

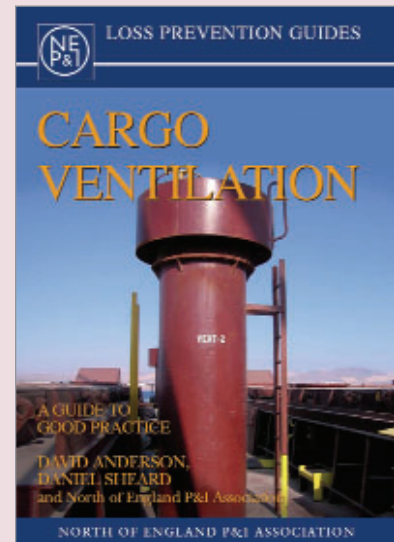
New cargo ventilation guide published

Even experienced mariners are sometimes uncertain when to ventilate cargo spaces, and the situation is often further confused by the demands of charterers and shippers. To provide practical advice to ships' officers and ship operators, and answer some of the questions that often arise, North of England has published a unique new guide entitled *Cargo Ventilation – A Guide to Good Practice*. It consists of sections giving a quick reference, practical guidance and practical considerations as well as the scientific

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background for those who want more detailed information. It also clarifies some of the myths surrounding ventilation, such as whether to ventilate at night or in the rain.

Copies of the guide are enclosed with this issue of Signals being sent to Members and appropriate types of entered ships. Members requiring additional copies of the guide should contact the risk management department. Email: risk.management@nepia.com



Cabin fever rises

The psychological pressures on modern seafarers, which may result from factors such as time spent away from their families, an increasing regulatory workload, restriction of shore leave in many parts of the world and possible worries about criminalisation, appear to be increasing. This issue looks at some of the symptoms and actions that can be taken when a crew member experiences problems.

See page 2 for full story

More problem cargoes

A number of potential problem cargoes are considered in this issue of *Signals*. The ongoing dangers associated with the carriage of direct reduced iron (DRI) and its derivatives are discussed. The description and labelling of dangerous goods in containers are also considered.

See pages 4 and 5 for full story

Club begins RSS news feed

North of England has always prided itself on being an extension to Members' offices, now it is going one step further and delivering service directly to every Member's desktop. The Association now provides an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed covering the latest press releases, Club circulars and industry news articles. This will enable anyone with an internet connection to receive up-to-date information directly from the Association without having to look for it.

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Charterparty arbitration clauses

A key part of any charterparty is its arbitration clause. In this issue guidance is given on points to bear in mind when agreeing an arbitration clause. The usefulness of the LMAA Small Claims Procedure for dealing with straightforward disputes is also highlighted.

See page 3 for full story

Collisions with anchored ships

Some think the only collision-avoidance precautions needed by ships at anchor are the showing of proper light and shape signals, and the making of appropriate sound signals. However, if a vessel underway is failing to keep clear, good seamanship might also require an anchored vessel to take whatever action will best aid to avoid collision. This issue discusses the precautions that should be taken when at anchor.

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Cabin fever: a growing cause for concern

In recent years the Association has noted an increase in incidents involving crew members who appear to be suffering from some form of psychological difficulty. This can range from mild anxiety attacks to aggressive behaviour to fellow crewmembers, including extreme physical violence. More tragically it can lead to suicide.

It is not clear what the main causes are, but a possible factor is the length of time spent away from home and sometimes an inability to get relieved from a ship. At the same time, there may be family pressure to remain at sea longer in order to earn more money and continue sending funds home.

In the modern world of shipping, turnaround times in port are also much quicker, creating more work for both officers and crew and less opportunity to relax, resulting in fatigue and stress. Another possibility, which has been discussed widely in recent years, is increasing anxiety about the criminalisation of seafarers. Whatever the cause, mental illness must be taken extremely seriously both to protect individual crewmembers, but also their colleagues on board.

Physical illness will cause many people to feel upset or irritable, but it can be expected that their temper improves along with their health. True mental illness occurs independently of any physical ailment. Normally a difference in behaviour can be seen, ranging from just slightly unusual to completely abnormal, though the person suffering may not be aware that he is acting oddly.

Diagnosing mental illness

It is very difficult to diagnose mental illness in detail and all that can be done at sea is to recognise the condition, handle the situation correctly and deliver the patient into skilled hands at the earliest opportunity. This can involve a great deal of time and effort with someone who may be irrational, violent or even suicidal.

Anxiety – An anxious person is usually aware of his state of mind, but the situation may have got out of control; he may find it difficult to sleep and may have lost his appetite. Encouraging the crewmember to share his problems can help enormously. It is important to listen sympathetically to what he has to say, but also to remain objective and apply common sense.

