Britannia

The Britannia Steam Ship Insurance Association Limited

RISK WATCH



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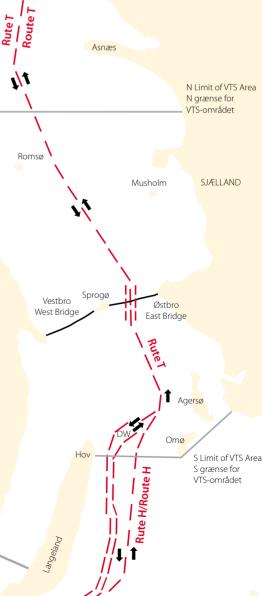
One of our Member's ships recently became the 23rd in three years to run aground on the Hatter Reef at the entrance to the Baltic Sea.

Thankfully no life was lost and no pollution occurred as a result but there was clearly potential for disaster. The frequency of the groundings, nearly always involving unpiloted, north-bound, large bulk carriers has caused some controversy in that these common circumstances point to an obvious solution i.e. the utilisation of pilots. Nevertheless, the route is not a compulsory pilotage area and there are no plans to change this situation. This may have more to do with political sensitivity than the purely navigational and safety considerations of transiting the Great Belt. The significant number of groundings clearly illustrates the difficulties of navigating this particular stretch of water. Accordingly, there is great benefit in utilising a pilot even though the use of one is not compulsory. Both Intertanko and Intercargo are co-operating in highlighting to their membership the value of taking pilots through the Great Belt.

Members should note that this peculiar circumstance, where a particularly difficult area of navigation is declared a non-compulsory pilotage area for essentially non-navigational reasons, may exist in other areas of the world. Masters should not therefore always assume that non-compulsory pilotage areas are easier to navigate safely.

Diagram of the Great Belt





Navigation and Seamanship

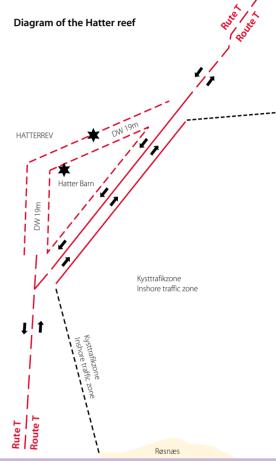


Non-compulsory pilotage route claims another victim (continued)

A useful publication available from the Danish Maritime Authority website 'Navigation through Danish Waters' (www.frv.dk/en/ifm/ navigation/navigation ntdw.htm) includes the IMO Resolution MSC 138(76) Recommendation on Navigation through the Entrances to the Baltic Sea. Unfortunately, as its title suggests, this Resolution gives no guidance as to where pilotage should start and finish. Indeed, it appears that some Masters proceeding outbound from the Baltic consider the assistance of a pilot beneficial until passing the Great Belt Bridge, but that thereafter navigation is somewhat less difficult. In fact, it is the deepwater route guiding vessels through the Hatter Reef which appears to cause most difficulty. This requires a 60° turn at the Hatter Barn light into a channel which is less than five cables wide. This channel accommodates both north and south-bound vessels so the effective width available could be as low as 2 cables. It is evident that the turn has to be commenced early and at an appropriate speed. A recent Danish Maritime Authority investigation emphasised the usefulness of parallel indexing

in such situations as it allows the navigator to readily determine the correctness of the turn. Additionally, the passage planning should provide for 'alter course positions' to be identified by bearing and distance from local, fixed, navigational marks rather than latitude and longitude determined by GPS.

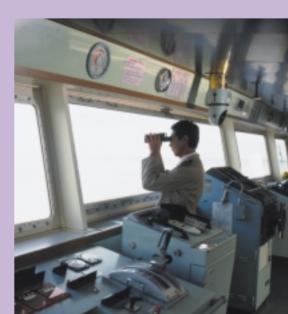
The Danish Maritime Authority report also suggested that the buoyage in the area could be improved. The Association understands that this may already have been undertaken with the addition of five low water markers and two light buoys.



