



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



Branch Master's Comments

Good day to all once more.

February has passed us in the blink of an eye, and we are back to how a Summer should be - warm to hot weather with no rain. Having said that, those of us in the Riverland are still suffering from the Interstate Spring floods, but at least the Coorong is getting a bit of a clean out and replenishment. As for our branch, we are still ticking over for now, keeping the flame burning for now.

Federally, on 11th Feb 2023, we had a General meeting by 'Teams', which is the branch of teleconferencing we are using at present. Living in the Hills, my Wi-Fi reception is only one bar at the best, so the video part of the meeting was sketchy at the best; once more than four people were on line at the same time. However, I will outline the main points covered. Capt. Zubin Bhada chaired the meeting in the absence of Capt. Ted Van Bronswijk, who was somewhere in The Bight on a tug as far as I could tell. Members were welcomed, and the last minutes of 19/11/22 were accepted. The Federal Master's Report was passed over due to his absence. Francis Castellano tabled his Secretary's Report, and a discussion was held on the rescinding the applications of several persons who submitted incomplete application forms, the result being that the applicants be given a last opportunity to submit valid applications.

A revised design for Membership Certificates was approved.

'Ex Officio' membership eligibility to be discussed at the next AGM.

The CoMMA Constitution accepted at the 19/11/22 meeting was presented with a few punctuation and formatting errors corrected.

A new Company Letterhead was approved.

Federal Treasurer's Report was tabled and Federal Assets at the end of 2022 were \$91,729 with \$23,072 as profit for the past year.

With the exception of myself, all Federal Directors have obtained their government ID numbers, and I'll do the same as soon as possible.

The Federal Levy for 2023 is \$75 per eligible member.

The Master Mariner magazine is scheduled for the end of August 2023. Any articles to be submitted by the end of July.

The Outstanding Achievement award requires nominations accompanied by CVs and reasons for nomination.

Capt Kuiper suggested that the Qld branch will consider hosting a joint Boulton Lecture with another maritime association, such as the Nautical Institute.

The next AGM is tentatively agreed to be held at the Grace Hotel, Sydney, on Sat 15th April 2023.

The meeting closed at 1400 AEDT.

Our South Australian monthly meeting will be at 1145 for 1200 at the Largs Pier Hotel on Wed 22nd Feb 2023

Happy sailing, Bob W. BM

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**The next Branch meeting will be held at
the Largs Pier Hotel, 198 The Esplanade, Largs Bay,
on Wednesday, 22nd February, 2023, at 1145 for 1200.**

**The Branch AGM will be held at the conclusion of the Branch meeting
Please confirm your attendance at the lunch or register your apology
before 1200 on Monday, 20th February 2023
with Bob Westley (0427 644 947) or Ian Dickson (0418 807 788)**

Age should not wither them.

By Michael Grey

"The old ships were always the best". That's what sailors of my generation used to say, usually after they had safely left the more ancient members of the fleet and were sailing on something rather more modern. Nevertheless, it is a belief I have always clung to, and still shake my head in sorrow to hear of some vessel in the prime of its life being sent for recycling, invariably on account of an unforeseen downturn in the market for its services, which has reduced its value below that of scrap.

So, I was sad to read in the excellent Splash 24 daily e-zine a report suggesting that the Indian authorities are soon to prevent their shipowners from purchasing any tanker, bulk carrier or general cargo ship which is more than 20 years of age. Of even more importance to the international ship operator will be the notice of the government's intentions to prevent any ships in these categories, of over 25 years, from entering the nation's ports. If you think that a 20 year-old ship is nicely run in, this will be, to say the least, disappointing.

It could be that this is a prudent safety measure, based on the experience of the country's surveyors and port state control officers, who have become frustrated with discovering deficiencies aboard ill-maintained visitors to their ports. It is the usual response after accidents, involving elderly vessels, in which their structural state was thought to be a contributor to their loss or a case of serious pollution. Readers will probably recall the response to the *Erica* and *Prestige* tanker casualties, when the use of elderly tankers was very bad news indeed, with oil companies (which can afford to be judgemental about these matters) issuing blanket bans on ships of 15 years old. Insurers too have been moved to respond in like fashion in the past.

Those issuing such rules will probably rationalise their decision by suggesting that it will encourage new building and modernisation, with more productive and (these days) more sustainable vessels, picking up the trade from these older, less efficient ships. That is almost certainly a positive consequence, but one hopes that the regulators are alert to some of the potential negatives. Not least is the fact that if a ship is to be condemned before her fourth Special Survey, it is asking a lot of its owner to spend money on its maintenance for the second half of this short life.