Depression – Depression can be considered in two forms. The first has an obvious cause, such as the death of a close friend. The second kind of depression occurs without apparent cause; the symptoms are similar and can range from feeling low-spirited to being suicidal. The person may be emotionally up one day and down the next to the extent of being morose and even sullen. It may be difficult to get a clear story from a depressed crewmember because he simply wants to be left alone.

Very depressed people may commit suicide and it is therefore essential to recognise those at risk so that correct precautionary measures can be taken. A natural progression of questioning about the patient's general feelings might establish whether suicide has been contemplated.

Obvious insanity – Any seafarer with very serious and obvious mental illness will require a great deal of care and attention. It is wise to assume that their behaviour may be so unpredictable as to become violent or suicidal, possibly without provocation or warning. Professional medical advice should be sought as a matter of urgency.

Providing help and support

Anyone who appears to be deeply depressed or who talks of suicide should never be left alone. In practice this can be difficult, but the crewmember should be confined to a cabin and remain there under supervision. The deck is a dangerous place and the ship's side may be a temptation. Obvious precautions should also be taken regarding the removal of medicines, potentially sharp objects and items such as string and rope. Again professional medical advice should be sought as soon as possible.

Many crewmembers who are feeling stressed or anxious while at sea find that the Mission to Seafarers can be of great help. The Mission to Seafarers is a missionary society of the Anglican Church but cares for the welfare of all seafarers regardless of nationality or faith. The Mission runs centres in over 100 ports and has honorary chaplains in some 200 other ports.

More information can be obtained about the Mission to Seafarers, the centres they run and the services they offer from their website: www.missiontoseamen.org

Personal protective equipment: use it!

The Association is still witness to many accidents which could have been prevented, or injuries minimised, if personal protective equipment was in use at the time. Often individual equipment issued to all crew such as boiler suits, safety shoes, safety helmets and eye protection will be operational, but additional equipment relevant to a specific task may not have been fully considered.

When carrying out job planning, each task should be assessed and appropriate levels of protective equipment established before the job is commenced. Non-routine duties may carry additional risks, and a permit-to-work system may be appropriate, where the safety officer or deck/engine officer must approve the method or work. For example, such a system is relevant to electrical work, entry into enclosed spaces and working aloft.

Working overboard and aloft

Lifejackets, safety harnesses and safety lines should be considered for all overboard operations or working at height. In a recent incident a crewmember who had been working without any

lifejacket or safety harness, while attempting to secure a pilot ladder, was lost overboard.

Entering enclosed spaces

Before entering enclosed spaces, as part of the proper entry procedures, consideration must be given to whether ventilation or use of breathing equipment is needed, and whether appropriate gas detectors are required for oxygen, flammable or toxic gases, as well as contingency procedures to employ in an emergency.

Working on deck

Working on deck can involve numerous hazards such as restricted vision. Shore personnel may not be aware of on-board procedures such as cargo operations, all of which should be subject to a risk assessment. Reflective jackets and portable radios may be appropriate as well as proper communications with shore staff such as stevedores.

In a recent incident, a crewmember was badly injured during container operations on deck during darkness hours. He was wearing a hooded jacket which restricted his view and did not have a high-visibility

jacket. There was also limited communication between the deck officer and the stevedores, who failed to see the crewmember.

All crew should be familiar with available personal protective equipment on board, and encouraged to use it to avoid unnecessary injuries.





Myth or truth?

Eating carrots improves eyesight

It is widely believed that eating a diet rich in carrots will improve vision, especially at night-time. This can be very important to the would-be seafarer as generally excellent eyesight is required, most importantly for potential officers of the watch.

The Association has even heard stories from crewmembers who were actively encouraged to eat carrots by their parents and grandparents before pursuing a career at sea. Unfortunately however, for those who dutifully and reluctantly ate their carrots in the hope that they would be able to see better, even on the darkest of nights, the story is largely a myth.

It is true that carrots are rich in beta-carotene, which is essential for sight. The body converts beta-carotene to vitamin A, and an extreme vitamin A deficiency can cause blindness. However, only a small amount of beta-carotene is necessary for good vision. If a person is not deficient in vitamin A, their vision will not improve no matter how many more carrots they eat.

Nonetheless, carrots still form part of a healthy diet. On the other hand, ingestion of excess vitamin A can cause toxicity, which can include symptoms such as orange colouring of the skin, hair loss, weight loss, fatigue and headaches!



Check your charterparty arbitration clauses

In charterparty disputes one of the first things lawyers in the Association's FD&D Department look for is the arbitration clause. Members should thus ensure that these clauses in their charterparties cover what they want them to do before a dispute arises.

