 16,000teu container series, which will consume green methanol, and aboard which the crew will serve as a sort of breakwater on the bow for the nine-high deck stow of boxes abaft the bridge. The video, introduced by a sonorous blast from its siren, is somewhat short of detail, but with the exception of this accommodation island perched on the forecastle, every metre of length is usefully employed for the stowage of containers. Even the single offset funnel is so far aft you could hang the ensign on it. The machinery is so far away from the engineers' accommodation that they will have to be very fit when the alarms go off in the middle of the night. The first ship handling operations in tight places might be quite exciting, as they whirl around their "pivot point"!

I guess we will just have to wait and see whether these revolutionary ships are a success, and represent the first of a new era in box ship design which will sweep the world. If you sail on them, you will at least get a nice sea view, rather than being forced to peer at the back end of a container for months on end. And it would be nice to think that the designers will come up with something equally exciting to address currently pressing issues of cargo securing or fire safety. But there can surely be no argument that the crew of these dramatic ships have surely been "fitted in" where they can, on the only available space.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.

Source: Maritime Advocate 793

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Japanese Banking Crisis?

According to industry insiders, the Japanese banking crisis shows no signs of stopping.

Following last week's news that Origami Bank had folded, we are hearing that Sumo Bank has gone belly up and Bonsai Bank plans to cut back some of its branches.

Karaoke Bank is up for sale and is (you guessed it!) going for a song.

Meanwhile, shares in Kamikaze Bank have nose-dived and 500 back-office staff at Karate Bank got the chop.

Analysts report that there is something fishy going on at Sushi Bank and staff there fear they may get a raw deal.

(With thanks to Paul Dixon)

Source: Maritme Advocate 793

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Shipping and the digital integration required by China's Belt Road Initiative

Andre Wheeler November 29, 2021

Beijing's Digital Silk Road initiative runs contrary to many data sharing platform projects around the world, something shipping will have to grapple with in the coming years. Andre Wheeler investigates.

There has been tremendous progress with regards to smart port/shipping developments in recent times. What is heartening has been the progress with development of common data standards, and the number of port ecosystems that have progressed data sharing platform and associated APIs that allow secure data transfer.

The architecture is increasingly in place, setting the standard for exchanging data. Further progress in this digital space comes out of the Port of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. It has taken a significant step forward in data integration operating systems. Based on DP World's terminal operating system and its operations and planning systems, it has integrated these with the backend Navis N4 software platform. This optimisation of the operating systems will help DP World progress automation activities and real time location systems.

Whilst these developments are welcome, the issue that is not being directly addressed is how will this interface with China's Belt Road (BRI) and Digital Silk Road (DSR). Have these developments taken account of the current megatrend coming out of China, namely the growing influence of China's Digital Silk Road (DSR) on supply chain and trade? This important trend sees China creating a single digital platform that seamlessly integrates all trade along the BRI.

At first glance the DSR looks relatively benign, as all global supply chain and logistics providers are working towards this seamless digital integration goal. There are significant and obvious benefits to this level of digital integration, particularly seamless data and information transfer between trading entities that would speed up trade across regional borders. Access to a central database reduces time and backlog constraints commonly found in the current manually driven documentation exchange, such as Bill of Lading, Letters of Credit, and custom clearance. This trade Nirvana has still a long way to go.

The open system approach by the West to the digitisation and creation of smart trade, and supply chains through data / systems integration, has progressed. Despite the building of data exchange networks, the slow implementation and agreement around data standards has been made problematic by the independent data silos found in this open digital network. Whilst the move from EDI data exchange to API exchanges focus on cyber security concerns through the incorporation of effective cyber security protocols, China is well ahead in its ambition to create a closed integrated and seamless 'smart' trade ecosystem that it controls from Beijing. Its closed data aggregation platform is the envy of others, but poses significant trade, transport and supply chain security questions for those seeking to diversify trade outside of China and its BRI.

This is fundamentally changing the way trade is conducted with China. The DSR platform is charged with co-ordinating and facilitating digital integration of all providers that conduct trade along the BRI regional ecosystem. In simple terms, it takes the discussion away from the idea of smart ports and/or cities, and looks instead to creating a digital regional trade ecosystem. The DSR is a platform constructed along a single digital spine and skeleton, essentially owned, and controlled by the Chinese Communist Party. Key data is centrally stored, disseminated, and controlled by a state instrument in Beijing rather than in neutrally accessible data warehouses or cloud-based data storage.

This is disrupting current digital developments being undertaken by the maritime sector. This is especially important when one considers that the merge points of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road are largely ports. The core component of the strategy around these merge points is the development of physical infrastructure within a digital framework. Increasingly we see China's applying pressure on all international trade to comply with and connect with its digital framework to trade with China.