Maintenance really matters and it is something which, if it is once neglected, is very difficult to catch up. It is also maintaining value, so if the vessel is going to be no more than scrap value before twenty years have elapsed, there is very little point. Maybe I did something wrong, but I spent nearly three years aboard ships that were more than 35 years old, and even if the lights went out occasionally, made money for the owners, and went to the scrapyards with no structural wastage under the thick layers of paint that had been lavished upon them all their lives. Such policies might even encourage designers and builders to offer "short-life" ships, which would be appalling, although you would hope class and insurers might counsel against such an idea.

Properly looked after, well-built ships last. I know individual or selective examples don't illustrate trends, but I remember seeing the 364,769dwt *Berge Stahl*, coming into Rotterdam on her thirtieth birthday, and she looked almost "as new", keeping going for nearly five more years. Check out some of the units in the European ferry fleet, which seem to keep going for ever, beautifully maintained by their owners. And if you are looking for owners who seem to treasure well-maintained older ships, take a look down the huge fleet list of the giant MSC, which, beside their new "mega" vessels, seems to demonstrate the value of ships well into the autumn of their lives. I imagine they would be quite narked at some Indian regulation restricting their visits to ships under any specific age.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List

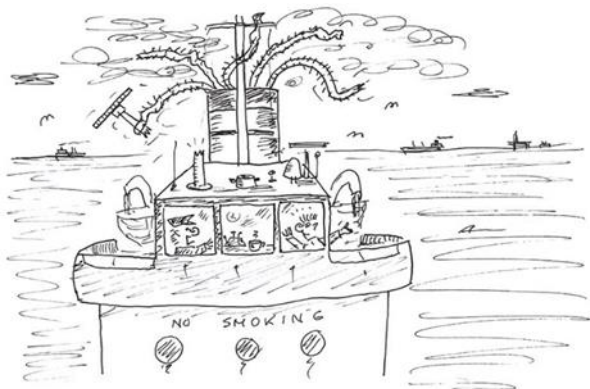
Source: Maritime Advocate 822

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Testing times

By Michael Grey

You would almost think that it is a seasonal phenomenon, these regular warnings about ships' machinery grinding to a standstill on account of something nasty having been introduced into the bunker tanks. The consequences of off-spec or non-compliant



"What makes you think our new bio-fuel bunkers are off-spec, Chief?"

fuel are generally dire, ranging from wrecked machinery, to expensive operations to purge the system and rid the ship of the filthy stuff, which never should have been aboard in the first place, if the proper precautions had been taken. And it might be that the "non-compliance" involves illegality, which, beside the above, could see the owner and the Master (why the Master of a ship is responsible for bunker specifications is one of the mysteries of the sea) heavily fined by a wrathful flag state, whose inspectors have detected the problem.

The latest warning, in the shape of a report from Lloyd's Register and their specialist consultants Thetius, put some numbers into the public domain. The report suggests that no less than 1m tonnes of off-spec and non-compliant fuel are detected every year, a pretty staggering quantity. I always like to think of these numbers in units which can be easily grasped, and that's four VLCCs full of the stuff, if you like, which is said to cost ship operators between \$27,000 and \$50,000 per incident.

And what about the ones which got away?

Is this a problem which is getting worse, or is it that with a greater emphasis upon inspections to ensure compliance with more onerous fuel regulations, brought about by emission criteria, there is just more of it being picked up? And it is worth putting the problem into perspective, in a time of changing regulations, increasing focus upon fuel quality and against the millions of tons of

maritime fuels that are annually consumed by the world fleet.

But whatever is the answer to these questions, there is no escaping from the fact that the quality of marine fuel is generally far less assured than practically any other. One can be reasonably sure that somebody running a power station, or other large fuel consuming machinery, will not put up with the sort of louché performance standards in the supply of fuel routinely put up with by ships' chief engineers. And a supplier of off spec fuel to the motor trades or aviation wouldn't last long in the business. You might say that ships – here today and gone tomorrow – are natural victims of sharp practice – there are plenty of stories from years ago about even coal being so poor that the steam pressure could not be maintained. Perhaps the “culture” which presided over shale and stones masquerading as useful fuel just never really changed when oil came along.

It is probably also a fact that in so many cases it is the charterer, rather than the owner, who is responsible for the bunkers, is looking for a cheap deal, and may only be vaguely interested in the quality of what is supplied. Moreover, even though there are these regular warnings and stern invocations to test fuel taken aboard before it is ever let near the machinery, it will be invariably to the owner's account.

There are excellent and highly reputable fuel testing services available all around the world, so if everyone could be persuaded to use them, you would think that this problem would disappear. In these columns we have pointed to companies which have been put on this earth precisely to test and track fuel all the way from its refinery to the ship, able to detect every possible impurity. But there will always be some bean counter, or chancer, who will veto their employment, leaving the quality or specification in the lap of the Gods, who are not always smiling.