There are many types of arbitration clauses in use. Although better than no clause at all, a simple clause such as 'arbitration in London, English law to apply' is treated as a reference to a sole arbitrator to be appointed by agreement between the parties. If one party refuses to cooperate, an application to the High Court in London is necessary for a judge to make the appointment, leading to delay.

BIMCO/LMAA clause

One example is the BIMCO/London Maritime Arbitrators Association (LMAA) arbitration clause. It is a shortened version of the BIMCO Standard Dispute Resolution Clause that appears in the recommended clauses section of the Association's P&I Rule Book.

Some points to note about the BIMCO/LMAA Clause are as follows – and these should be kept in mind when agreeing to it.

- The clause specifies the law to apply to the contract.
- Any dispute is to be referred to arbitration in London in accordance with the Arbitration Act 1996 or any update of that act.
- The procedure of the arbitration is governed by the LMAA terms current at the time when the arbitration proceedings are commenced.
- There are three arbitrators, with each party to appoint their own arbitrator.
- If the other party ignores the request to appoint their arbitrator, there is a default provision for appointing your arbitrator as sole arbitrator (the Arbitration Act 1996 has a similar provision but with a further seven-day notice).
- Where the claim does not exceed US\$50,000 and any counterclaim does not exceed US\$50,000, the arbitration will be conducted in accordance with the LMAA Small Claims Procedure (SCP).

LMAA small claims procedure

The Association considers that a reference to the LMAA Small Claims Procedure can be a valuable weapon on behalf of Members as it is quick and inexpensive. It has the following benefits.

- The arbitrator's fees are limited to £1,500. Where there is a counterclaim which exceeds the amount of the claim, there is an additional £750.
- Under English law, a losing party in an arbitration has to pay a large proportion of the legal costs of the winning party. Here, if a party loses the arbitration, the liability for the winning party's legal costs is limited to £2,000 which is a modest amount in most jurisdictions.
- It is determined by a sole arbitrator to be agreed between the parties or the President of the LMAA will make the appointment.
- The respondent has 28 days to serve a defence, the claimant must serve a reply and defence to counterclaim (if any) within 21 days, and the respondent can serve a reply to the defence of any counterclaim within 14 days. Extensions of time are very limited. There can be further submissions by agreement with the arbitrator. All relevant documents are attached to each submission.

Therefore, the Small Claims Procedure deals with many of the common complaints made about arbitration, in particular delay and expense. On the other hand, although the US\$50,000 limit can be altered to any figure that the parties agree on, the Small Claims Procedure is intended for relatively uncomplicated disputes with short submissions and limited documentation. The parties can expect a quick commercial decision.

Members requiring further information about the LMAA Small Claims Procedure arbitration clause should visit the London Maritime Arbitrators Association website: www.lmaa.org.uk

Incompetent stevedores: have charterers run out of excuses?

Members could soon see a reduction in claims for cargo damaged by stevedores appointed by charterers following a recent arbitration award.

As previously discussed in *Signals*, though stevedores are often appointed by or on behalf of charterers, their negligence is often deemed to be the responsibility of owners so far as damage to or loss of cargo is concerned.

Charterers are usually liable for stevedores' negligence only if it can be shown that they appointed negligent stevedores. In the past, it has been generally assumed that this meant competent

or incompetent stevedores in the context of the general standard of stevedoring at that particular port. This would mean that charterers are not liable if they appoint incompetent stevedores at a port where the general level of competence of stevedores is low.

Objective definition of competence

However, a recent arbitration award has thrown doubt on that assumption. The tribunal asked itself what a 'competent' stevedore was, and accepted a dictionary definition of competency as being 'the ability and skill to do what is needed'. The stevedores in question stole and damaged the bagged sugar

cargo, tearing nearly 3% of the bags. The tribunal accepted the owner's position that stevedores who do this cannot be regarded as being competent.

The decision suggests an objective global standard of competence, not a standard which depends on the general quality of stevedores in the port concerned. In particular it should assist all Members carrying bagged cargoes, both sugar and rice, into ports where the standard of stevedoring still leaves much to be desired.

Members requiring further information should contact Peter Scott at the Association.



Carriage of direct reduced iron (DRI) and its derivatives



With the recent publication of the 2004 edition of the IMO Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code) repeating long-standing entries for DRI and HBI, and of a further draft IMO circular addressing for the first time some of the DRI sub-products involved in some recent DRI casualties, it is timely to review measures necessary to safely carry DRI and its derivatives.

Direct reduced iron (DRI)

DRI is produced by passing hot reducing gases such as hydrogen, methane and carbon monoxide over iron ore (oxide), which is usually in the form of pellets or lumps. Although the process is conducted at high temperature, this is still substantially below the melting point of iron. This means that the lumps and pellets retain their original shape, but are considerably lighter owing to the removal of oxygen from the ore. Therefore, the pellets and lumps have a very porous structure, which makes the material extremely reactive and prone to re-oxidation on contact with air and/or moisture.