Strategically, China is re-aligning trade such that it increasingly enforces participants to comply with China's IT standards. The DSR is increasingly playing a central role in the development of a comprehensive package that includes policy dialogue, financial support, unimpeded trade, and people-to-people exchange. This 'team China' approach is to have all end user devices/services interfacing along a central/common digital infrastructure corridor that includes cloud-based platforms.

There are several indicators that China is becoming more robust in encouraging global shipping to dock into their platform. An example of this has been the introduction of the Data Security Law and Personal Information Protection Law that effectively shut western users access to AIS data based on national security. In some cases, shipping lost up to 90% AIS data access impacting on the visibility of vessels within China's waters.

A further concern is China's recent steps to replace US / Western technology with homegrown suppliers. Known as the Xinchuang whitelist, it gives Beijing leverage to replace foreign tech firms in sensitive sectors. They have already forced Amazon Web Service and Microsoft to set up joint ventures to operate with China's mainland. The Xinchuang committee is overseen by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the China Electronics Standardization Association. This should raise red flags for the likes of the Port of Jeddah which relies on the US-based Navis OS.

Another concern is the Cybersecurity Administration of China draft rules for data transfer on October 29, 2021. Under the heading of 'Outbound Data Transfer Security Assessment Measures' it lists 18 articles of assessment. Article 4 of the measures would require all outward data transmission to undergo transfer security assessments. Article 16 goes further by allowing the state cybersecurity department to unilaterally "cancel" outward data transfer and sharing activities. Sadly, it does not specify what data constitutes a "risk to national security" and as such we could possibly find greater disruption that was recently experienced

when international shipping was denied access to China AIS data.

What is no longer in question is no longer if technology will be used in Chinese backed ports, but when will it be no longer possible for global maritime trade to operate outside of China's DSR, thus ceding control and ownership of data to Beijing. Huawei's Smart Port solution focuses on four key areas: custom clearance, visualised collaborative command, convenient clearance systems and port management. Locked into the Logink data aggregation platform, it uses Big Data, AI, and cloud computing to offer an attractive proposition for busy ports.

This raises strategic questions, particularly as to how European shipping and technology companies can compete.

Is it possible for Application Programming Interface (API) and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) standards that would allow differing operating data systems to securely communicate with China's DSR? Can the recent Build Back Better infrastructure initiative recently introduced by the G7 offer a viable infrastructure / digital alternative to China's BRI – how can this be leveraged?

What is becoming clear is that in the short to medium term, it is increasingly evident that to trade with China will require incorporation into their DSR.

Source: Splash247 211129 —oo00oo--

Wind-assisted boxship project moves ahead

Kim Biggar December 9, 2021

Zéphyr & Borée has received an approval in principle (AiP) from class society Bureau Veritas for an open-top 1,800 teu containership that demonstrates the feasibility of using wind-propelled wing-sails on this type of vessel.

The 185 m long container vessel is equipped with shaft generators and a heat-recovery system that minimise fuel consumption. Its propulsion system is augmented by eight thick, asymmetrical wing-sails, provided by CWS (Computed Wing Sail), that can be steered to catch port and starboard winds, and adjust themselves automatically depending on wind conditions. The system is compliant with IMO Tier III standards.

The AiP confirms the design's compliance with the most recent Bureau Veritas notations, including NR 206 on wind-propulsion systems.

Laurent Leblanc, senior VP, technical & operations at Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore, commented: "Wind, even if it is not always available, is a serious option to help decarbonise the shipping industry. Wind-propulsion systems can play a significant role by providing substantial propulsive energy. With this AiP, we are pleased to demonstrate the technology can be applied to containerships, which represent 17.5% of the global fleet in tonnage."

Source: Splash247 211209 —oo00oo--

Hyundai Glovis hit with $3m fine over *Golden Ray* capsizing

Sam Chambers November 25, 2021

Environmental regulators from the American state of Georgia have decided to fine Korean shipowner Hyundai Glovis $3m over the 2019 capsizing of the *Golden Ray* car carrier.

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division said that there were pollutants, petroleum products and debris from the ship, which capsized on September 8, 2019, carrying 4,100 cars, shortly after departing the Port of Brunswick.

After more than two years, the last remains of the *Golden Ray* car carrier were removed from the Saint Simons Sound late last month, the largest wreck removal operation in the history of the United States.

The capsizing was caused by incorrect calculations about the vessel's stability, the National Transportation Safety Board said in September.

Source: Splash 211125 —oo00oo--

Merchant Navy officers to tour with Royal Navy in training partnership scheme

In a new partnership between the UK Merchant Navy and Royal Navy, 30 UK Merchant Navy officers will sail around the world this winter with the Royal Navy.