Mobile menace on the bridge – the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency

The issuance of the MGN followed a review of anecdotal evidence via the Confidential Hazardous Information Reporting Programme (CHIRP) and also an investigation into the grounding of a ship off Southampton in June 2004, which was undertaken by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB). The MAIB report clearly states that a mobile phone was in use on the bridge for the majority of the time between the pilot disembarking and the ship grounding. It further states that the Master made some, if not all, of the calls during this period. The MAIB report encourages shipping companies to introduce a routine of limited use of mobile phones in pilotage and other

restricted waters. The MCA strongly endorses this recommendation and encourages the development of procedures to restrict the use of mobile phones in such situations to be incorporated, where appropriate, into the ship's Safety Management System, as part of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code compliance.





Containerised scrap metal – potential dangers

Traditionally, scrap metal has been carried in bulk and is, therefore, subject to the Bulk Cargo (BC) Code. The BC Code recommends a number of general precautions which should be taken for the carriage of scrap metal, although it states that no particular hazards are involved and that such cargo has a low fire risk except when it contains swarf. By contrast, the IMDG Code, which is primarily intended to govern the carriage of containerised and break bulk cargo, does not include any specific requirements for the carriage of scrap metal. Furthermore, by its very nature and unlike the position where scrap is carried in bulk, it is not possible to carry out a visual inspection of containerised scrap metal prior to loading on board without actually opening the container. However, scrap metal is increasingly being shipped in containers (particularly from the USA) and one of the Association's Members has recently been involved in an incident which highlights the potential dangers.

In this recent case the shipper described the cargo as 'scrap metal'. The container was packed by the shipper and delivered to the Members at the terminal where it was stored on the quay in one of three adjacent stacks to await loading. Some time later an explosion was heard in the vicinity of the stacked containers. Shortly after this a fire was reported. The local fire department was called and was able to extinguish the fire but approximately 5 containers and their contents were badly damaged.

Upon opening, the container of scrap metal was found to contain bales of crushed vehicle radiators which had been bundled together with steel straps. These bundles also contained plastics, rubber hoses and transmission coolers. On top of the bundles were stowed rolls of aluminium foil scrap wrapped in plastic sheeting and packaged in cardboard boxes.

Fire experts concluded that the fire had resulted from an exothermic reaction (i.e. a chemical reaction involving the giving off of heat) that had occurred within the crushed bundles. The metal scrap was found to consist not only of dissimilar metals and other materials tightly compressed together but also various automotive liquid residues such as antifreeze, brake fluid and transmission fluid.

The experts concluded that this compression of various materials combined to produce an exothermic reaction, generating sufficient heat to ignite the aluminium foil scrap wrapped in plastic sheeting and cardboard which served as an effective fuel for the fire, along with the wooden floor of the container itself.

Fortunately, because the container was still on the quay, the fire was relatively easy to extinguish and the extent of the damage was, therefore, limited. However, if the container had been on board the intended ship when the fire broke out, it is easy to conceive the potential danger this would have represented both to the crew and to other property.

When accepting the booking of scrap shipments, liner operators may wish to ask the shipper to clarify exactly what the scrap consists of and its origin, eg used automobile parts. If the scrap contains products which are listed in the IMDG Code (eg acids, fuels etc.) then the cargo constitutes dangerous goods. The shipper should then be required to make a declaration in accordance with the IMDG Code and the container should be marked properly and stowed accordingly. Alternatively the shipper could be asked to certify that all residues (eg brake fluid, oily rags, battery acid) that are potentially dangerous have been purged from the scrap before it was packed in the container.

Without these precautions being taken, the container should perhaps be treated as if it contains potentially combustible goods while it is at the terminal and should be stowed accordingly.

Piracy precautions

The UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency has recently issued Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 298(M): Measures to Counter Piracy, Armed Robbery and other Acts of Violence against Merchant Shipping. The MGN aims to assist in understanding the risk of piracy, armed robbery and other acts of violence against ships, reminds ship owners and Masters of the importance of taking action to deter such acts and advises on how to deal with piracy situations if they do occur.

The full text of the MGN can be found at: www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga-guidance-regulation/mnotices.htm

Collision report published

The Swedish Accident Investigation Board (SAIB) recently issued its report into the collision of the Stena Nautica and the Joanna which led to the flooding of the Stena *Nautica*. The primary cause of the collision was due to the fact that 'none of the officers on watch on board the two ships took appropriate action in time to avoid a closeguarters situation'. The Stena Nautica flooded and almost sank because the company 'did not have a carefully prepared and implemented safety policy' - the most obvious critisism being that the watertight doors were open at the time. The full text of the report (Report RS 2005:03e) can be found on the SAIB website at:

www.havkom.se/virtupload/reports/rs2005_03e.pdf

Grounding risk at Barranquilla, Colombia

The Association has been advised of a possible grounding risk at Barranquilla, as an excessive amount of sediment is being carried into the channel by the Magdalena River. Local Club Correspondents advise that Masters should make sure that pilots have the most recent bathymetric charts with them and that echo sounders are used while passing through the channel.