Hot briquetted iron (HBI)

Alternatively, the pellets and lumps can be compressed at temperatures exceeding 650°C to form briquettes. These are commonly referred to as hot briquetted iron (HBI) or hot moulded briquettes and may pose a lesser hazard than DRI.

DRI Fines

The process of bringing iron ore into a plant, storing and transporting it, then conveying it to and through various screens and furnaces during the DRI production process, (and then through the hot-briquetting facility if HBI is being produced) and finally to finished product storage, generates copious quantities of dust or 'fines'. These fines, created as a by-product of DRI/HBI production are usually stored separately from the finished DRI or HBI product, but, as they have commercial value for steel making, there is a market for shipping them. Fines are not normally compressed into large cohesive briquettes and remain porous like DRI.

Consequently they can exhibit self-heating qualities. They may also generate hydrogen in sufficient quantities to form explosive atmospheres, even in holds that have been subject to natural ventilation through conventional cargo hold vents.

Hazards of DRI

The principal hazards of all cargoes of DRI and its derivatives are twofold.

Firstly, they will react with the oxygen present in the air, thereby producing heat. This effect can run away in spectacular fashion, leading to auto-oxidation (burning) of the iron, in which the stow becomes incandescent as the temperatures approach 1,000°C. This tendency is successfully prevented in most practical applications by densifying the DRI pellets at temperatures exceeding 650°C to produce HBI. Whereas self-heating is dangerous and alarming, it is a gradual and progressive event that can often be diagnosed early, affording masters time to obtain advice from ashore and institute suitable safety measures.

The second hazard is again related to the reactivity of iron, this time with moisture or water. The result is the generation of hydrogen gas, which is explosive over a very wide range of concentrations and, in practical situations, displays an alarming readiness to be ignited. Explosions of hydrogen in air are extremely violent and rapid and an unfortunate master has no time in which to react to an explosion.

Carriage of DRI, HBI and Fines

(A) DRI

The common factor to both hazards is the oxygen present in the atmosphere. It is clear that the exclusion of oxygen, or its reduction to a suitably low level, will eliminate the possibilities of self-heating or of a hydrogen explosion occurring. It follows that carrying a cargo of DRI or its derivatives under an inert gas blanket, and maintaining that blanket throughout the voyage, is an acceptable method to carry the product in

safety. Use of inert gas is one of two alternative methods for the carriage of DRI which a shipper is required to designate under the BC Code entry for Direct Reduced Iron (B) in Appendix 1. The second method requires the DRI to have been subjected to an oxidation-inhibiting and corrosion-inhibiting process approved by the competent authority as providing effective protection against dangerous reaction with seawater or air under shipping conditions. However the Association's current advice is that no satisfactory inhibition process is known and therefore, if this method is proposed, Members should carefully check for approval by a competent authority. The BC Code also permits the competent authority to waive or vary either method for a specific voyage due to applicable conditions, but, if shippers claim to have permission not to use an inert gas blanket, Members should carefully check the conditions relating to such permission.

(B) HBI

With HBI, because of its greater stability and resistance to auto-oxidation, carriage under an inert atmosphere is not required in the BC Code under the entry for Direct Reduced Iron (A) in Appendix 1. Moreover, the Code permits open storage and accepts that the cargo may therefore be wet prior to loading, although loading and transfer during rain is prohibited. Unfortunately, whereas auto-oxidation might not be a realistic hazard, the material will still produce hydrogen and the BC Code requires provision of adequate ventilation to address the potential hazard. As the generation of hydrogen is slow with correctly produced HBI, the BC Code does not require monitoring of hydrogen quantities. However, the Association has become aware of hydrogen being generated more rapidly with certain HBI cargoes and therefore monitoring the gas concentrations in the holds with a detector that is suitable for hydrogen is a wise additional precaution with all HBI cargoes.

(C) Fines

The carriage of fines was discussed at the 10th session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (DSC) meeting in September 2005, following which a draft circular that will form the basis for an IMO DSC Circular was issued entitled "Carriage of DRI and HBI Fines".

The draft DSC circular recognises that fines referred to as "DRI fines" created during the production of DRI that is not hot-briquetted should be carried in the same manner as other DRI cargoes, ie DRI pellets, lumps, etc.