The Merchant Navy officers will spend three months at a time on patrol and survey ships to help with their training, and to gain a deeper understanding of the Royal Navy's role.

Lieutenant Commander David Carter, the RN Merchant Navy liaison officer, said: 'This is something of a novel concept for the Royal Navy, but it runs alongside several strands of the Merchant and Royal Navy coming closer together in the maritime sphere for multiple "wins".'

Source: Flashlight 228 —oo00oo--

World Population vs Memory Loss

Earth's Population Statistics in Perspective

The population of Earth is around 7.8 billion. For most people, it is a large figure. However, if you condensed 7.8 billion into 100 persons, and then into various percentage statistics the resulting analysis is relatively much easier to comprehend.

Out of 100:

11 are in Europe
5 are in North America
9 are in South America
15 are in Africa
60 are in Asia
49 live in the countryside
51 live in cities
75 have mobile phones
25 do not.
30 have internet access
70 do not have the availability to go online
7 received university education
93 did not attend college.
83 can read
17 are illiterate.
33 are Christians
22 are Muslims
14 are Hindus
7 are Buddhists
12 are other religions
12 have no religious beliefs.
26 live less than 14 years
66 died between 15 - 64 years of age
8 are over 65 years old.

If you have your own home, eat full meals & drink clean water, have a mobile phone, can surf the internet, and have gone to college, you are in the miniscule privileged lot (in the less than 7% category).

Amongst 100 persons in the world, only 8 live or exceed the age of 65.

If you are over 65 years old, be content & grateful. Cherish life, grasp the moment.

If you did not leave this world before the age of 64 like the 92 persons who have gone before you, you are already the blessed amongst mankind.

Take good care of your own health. Cherish every remaining moment.

If you think you are suffering memory loss, don't get too concerned too quickly.....

In the following analysis the French Professor Bruno Dubois, Director of the Institute of Memory and Alzheimer's Disease (IMMA) at La Pitié-Salpêtrière - Paris Hospitals, addresses the subject in a rather reassuring way:

"If anyone is aware of their memory problems, they do not have Alzheimer's."

It often happens in people 60 years and older that they complain that they lack memory. "The information is always in the brain, it is the "processor" that is lacking."

This could be "Anosognosia", maybe, or just temporary forgetfulness.

Half of people 60 and older have some symptoms that are due to age rather than disease. The most common cases are:

- forgetting the name of a person,
- going to a room in the house and not remembering why we were going there,
- a blank memory for a movie title or actor,
- a waste of time searching where we left our glasses or keys ..

After 60 years most people have such a difficulty, which indicates that it is not a disease but rather a characteristic due to the passage of years ..

Many people are concerned about these oversights, hence the importance of the following statements:

1."Those who are conscious of being forgetful have no serious problem of memory."
2."Those who suffer from a memory illness or Alzheimer's, are not aware of what is happening."

Professor Bruno Dubois, Director of IMMA, reassures the majority of people concerned about their oversights:

"The more we complain about memory loss, the less likely we are to suffer from memory sickness."

Source: Flashlight 228

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101 ships spread across 1,000 miles waiting for berth space at LA and Long Beach

Sam Chambers December 14, 2021

Out of sight, yet growing day by day, the number of containerships straddling the Pacific shoreline waiting for berths to open up at Los Angeles and Long Beach is now in excess of 100.

Port of Los Angeles

Spread out across 1,000 miles of North American coastline, stretching deep into Mexico, there are 101 boxships anchored or loitering, waiting for space at America's twin top gateways, according to the latest data from the Marine Exchange of Southern California. The typical pre-pandemic fortnight's passage for ships transiting from Asia to North America is now soaking up enormous capacity with some voyages taking longer than 45 days to berth.

Last month, American authorities pushed the vessel parking lot away from the California coast, asking ships to idle some 150 miles from the coastline. While surfers at Newport Beach, south of Los Angeles, are no longer looking at an armada of container tonnage, the volume of backed up vessels has continued to swell.

The latest data from the Marine Exchange of Southern California shows there are 101 containerships backed up – 30 ships anchored or loitering inside Southern California waters, plus 71 slow-speed-steaming or loitering outside the designated safety and air quality area.

"Could you imagine the risk if the 101 container ship backup were all within 40 miles of LA/LB tonight in a rainy storm? Now, they are spread out 1,000 miles, including many in the relatively calm waters south off the coast of Mexico," a Facebook post from the exchange stated yesterday.

By last night, authorities had actually cleared all ships anchored off Los Angeles and Long Beach in preparation for a big incoming storm.

