

NORTH P&I CLUB ADVISES MEMBERS ON HOW TO MAKE CHIEF MATES INTO MASTERS

25 OCTOBER 2016

North P&I Club has published detailed advice for its shipowner members on how ensure a smooth and successful promotion of their chief mates to the all-important role of master. The advice appears in the latest issue of the Club's loss prevention newsletter *Signals*, which is published today (25 October 2016).

Deputy loss prevention director Colin Gillespie says, 'Once a shipowner has selected one or more chief officers for promotion to captain, a comprehensive programme of training and coaching should be put in place to ensure they are fully prepared to assume command. In addition to achieving the necessary STCW certification, the programme should include learning about mentoring, pastoral care and their over-riding safety duties under SOLAS.'

Gillespie says all masters need to understand how to be good mentors, enabling them to pass on their valuable experience to officers and crew and thereby improve job competence throughout their ships. 'Chief officers chosen for promotion will have already benefited from being mentored by masters and other officers, but they should be given specific training in mentoring skills to ensure the process continues.'

He says captains also need to be able to provide good leadership and pastoral care. 'This is essential to ensure crewmembers are happy and enjoy their work. Chief officers in line for promotion should therefore have training on promoting and championing good pastoral care on board. Pastoral care is not rocket science: it's simply a case of creating a strong on-board "family", with the master at the head.'

Thirdly Gillespie says that all would-be masters must fully understand their over-riding responsibilities under SOLAS for the safety of people and the environment. 'SOLAS V regulation 34-1 states that masters are free to take any decision which, in their professional judgement, is necessary for the safety of life at sea and protection of the marine environment. Understanding this all-powerful duty needs to be a vital part of preparing chief officers for command.'

In conclusion he reminds shipowners that running ships is a joint task between the on-board management team and the ship operations team ashore. 'Both teams need to contribute to training and coaching chief officers for command. The more this becomes part of the safety culture of the company, the better prepared chief officers will be to make the big step up to captain.'

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Notes to editors

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1. **Signals** issue 105 can be downloaded from North's website at <http://www.nepia.com/publications/loss-prevention-publications/signals/>.

2. **North P&I Club** is a leading global marine insurer providing P&I, FD&D, war risks and ancillary insurance to 131 million GT of owned tonnage. North acquired Sunderland Marine in February 2014 and formed the North Group. Through Sunderland Marine, North is also a leading insurer of fishing vessels, small craft and aquaculture risks. The Standard and Poor's 'A' rated club is based in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK with regional offices in Greece, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore and Sunderland Marine offices worldwide. North is a leading member of the International Group of P&I Clubs (IG), with 11.5% of the IG's owned tonnage. The 13 IG clubs provide liability cover for approximately 90% of the world's ocean-going tonnage and, as a member of the IG, North protects and promotes the interests of the international shipping industry. For further information visit: www.nepia.com.