However, the draft DSC circular also suggests that the carriage requirement for a separate commodity designated "HBI Fines" may differ from those for DRI/DRI Fines. A limit of 5% of fines is imposed in the BC Code for HBI cargoes, suggesting that a cargo that contains more than 5% of fines should not be classed as HBI (under the BC Code entry for



Direct Reduced Iron (A)). Despite this, the draft DSC circular notes that if produced after the briquetting process, the HBI fines may be in a safe form and could be treated in a similar manner to the BC Code entry for HBI briquettes. Nevertheless, the draft DSC circular goes on to recognise that fines, confusingly also called "HBI Fines", that originate from a stage in the HBI production process prior to the hot-briquetting process must be carried in the same way as DRI/DRI Fines.

The draft DSC circular also refers to some shippers' practice of using trade names or abbreviated names, further confusing the position, and advises that owners should be cautious of any bulk cargo offered for shipment under such names and that owners should insist on shippers providing a full product description, including technical names.

The draft DSC circular concludes with minimum recommendations including the monitoring of hydrogen, oxygen and moisture contents of the holds every 6 hours during carriage, and the advice to consider using either a continuous ventilation regime with additional air driven ventilators, or keeping the cargo holds under an inert gas blanket during the voyage.

Accordingly, a Member should be cautious if asked to carry any DRI fines cargo or HBI fines cargo other than under an inert gas blanket, and should enquire carefully before agreeing to do so.

The Association is very grateful to Dr Alan Mitcheson, Principal Member, Dr J H Burgoyne & Partners LLP, for providing information for this article.

Members requiring further information about the draft DSC circular should contact the IMO. Website: www.imo.org

Cargo descriptions and labels – a reminder

Recent reported incidents involving fires on container ships serve as a reminder that containers may carry dangerous cargoes that no-one on board knows anything about.

Fortunately, the Association has not experienced any significant incidents as a result of dangerous goods in containers, but that does not necessarily mean that all dangerous goods shipped in containers have been properly declared – or are properly labelled.

Avoiding mis-description

Shippers are only likely to mis-declare the contents of a container where they have reason to do so, such as if the contents are dangerous and would therefore attract a higher freight rate or special restrictions on carriage.

There are no quick and easy recommendations as to what carriers can do to stop this practice. The most important preventative step that carriers can take is to ensure that they have knowledge of the shippers. Special care should be taken with shipments from new shippers – and this should happen in any event as part of carriers' booking procedures.

Another recommendation is that carriers should not accept a generic description such as 'general cargo' on bills of lading. Such a description is no longer accepted by some customs authorities and owners should use this opportunity to extend the restriction on generic cargo descriptions throughout their trades as a matter of 'best practice'.

Ensuring correct labelling

In addition to accurate descriptions, it is important to remember that all cargoes and containers need to be properly labelled.

The Association has recently had an incident of a Member being fined about US\$60,000 by port authorities at a discharge port because containers did not carry proper labels and placards (enlarged labels) for the goods inside. This was a negotiated settlement and the port authorities could have fined the ship a much larger amount.

The IMO International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code requirements for proper labels and placards to be shown on goods and on containers are in Chapter 5.3 of the Code. Basically they require that the relevant placards are fixed to the outside of containers with one on each side and one on each end of the container, and also that the UN number, or sometimes the proper shipping name, is shown either on each placard or on a label beside it.

Once the container has been unpacked, any placards should be removed. Labels and placards can be easily purchased from ship chandlers. Though a carrier might assume that it is the responsibility of the shipper to attach the proper placards, the port authorities do not always accept this and, as in the recent case, may impose the fine on the carrier or ship owner.

Members who require further information should contact the Association's risk management Department.

Dealing with containers of valuable cargo

Members in trades where containers of valuable cargo are shipped on a regular basis have often asked for advice on how best to carry these containers. Valuable cargoes can range from bullion (gold and other precious metals in ingots) and specie (currency and coinage) to cigarettes and liquor. The Association has reviewed a number of loss-prevention plans over the years and takes this opportunity to set out what it believes to be best practice in this area.

Delivery

Delivery of containers to the ship should, ideally, be directly by truck from the shipper's premises to the ship's side where the gantry crane can lift it directly from the truck onto the ship. This gives the shortest possible time of exposure of the container and its contents to dangers of theft or pilferage.

Where direct delivery is not possible, storage at a container terminal or similar should be kept to the minimum period possible. If storage is required, the carrier should try to agree with the shipper that risks of storage are for the shipper's account. Necessarily, this means that there would have to be an agreement whereby the carrier becomes responsible for the cargo only when it is loaded into the ship. This may also require some form of three-way agreement between the shipper, the container terminal operator and the carrier.

In all cases, whether the container is stored ashore or is delivered directly to the ship, it should be inspected by a third party inspection company prior to being loaded on board. Surveyors should check that the shipper's seal is intact and also that the container is neither damaged nor shows signs of suspicious recent repairs. Surveyors should, in all cases, fix their own seal to the container immediately they inspect it – there should, therefore, be two seals on the container once surveyors have inspected it.