Highlighting the extreme waiting time for ships across the Pacific trade lane, Sal Mercogliano, an associate professor at Campbell University in North Carolina, pointed towards the *Navios Amarillo* waiting off Baja, Mexico, and the *Maersk Esmeralda*s waiting off Xiamen in the latest video from his popular *What's Going on With Shipping* YouTube series.

The 4,250 teu *Navios Amarillo* left the South Korean port of Busan on November 17, and is currently anchored in Mexican waters with a scheduled berthing in Los Angeles on January 2, making for a 46-day transit.

Showing the scale of the extraordinary backup on the Pacific, the 13,000 teu *Maersk Esmeraldas* left the port of Xiamen two days ago and remains at anchor not far from the Chinese coastline, with a scheduled arrival in Los Angeles on January 11, making for a month's transit time.

The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach yesterday announced that the planned container excess dwell fee has been put on hold for another week. The fine was first mooted in October but has yet to be introduced.

Source: Splash 211214

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Japan Plans to Double Military Spending in rush to Bolster Air and Sea Defences

November 27, 2021

By Tim Kelly TOKYO,(Reuters)

Japan plans to add $6.75 billion to its already record annual military spending, in a rush to bolster air and maritime defences as it becomes more concerned about threats posed by China and North Korea.

SAGAMI BAY, Japan – The Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) helicopter destroyer, *JS Kurama* (DDH 144), leads ships from the JMSDF during the Fleet Review rehearsal. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Dominique Pineiro)

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government on Friday approved the outlay as part of a supplementary budget. While such additions to defence spending are common, the 774 billion yen that lawmakers will be asked to approve is the largest amount ever, according to Japan's Ministry of Defence.

"As the security environment around Japan worsens at unprecedented speed, our urgent task is to accelerate the implementation of various projects," the defence ministry said in its spending proposal.

The cash injection will let Japan, three months earlier than planned, upgrade surface to air missile launchers on islands at the edge of the East China Sea and Patriot PAC-3 missile batteries elsewhere that are the last line of defence against any incoming North Korean warheads.

China's increasing pressure on Taiwan is causing jitters in Japan because Beijing's control of the island would bring Chinese forces within around 100 kilometres (62 miles) of its territory and would threaten key maritime trade routes that supply Japan with oil and other goods. It would also provide China with bases for unfettered access to the western Pacific.

The extra spending will also let Japan more quickly acquire anti-submarine missiles, maritime patrol planes and military cargo jets, the defence ministry said.

The additional military outlay comes after Kishida's ruling party in October included an almost doubling defence spending to 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) in election pledges.

For decades the pacifist nation has stuck to a policy of keeping defence spending within 1% of GDP, easing concern both at home and overseas about any revival of the militarism that led Japan into World War Two.

The additional spending plan, approved by Kishida's government on Friday, also includes pre-payments to defence contractors for equipment to help them deal with coronavirus pandemic disruptions that have hurt their finances.

The proposed supplemental spending combined with defence outlays approved for the year to March 31 comes to about 1.3% of Japan's GDP. ($1 = 114.6300 yen)

Reporting by Tim Kelly; Editing by Kim Coghill

Source; gCaptain 211129 —oo00oo--

2021 review: The Year of the Green Dot

Sam Chambers December 20, 2021

It's been the year of the green dot for me covering shipping in 2021. Scanning MarineTraffic (other vessel tracking service providers are available) for tales of congestion has become a daily ritual. Said Covid-linked ship queues propelled container shipping to record earnings, while also snaring many thousands of crews in an ongoing work purgatory. LNG shipping also enjoyed new highs in 2021, while dry bulk was able to cash in on its best year since the global financial crisis.

The massed green dots on my screen and out to sea in southern California also highlighted just how frail and no longer fit for purpose American logistics infrastructure has become. The yawning gap in productivity between the American quayside and across the Pacific in Asia is something that will require hundreds of millions of dollars to remedy.

In 21 years of covering this industry, 2021 was the first year where friends and family finally 'got' shipping. Starting with the *Ever Given*, then rapidly following up with plenty of headlines about bare shop shelves, suddenly the world was awash with shipping experts. Shipping was in the spotlight, a place historically it has gone to great lengths to avoid. The ramifications for this new found interest in our

industry are going to be greater scrutiny and oversight, something we'll be covering closely next year.

For *Splash*, we've welcomed new writers and readers this year – our mission going into 2022 is the same as when this title was founded – to provide an impartial, expert snapshot of global shipping. For an irreverent view of the industry look no further than resident cartoonist, The Freaky Wave below. Wishing all our readers a happy 2022.

The next issue of Daily Splash, our free newsletter, will be published on January 4.

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