Containers and Cargoes



Salmonella in soya bean meal – the Association has been advised of cargo claims submitted by the receivers of soya bean meal shipped from South America to European ports in respect of alleged infection by salmonella. Similar claims have been made against Members of other International Group Clubs.

Claims from Italian receivers are in respect of costs incurred as a result of storing, transporting and re-conditioning allegedly affected consignments of soya bean meal in bulk. The consignments were from Argentinian and Brazilian ports and were destined for discharge in Italy, for delivery to other European countries.

It has been suggested that the source of the contamination was bird and rodent faeces affecting the cargo, either at the storage facility/silo prior to loading, or during loading on board when the cargo is transported to the vessel by trucks and elevators.

Generally, animal foodstuffs imported into the European Union require certain forms of treatment (such as pelletising) to minimise the risk of introducing diseases or infections. It should be remembered that not all types of salmonella pose a danger and therefore not all cargoes with a suspected salmonella infection would require such extensive treatment by receivers, who may then seek to pass on this cost to the shipowner Member.

The Association has considered the effectiveness of taking samples prior to loading in order to ascertain the presence of salmonella.



Any salmonella infection is likely to be present in a small area in one part of the cargo prior to loading and would then spread to a wider area throughout the cargo hold during a lengthy ocean voyage. Therefore, a representative sample taken at time of loading, either ashore or onboard, is unlikely to be conclusive. Indeed the issuance of a 'salmonella free' certificate following such a sample could be prejudicial to the defence of any subsequent claim for contamination.

Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that a laboratory analysis of cargo samples taken prior to loading may not be available before the ship sails, thereby preventing Members from taking any remedial action before the commencement of the voyage. Accordingly, despite the source of the contamination almost certainly being at the load port, it is unlikely that any practical, preventative action can be undertaken and it may well be that expert attendance upon discharge is the most effective assistance that can be given.

The Association recommends that Members intending to accept contracts for the shipment of soya bean meal from South American ports for discharge in Italy contact the Association for further information and assistance.

Wood packaging materials in the US – the United States has revised its import regulation for wood packaging materials (WPM) which will become effective on 16 September 2006.

From this date all such materials must be treated to kill harmful insects and there must be full details of how and where the treatment took place. All WPM must also be clearly marked to indicate that it meets the new requirements.

Full details of the regulation can be found at: www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/import/commercial_enforcement/wpm/



XX represents the ISO country code.

000 represents the unique number assigned by the national plant organisation.

YY represents either HT for heat treatment or MB for methyl bromide fumigation.

Australian legislation on container weights – the individual Australian States are in the process of adopting model 'National' legislation which requires users of trucking services to provide a Container Weight Declaration (CWD).

As a result, liner operators need to be aware when arranging 'carrier's haulage' that they might be obliged to provide a CWD stating the weight of the freight container and its contents. There may well be a problem with declarations by consignees in the case of 'merchant haulage' as they, whilst being aware

of the cargo weights as shown in the Bill of Lading, may not be aware of the TARE weight of the container.

These provisions are designed to ensure that drivers and operators of vehicles receive correct information so that they may select the appropriate vehicle to transport the container. Failure to do so may result in fines but may also have further consequences should, for example, an accident arise during the trucking. As the individual States may enact slightly different variances of the model Act, Members are advised to contact their local agents at individual ports.

New container security measures in Spain – on 14 January 2006 Royal Decree (RD) 2319/2004, dealing with container security measures, came into force in Spain.

This regulation incorporates the International Convention for Safe Containers 1972 (CSC) and its modifications and gives compliance to IMO Circular CSC/Circ.124 as well as implementing the recommendations of the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO.

The Royal Decree applies to containers as described in Section II of the 1972 CSC which are used both in national and international transport and which are to be loaded or unloaded in Spain, with the exception of containers specifically designed for air transport.