Stowage

Stowage of the container, whether in a container stack ashore or on the ship, should be arranged so that the doors of the container cannot be opened – for instance by ensuring that the doors face inwards into the container stack rather than out into an access way or open area. On deck or ashore, the container should not be stacked any lower than the second tier and should be stowed randomly in the stacks. The container should then be inspected twice a day to ensure that the seals are intact, that the doors are blocked from opening and the container has not been damaged or shows signs of a quick repair. If under-deck, the container should be stowed with the doors directly facing a bulkhead so that no access to the container is possible.

Discharge

At the port of discharge, the process should be reversed with independent surveyors inspecting the

container and fixing their own seal immediately upon the container being landed. Preferably, the container should be landed directly onto a truck and taken from the ship's side to the receiver's warehouse. Where this is not possible, it should be stowed ashore as per the above criteria and inspected again when the container is delivered to the receiver. Again, it is preferable that the carrier agrees with the receiver that any storage ashore should be at the receiver's risk.

Where any of the inspections gives surveyors cause for concern that the contents of the container may have been tampered with, they should immediately fix another seal and notify all parties including the owners, stevedores, container terminal operators, customs, and cargo interests seeking a joint inspection. The container should, if possible, not be taken to a general stack until the joint survey has been carried out.

Members should note that under the Association's P&I Rule 19(17)(G) there may be no recovery in respect of loss or damage to rare and valuable cargo unless the contract and details of carriage have been approved by the Managers.

Members requiring further information should contact Peter Scott or Belinda Ward at the Association.



Collision avoidance when at anchor

One might think that compliance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREG) when a ship is at anchor would be restricted to Parts C and D of the rules, which cover exhibiting appropriate light and shape signals and making appropriate sound signals.

However, many aspects of Part A and B of the rules can also apply, and should certainly be considered when conducting a risk assessment of the intended anchoring.

Proper lookout

Every vessel should at all times maintain a proper lookout. The need to appraise the situation fully includes monitoring the ship's position to establish whether it is dragging its anchor as well as to establish whether risk of collision exists with other vessels.

Ordinary practice of seamen

Ships must not neglect to take *any precaution which may be required by the ordinary practice of seamen*. Good seamanship would probably include a vessel underway being expected to keep clear of a vessel at anchor.

But what happens if a vessel underway fails to keep clear and a collision with a vessel at anchor cannot be avoided if only the vessel underway takes action?

Under these circumstances it may be that good seamanship might also require the anchored vessel to take whatever action will best aid to avoid a collision.

Action to avoid collision

Any action to avoid collision shall, if the circumstances allow, be made in ample time and with due regard to the observance of good seamanship.

If the circumstances allow, a ship at anchor could be expected to take action to avoid collision by either using the engines to move the ship or by releasing more of the anchor cable to drop astern. Failure to take these actions could affect the subsequent apportionment of blame.

In restricted visibility all power-driven vessels should have engines ready for immediate manoeuvre.

Summary

When on watch at anchor, officers should thus consider

- the need to keep a proper lookout according to COLREG Rule 5
- taking reasonable action under the circumstances to avoid collision
- keeping engines ready for immediate manoeuvre.

New safety poster on collision avoidance

The latest poster in North of England's hard-hitting 'If only...' series shows the consequences of not taking proper action to avoid a collision. The Association has looked at a number of recent collision incidents and the common factors in most include failing to keep a proper lookout or carry out a proper assessment of the risk of a collision, and failing to take early action to avoid a close-quarters situation.

The poster depicts the aftermath of a collision. *If only* the watch keeper had properly applied the rules contained in the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREG), this would not have happened.

A copy of the new 'If only...' poster accompanies this issue of Signals.



VISIT WWW.NEPIA.COM

Industry News is a proactive loss-prevention service provided for Members. News items are researched and selected on the basis that they will provide advice on which to base loss-prevention decisions.

Members can access Industry News from the direct link on the left-hand side of the Association's website at www.nepia.com

NEW AMENDMENTS TO SOLAS

A number of amendments to SOLAS entered into force on 1 July 2006. Some of these are summarised as follows.

- Lifeboats (except freefall) shall be launched for manoeuvring drills or turned out at abandon ship drills without crew on board (MSC.152(78)).
- New requirements are introduced for maintenance, testing and inspections of life saving equipment (MSC/Circ.1093).
- An immersion suit is required for every person on board (MSC.152(78)).
- Daily reports are to be sent by ships on international voyages (MSC.142(77)).
- A new regulation clarifies that owners and charterers should not restrict a master's decision necessary for safety of life at sea (MSC.153(78)).
- A revised Chapter XII of SOLAS is introduced – *Additional safety measures for bulk carriers* – that includes a ban on alternate hold loading and new standards and guidelines for inspection and maintenance (MSC.170(79)).