You could also argue that if the industry is to embrace some of these exciting new fuels, like methanol or ammonia, there will need to be new levels of precision and expertise in their handling, to provide both safety and quality assurance. It seems to be the preferred strategy of designers to place the fuel tanks containing these “future fuels” on the weather deck, rather than below. One doubts whether anyone has consulted the seafarers who will sail on these emission-free ships, but one proposed design for a large bulk carrier that is current shows an enormous tank of ammonia each side of the accommodation. It rather spoils the view, although their near neighbours may have other thoughts.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.

Source: Maritime Advocate 823

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Ferguson's workers 'fear ferries may never sail'

Workers at Ferguson's fear the fiasco ferries being built for CalMac may never be considered fit to take to the seas as new problems over their delivery emerge. Concerns from within the workforce of the nationalised shipyard have emerged as latest assessments show 'high' level risks over Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL), the taxpayer funded company which owns and procures ferries, not accepting the vessels if faults are not remedied to its satisfaction.

It comes as Ferguson Marine has admitted an 'oversight' that crucial vacuum sensors required for the green dual fuel system had been forgotten about since 2021 – two years after the Port yard was nationalised by the Scottish Government. Earlier this year the yard confirmed that further issues with one of the two vessels meant it will not initially run on LNG. The ferries are five years



late, with costs soaring from £97 million to nearly £350m. Notes of a meeting between MSPs and yard staff have now revealed they are concerned about delivery. The record of the recent meeting states: 'Concerns were...expressed that there remains a risk that the vessels may not be considered fit for purpose once they are completed.' 'The importance of senior managers facing up to these risks was highlighted during the meeting.' Staff also reportedly spoke of how they felt there was always something in the news about Ferguson Marine being a 'failed shipyard' and it was stated that *MV Glen Sannox* was 'a constant source of embarrassment' It was even said that staff don't tell people they work for Ferguson Marine. Concerns were also raised about possible further delays with the delivery of *Glen San-*

nox.

The meeting notes reveal concerns that some items that have been purchased for the vessels have been lying around the yard for a 'considerable amount of time and may therefore be out of warranty'. Meanwhile there are concerns about the possibility of 'a late change due to design errors'. Other key challenges listed include the installation of ship cables and pipework, delivery and completion of production drawings, accuracy of production drawings and availability of materials, plus the availability of experienced supervisors and a shortage of experienced tradesmen. One of a list of key challenges for the shipyard, according to CMAL, includes completion of pipework to meet commissioning dates. The yard faced further problems this week when it was shut down due to cold weather. It was forced to close temporarily on Tuesday due to freezing conditions. The cold caused pipes at the yard to freeze, affecting staff facilities and other parts of the site. A Ferguson spokesperson confirmed that following a review by shipyard bosses, shipbuilding operations had resumed, with office-based staff continuing to work from home where possible. They said the shipyard had temporarily supplemented with additional staff catering facilities. A Scottish Government spokesperson said: "The Scottish Government's priorities have always been the completion of the two ferries, securing a future for the yard and its workforce, and supporting our island communities that rely on this type of vessel on a daily basis. "Ministers expect all possible measures to be taken to deliver the vessels to serve islanders as soon as possible."

Source : greenocktelegraph.

Source: MNA Pulse230119

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Archaeologists Recovered 275 Artifacts from the Wreck of a 19th-Century Ship that Sank in the Search for the Northwest Passage

The finds include a leather folio with an accompanying feather quill pen.

Vittoria Benzine, December 26, 2022

The human story behind one of history's most sensationalized maritime cold cases is coming to light. Parks



Parks Canada Underwater Archaeologist Jonathan Moore observes a washing basin and an officer's bed place on the lower deck of *HMS Erebus*, September 2022.

Photo: Marc-André Bernier, courtesy of Parks Canada.

Canada, the agency overseeing wreckages of the *HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror*, has completed its latest excavations of the former in the waters near Gjoa Haven. Researchers unearthed 275 artifacts, including a leather folio that could contain scraps of the crew's own writing.

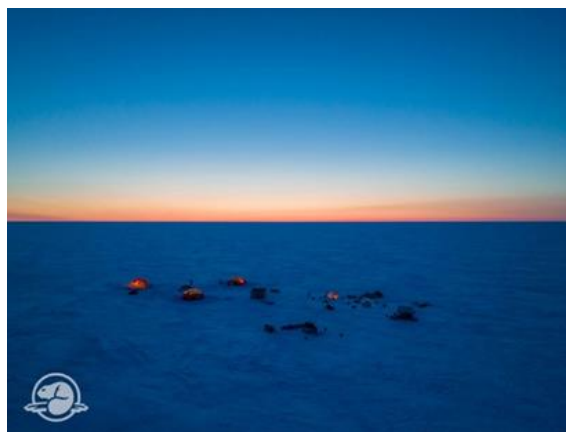
"*HMS Erebus* and *HMS Terror* are some of the best-preserved wooden wrecks in the world," Parks Canada told Artnet News. "But reduced ice cover and increased sea swells caused by climate change are believed to be accelerating the deterioration."