According to the new regulation, containers manufactured after 13 September 1977 will need a Certificate of Conformity and a safety approval plate (attached to the container). Containers manufactured before 13 September 1977 and without a Certificate of Conformity will need a safety approval plate endorsed by the competent authority of the state signatory

to the CSC. Containers which do not comply with these conditions cannot be used for transport and will be retained by the authorities in Spain until the deficiencies have been rectified. This means that the container could not be loaded on board the ship (although the cargo can be removed to another container in order to continue with the carriage). Containers which have been discharged in breach of this regulation will also be detained and will not be delivered to their destination until released by the authority.

It is the responsibility of the container owner to maintain the safety status of the container and also to have it regularly inspected. According to the new regulation, the inspection of a new container will be valid for 5 years and that of an existing container shall be valid for 2.5 years.

The penalty for any breach of the provisions of RD 2319/2004 will depend on the seriousness

of the breach and will range from €3,000 for minor infringements up to €600,000 for a very severe breach. These sanctions can be applied if the container is not well maintained or has not passed the necessary inspection, or has no safety approval plate. The authorities will always detain the container in the first instance and then decide whether penalties will be issued.

Members with ships calling at Spanish ports should try to ensure, through their local agents in Spain, that all containers to be loaded comply with the 1972 CSC and with the new regulation RD 2139/2004. Ideally, containers which are to be unloaded in Spain should be checked at the port of loading to ensure compliance with the new regulations.

Stop press

Following recent incidents of container stow collapse, concern has focused on certain designs of fully automatic twistlocks (FATs). One manufacturer is withdrawing its FATs even though their equipment was not associated with the incidents. Liner Members should consult with their FAT supplier and the Classification Society which has approved their Container Securing Manual.



Recent publications

• The 2005 edition of **The Code of Safe Practice for Bulk Carrier Cargoes 2004** (the BC Code) has recently (December 2005) been published, IMO publication no. ID260E.

• MARPOL amendments 2005 was published in December 2005 – IMO publication No. 1525E.

Regulatory update



Fines for deballasting in Ukraine – a number of ships have recently paid financial penalties to allow them to deballast at Ukrainian ports.

The fines arise because the Ukrainian Authorities have imposed very stringent limits on contaminants allowed to be discharged from ships, for example; 0.75 mg/litre for suspended matters, 0.05 mg/litre for iron and 0.05 mg/litre for oil products. The ports of Odessa, Yuzhny and Ilyichevsk are particularly affected. In the experience of some of the Association's Members, these levels are lower than the level of contaminants already in the Black Sea where their ships have exchanged ballast prior to arrival at the port in accordance with the local requirements and their own ballast water management plans.

The State Ecological Inspection Authorities attend ships calling at Ukrainian ports during their inward clearance and take samples of the

ballast to be discharged. The samples are then analysed and in the event that permissible levels are exceeded the ships are only allowed to discharge ballast on payment of a penalty. This penalty consists of compensation for damage to the environment, based on the applicable tariff for the level of contamination, and the quantity of ballast water discharged, plus an administrative fine. In the Association's experience, the total payment often exceeds US\$15,000 and could be significantly greater. The alternative to payment of such a penalty is to deballast outside the 12 mile territorial sea zone, however the costs and practicalities of this usually make the penalty the more commercial option.

Masters should therefore ensure that they obtain detailed advice from the local agents on

exchanging ballast as well as ship clearance and other procedures in plenty of time prior to arrival. By following such advice, and carefully complying with their own ballast water management plan, it will hopefully be possible to avoid or minimise any financial penalties. However, if Masters do encounter difficulties with the authorities they should contact the local Club Correspondent.

For more information see the 'Problems' section of the website of Club Correspondent, Dias Company Limited **www.dias-co.com** ('Deballasting in Ukrainian ports: some new aspects of the problem').

Compulsory security alert systems

Ship Security Alert Systems (SSASs) were made compulsory for passenger ships and all oil tankers, gas carriers, bulkers and high speed cargo ships of 500 GT and above, not later than the first radio equipment survey occurring after 1 July 2004. Other cargo ships of 500 GT and above which fall outside those types will be required to carry an SSAS not later than the first radio equipment survey occurring after 1 July 2006. IMO Circular MSC/Circ. 1072 provides guidance on the provision of SSASs. The SSASs are not intended to conform to any

particular form or format. The Circular provides several alternative methods of achieving compliance.