Members can obtain further details of many of these amendments Members from the Industry News pages at the Association's website, or by referring to the IMO publications cited above.

First emission control area enters into force

The world's first Sulphur (SO_x) Emission Control Area (SECA), which covers the Baltic Sea area, entered into force on 19 May 2006. Ships within the area must now comply with the provisions of MARPOL Annex VI, including using marine fuel with a maximum sulphur content of 1.5% by mass (m/m).

As reported in detail in the July 2005 Signals supplement on air pollution, MARPOL Annex VI – which provides new international regulations for prevention of air pollution from ships – was adopted on 26 September 1997 and entered into force on 19 May 2005.

Low sulphur fuel availability

The bunker supply industry has advised there is sufficient quantity of low-sulphur fuel available worldwide for the anticipated demand. However, owners and charterers should plan ahead to ensure that supplies are available when and where they are needed.

The main bunkering ports such as Singapore and Rotterdam are said to have low-sulphur fuel available. Ports in the Baltic are also reported to have the fuel widely available, though ships would have to transit the new SECA to reach those supplies.

Indications are that a price premium of US\$20–70 a tonne will have to be paid for marine fuel with a sulphur content of less than 1.5% (compared with fuel with less than 4.5%), depending on location and quality.

The Association is grateful to the International Bunker Industry Association (www.ibia.net) and Cockett Marine Oil (www.cockettgroup.com) for information contained in this article.

Members can view up to date information about all aspects of MARPOL Annex VI on the Industry News pages of the Association's website: www.nepia.com



IMO UPDATE: MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

The 81st session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) was held in May 2006 at IMO's headquarters in London. The MSC is IMO's senior technical body on safety matters and as such the agenda items at each session provide an indication of future areas of concern.

The MSC considered the report of an industry-wide working group formed to investigate fires and explosions on chemical and product tankers. Perhaps the most worrying aspect of the report is that no new hazards causing fires and explosions were identified. Existing control measures written into cargo operation procedures should be sufficient to control the risk, but it seems these procedures are still not being followed.

Other items to be monitored for future developments were as follows.

- A review of the principles for establishing safe manning levels for ships recognising that existing minimum standards may not reflect recent increased demands on ships' crews nor provide adequate cover to comply with International Labour Organisation requirements on seafarers' working hours.
- Proposals for International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations on the carriage of electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS) related to ship type and size and for International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) regulations on ECDIS training and familiarisation. A risk assessment for ship type and size has identified a significant cost and navigation benefit for many ships.



NEW AMENDMENTS TO IMDG AND STCW CODES

Amendments to some existing IMO codes were adopted at MSC 81.

- Amendments to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code are to be applied on a voluntary basis from 1 January 2007 and enter into force on 1 January 2008 (DSC10 Amendments 33-06).
- Amendments to the STCW code will be deemed accepted on 1 July 2007 and enter into force on 1 January 2008. The amendments include training of crew in launching/recovering operations of fast rescue boats and means of rescue in adverse weather conditions.

Visits to Members' offices

Over the last few months North of England's risk management team have continued to visit Members' offices to advise both shore-based and sea-going staff. Presentations and workshops have been given at Members' offices in Costa Rica, Dubai, France, Greece, Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, Philippines, Singapore, UK and USA.

Topics covered included admiralty claims, pollution, risk assessment and carriage of various cargoes.

A number of visits are being planned over the next few months including to China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico and Norway.



Pictures:

1 North of England staff at NITC training centre in Mahmoodabad, Iran

2 Delegates at Lumley Castle, UK

3 Delegates visiting a ship at PD Teesport, Middlesbrough, UK

P&I residential course 2006



The Association's annual residential course in P&I insurance and loss prevention, which took place in June 2006 at Lumley Castle near Newcastle, UK, was reported to be a great success by those who attended.

Some 30 delegates attended the course including people from Members' offices, correspondents, brokers, underwriters and serving sea staff from around the world including Germany, Greece, Japan, Singapore, Tunisia, Turkey and the UK.

Starting with a two-day introduction to shipping, which included ship visits at a local port, the course continued with an introduction to P&I insurance and concluded with four days of detailed workshops, supported by resources such as the ship-bridge simulator at South Tyneside College.

The course was once again fully subscribed and early reservation is recommended for places on the 2007 course.



Mariner and maritime law seminar

North of England continues to support the excellent seminars run for mariners in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK, by the Nautical Institute's North East Branch. The next event, on 10–11 November 2006, is entitled *Collision – Controlling the Chaos, the Master's Role*.