The full text of the Circular is available on the IMO website:

www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D7496/1072.pdf

Cargo residues now classed as garbage

A recent amendment to Annex V of the IMO International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL Convention) means that cargo residues are treated as garbage for the purposes of disposal. Such residues now fall into the same category as paper, rags, glass, metal and bottles. The result is that the residues must be disposed of ashore or more than 12 miles offshore; in the latter case, the position of the ship must be recorded in the garbage record book at the time the residues are discharged.



Maintenance of lifeboats – SOLAS Regulation III/20

Following the IMO Circular (MSC/Circ.1093) dated 17 June 2003 there are new guidelines for the servicing and maintenance of lifeboats that will become mandatory on 1 July 2006. Weekly and monthly inspections, and routine maintenance as defined by the manufacturer, must be conducted under the direct supervision of a senior ship's officer in accordance with the instructions provided by the manufacturer. Significantly, it is now a

requirement that all other inspections, servicing and repair should be conducted by the manufacturer's representative or a person appropriately trained and certified by the manufacturer for the work to be done.

The full text of the Circular can be found on the IMO website:

www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D7510/1093.pdf

Safety



Problems with steel wire ropes on ships' cranes – the Association was concerned when a 3-year old ship suffered wire rope failures on one of its cranes.

The wire failure caused severe injury to a stevedore and gave rise to a lengthy off-hire period. John Gibbons of Specialist Crane Services was retained to advise Members and his comments on crane wire failures might be of interest to all Members.

Wire ropes, so commonplace and often taken for granted, are possibly one of the most complex devices on a crane in that all the strands in a multi-core rope are in motion relative to each other. Their maintenance presents a challenge to many operators in the shipping industry.

Different types of wire rope are available but certain can be considered as standard such as 6 x 36 IWRC wire rope which comprises 6 cores each with 6 strands. Four core wire ropes, available readily in the Far East but not elsewhere, are not accepted for general use in the heavily unionised stevedoring operations in parts of the USA and Canada.

Wire rope should always be galvanised to protect it from the marine environment. When manufactured it should be impregnated with lubricant that will remain within the cores of the rope, not just be present on the exterior. Impregnation by the manufacturer achieves a degree of lubrication that cannot readily be achieved on board a ship particularly when the wire is reeved on the crane. The wire should always be supplied on a drum as this is the only way to avoid twists which will eventually lead to wire failure.

Wire rope maintenance

The two main wires on shipboard cranes are the hoist and the luff. The hoist is the cargo fall or runner to which the cargo load will be attached whereas the luffing wire is used to lower and raise the crane jib and set its working radius. They need to be considered separately because they have different duties and life cycle.

Hoist wires

Hoist wires, galvanised and pre-impregnated with lubricant, would not be expected to last longer than 3/4 years at the very maximum and indeed may last for much shorter periods in practice. They should be lubricated with a suitable penetrative lubricant applied in a thin coat to prevent the development of internal corrosion and surface rust. This should be done monthly regardless of use and the wire should

be run off the winch so that the parts that are subject to wear, where they pass over the sheaves, are not missed. By comparison, applying a coat of grease to the outside surface of the wire provides little benefit and may only serve to form the basis of a messy paste that builds up on the sheaves and finds its way all over the deck.

Hoist wires that are used on cranes involved in grabbing bulk cargo can be expected to have a much shorter life span than the 3 or 4 years set out above as many commodities grabbed from ships are either corrosive or abrasive or both. It is for this reason that the act of cleaning the ropes prior to lubrication is as important, if not more important, than lubrication itself particularly on a regularly used hoist system.

Luffing wires

There is less chance of physical damage to luffing wires and one might imagine therefore that their life is longer. However failure of luffing wires is the most common cause of crane failure. It is often forgotten that they are active 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. When a crane is stowed for sea the jib is put into a cradle and the ropes are slackened off and this is the condition in which they remain until the next time they are called upon. While in this position the wires are constantly on the move due to the motion of the ship. In addition, the same part of the wire is bent around the sheaves and thereby partially opened up. It may seem surprising, but it is a fact that the less 'cargo active' ropes on a luff system require more regular maintenance and lubrication than hoist wires.