The seminar will focus on the legal position of masters immediately following a collision. Many shore-based personnel will seek to come on board in the aftermath of a collision – and the seminar aims to explain the numerous parties involved in a collision investigation. Speakers from various organisations, including ship managers, surveyors, salvors and media response, will present at what should be an informative and thought-provoking event.

The seminar will start at Friday lunchtime at the Hilton Newcastle-Gateshead hotel and continue until Saturday lunchtime. Over 150 overseas and UK delegates are expected to attend. A seminar dinner is included in the registration fee and Nautical Institute members are entitled to a discount.

A brochure and registration form is enclosed with this edition of *Signals*.

Delivering service directly to your desktop



North of England is now providing an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) news feed that enables Members with an internet connection to receive up-to-date information directly from the Association to their desktop without having to look for it.

RSS allows users to see the latest information from selected websites in one place, as soon as it is published, without having to remember to visit each site every day. North of England's service will keep Members and other interested parties up to date with the club's latest news.

The RSS service is the latest addition to a new range of electronic services for Members. The Association is already distributing an electronic news publication, *E News*, to Members by email. *E News* provides a monthly summary of recent news from the Association and contains a digest of industry news items, Club circulars and press releases from the previous month. *Signals* is also being distributed electronically on a quarterly basis to those on the *E News* circulation list.

A guide to using the new RSS service, and the news feed itself, can be obtained from the Association's website: www.nepia.com/rss

Members' shore or sea staff who wish to be added to the *E News* circulation list should send their contact details, including their name, position, company and email address to the Association using the dedicated *E News* email address: add.eneews@nepia.com

Signals Search 8

Questions

1. What vegetable may not improve your vision?
2. What is the acronym for North of England's new electronic news service?
3. Where has the first SECA just entered into force?
4. What work system should be used before working aloft?
5. What might be kept ready for immediate manoeuvre at anchor?
6. What is the acronym for the compressed briquette form of direct reduced iron?
7. What term is sometimes used for crew members who appear to be suffering from psychological difficulties?
8. The latest "If only ..." poster depicts what sort of incident?
9. What is the subject of the Association's latest guide book?

Find the answers to the questions in the wordsearch. GOOD LUCK!



- Signals Search is open to all readers of *Signals*.
- Send a photocopy of your completed search, along with your name and, if appropriate, name of ship, position on board, company and address to Denise Huddleston at the Association.

- All correct entries received by the closing date will be entered in a prize draw.
- Closing date Friday 25th August 2006.

The first correct entry drawn will receive a prize along with a limited edition statuette of our quiz master

"Bosun Bo". The next 5 correct entries drawn will each receive a statuette.

Details of the winner and runners-up will appear in the next edition of *Signals*.

Your copy of Signals

Copies of this *Signals* should contain the following enclosures:

- Ventilation – A guide to good practice (Members and selected entered ships)
- If only... poster (Members and entered ships)
- Mariner and maritime law seminar – brochure and registration form

Signals Search No.7

Winner: Captain Bob Ridge, Master MV "ALPINE GIRL", Mermaid Marine Management

Runners-up: Captain E Libron, Master MV "FRESIAN EXPRESS", Vroon BV • Mr Ian Maitland, Wallmans Lawyers, Adelaide, Australia
 • Mari Stewart, Risk Management Dept, NEPIA • U San Shwe Maung, 2nd Officer, MT "OCEAN NEPTUNE", Ocean Tankers • Mrs Vjera Bozanic, Croatia Insurance, Zagreb, Croatia

Answers to Signals Search 7

- 1 Kuala Lumpur
- 2 IMPA
- 3 Breakfast
- 4 Petcoke
- 5 BC Code
- 6 Conductivity
- 7 Passage plans
- 8 ILO
- 9 E News
- 10 Tour pour la Mer

• In this publication all references to the masculine gender are for convenience only and are also intended as a reference to the female gender. Unless the contrary is indicated, all articles are written with reference to English Law. However it should be noted that the content of this publication does not constitute legal advice and should not be construed as such. Members with appropriate cover should contact the Association's FD&D dept. for legal advice on particular matters.

• The purpose of the Association's loss prevention facility is to provide a source of information which is additional to that available to the maritime industry from regulatory, advisory, and consultative organisations. Whilst care is taken to ensure the accuracy of any information made available (whether orally or in writing and whether in the nature of guidance, advice, or direction) no warranty of accuracy is given and users of that information are expected to satisfy themselves that the information is relevant and suitable for the purposes to which it is applied. In no circumstances whatsoever shall the Association be liable to any person whatsoever for any loss or damage whensoever or howsoever arising out of or in connection with the supply (including negligent supply) or use of information (as described above).

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