Class inspection

For thorough inspection a rope should be inspected minutely over its entire length and then should be opened up with special tools to inspect the inside. Such an inspection will itself take a full day after the rope has been run off the crane. A class surveyor nowadays may commonly spend one day on board, looking at the whole ship, and his priorities are set by the need to make sure the ship is safe to go to sea. The surveyor looks at the generators, safety gear, water tightness and all of the many other things needed to retain the class certificate. Inspection of the crane wires may be visual only and will not usually involve an internal examination of the nature set out above.

Wire rope lubrication

When wire ropes are not under load and bent around sheaves they tend to open up at the top of the crane turret and the jib head. It is in these areas that the salt laden marine atmosphere does its damage. Wire rope lubricant needs therefore to penetrate the inner cores of the wire and a thin lubricating oil such as Ensis Fluid will be more effective. The use of a thick layer of grease over the outer surface of a wire not only fails to achieve penetration but also serves as a serious deterrent to close inspection and is likely to trap moisture in the wire and accelerate corrosion.

The wire has to be cleaned before lubrication. Even if the right lubricant is used and applied properly it will carry the marine salt into the rope if it has not previously been cleaned.



General guidelines

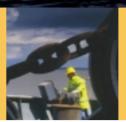
In summary, here are some basic points to help to avoid problems:

- The ship should be fitted with a readily available standard galvanised wire rope.
- The wire should come from the factory already impregnated with lubricant.
- All wires should be delivered on a drum so they can be fitted properly and supplied with the correct type of lubricant.
- Wires should be visually inspected every time they are cleaned to determine whether they are sound and have not suffered damage or excessive wear.

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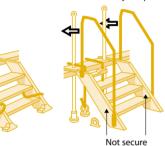
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Safety



Pilot overboard: bulwark stepladder failure – the Marine Accident Reporting Scheme (MARS) describes a less than typical accident involving a pilot.

1 IMPA Requirement



2 The reason why the pilot fell Unusually, the culprit was not an insufficiently secured or improperly arranged pilot ladder, but the inboard stepladder to the top of the bulwark. As shown in diagram 2, the bulwark stepladder was not secured to the deck. As the pilot stepped backwards from the bulwark to disembark, he was holding the bulwark ladder railing (rather than the Man-Rope stanchions). This action caused the bulwark ladder to tip up,

the pilot lost his balance and fell overboard. There are IMPA recommendations in respect of bulwark ladders and as can be seen in diagram 1, the securing of the bottom of the bulwark ladder to the deck would have avoided the accident.

Crew matters





Beware friendly stowaways!

The Association has recently been advised by the Club Correspondent in Durban about a stowaway incident that received wide coverage in the international press.

The case involved seven stowaways who boarded a ship at Mombasa and made themselves known to the crew once the ship was en route for Durban. The crew complied with the IMO Guidelines regarding stowaways and treated them humanely during the voyage. However, the Master failed to notify the ship's owners of the presence of the stowaways on board. The crew also made the mistake of becoming friendly with the stowaways.

The Club Correspondent advises that stowaways will often seek to befriend crewmembers by telling stories about their miserable circumstances and how they are seeking to travel to Europe or America to find work and improve their lives. Whilst crewmembers may feel sympathetic, it is nevertheless dangerous for them to become friendly with stowaways.

When the ship arrived at Durban, the Master did not report the stowaways to the port authorities and the crew agreed to allow them to leave the ship to try to find another ship which was going to their intended destination. In order to avoid detection, the stowaways were allowed to climb down a rope on the offshore side of the ship into the harbour. Regrettably the escape did not go according to plan and two of the stowaways were drowned. The remaining stowaways were caught and when questioned by the police, alleged they had been forced off the ship. The Master and three members of the crew were arrested and charged with murder.

A plea bargain was agreed and the charge was reduced to culpable homicide, also known as manslaughter. They were heavily fined and received suspended prison sentences.

Once stowaways are discovered on board, the fact should immediately be reported, not only to the owners or managers of the ship, but also to the P&I Club or their correspondent at the port where they boarded and, more importantly, the next port of call. Should the next port be in the USA, there is an absolute obligation to report the fact at least 92 hours before the arrival of the ship.

Ships' crew should, at all times, comply with the IMO Guidelines, IMO Resolution A.871(20), regarding the handling of stowaways. These Guidelines on the Allocation of Responsibilities to Seek the Successful Resolution of Stowaway Cases can be viewed at:

www.pmaesa.org/Maritime/Res%20A.871 (20).doc