Captained by explorer Sir John Franklin, both vessels originally departed England in 1845 with 128 crew members, in search of the Northwest Passage linking the Atlantic and Pacific via the Arctic.

A note discovered since detailed the failure of the expedition. Both ships became trapped in ice. There were no known survivors.

Archaeologists have documented the *Erebus's* condition since its miraculous discovery in September 2014, two years before crews found the *Terror* 45 miles away. 2022 is only their second season surfacing artifacts from the *Erebus*. Archaeologist Ryan Harris has been on the case since it was first found.

Arctic waters are only suitable for diving during a brief window each year. The *Erebus's* first excavation in spring 2015 unearthed a few artifacts, including a cannon and kitchenware. 2016 centred around sample collection. The 2017 excavations were postponed to 2018,



Night view of the *HMS Erebus* ice camp, April 2022.

Photo: Thierry Boyer, courtesy of Parks Canada

due to technical difficulties. In the summer of 2019, archaeologists unearthed 350 artifacts including wine bottles and a hair brush.

Last summer marked the team's post-pandemic return, during which it conducted 56 two-hour dives over 11 days. Returning to the steward's pantry, archaeologists unearthed more dish ware, but also a lieutenant's epaulettes and a lens from someone's eyeglasses.

They also found a leather-bound folio, "beautifully embossed," Harris told CBC Canada, with a "feather quill pen still tucked inside the cover like a journal that you might write in and put on your bedside table before turning in."

2022 was also the first time archaeologists cracked open the officers' cabins, abandoned with evident dignity. In mapmaker 2nd Lt. Henry Thomas Dundas le Vesconte's room, they found a green box with drafting implements inside.

Parks Canada said all newly discovered artifacts "are jointly owned by the Government of Canada and Inuit," an extension of both parties' ongoing collaboration on the case.



Lieutenant's epaulettes excavated from a furniture drawer in an officer's cabin of *HMS Erebus*, after having been raised to the lab on the barge *Qiniqtirjuaq*, September 2022. Photo: Charles Dagneau, courtesy of Parks Canada.

At present, all 275 relics are being studied and preserved at Parks Canada's Ottawa lab. Researchers have only explored a sliver of *Erebus's* expanse; they have yet to excavate the *Terror*, since it's more secure. An eventual tourist attraction has been posed.

Source: Artnet News 221226

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Russia's Dark Tanker Fleet Gets Stretched Sailing Thousands of Miles

Bloomberg February 15, 2023

By Julian Lee (Bloomberg)

Russia assembled a huge fleet of tankers to beat western sanctions. They're struggling to get the job done, writes Bloomberg oil strategist Julian Lee.

The European Union banned almost all seaborne crude imports from Russia back in December, forcing Moscow to divert the shipments thousands of miles to China and India.



Photo credit: Sovcomflot

But as the fleet of Russian and Russia-friendly tankers makes those longer-distance deliveries, it's getting stretched out, making the country increasingly reliant on European-owned vessels again. That matters because they are barred from carrying Russian oil — and cannot get insurance to do so — if the cargo costs more than \$60 a barrel.

Before the EU crude import ban and an accompanying G7 price cap were introduced, almost half of Russia's crude exports from its western ports were carried on ships owned by European firms. That share collapsed to about one-quarter in the first month after the sanctions came into effect on Dec. 5 and was filled with Russia's own vessels and ships from the shadow fleet, shown as "unknown" in the chart above.

But in the second month, most of those Russia-friendly vessels were still engaged on their first post-sanctions voyages. With insufficient

tankers available to maintain the flow, the share of the trade carried on European ships rebounded to more than one-third.

The figures will ebb and flow. Most of the Russian-owned and shadow-fleet tankers are now on their way back after discharging their cargoes in India, so it's likely that their share of the Russian trade will rebound again in February, but after that the reliance on European vessels could climb again.

Trade Shift

The shift that caused this has been swift.

At the start of 2022, European buyers took 89% of the crude shipped out of ports in western Russia, India took almost none. A year later, the positions had been reversed, with 85% of shipments heading to ports in India and just 6% remaining in the Mediterranean.

That has had a dramatic impact on the average distance a barrel of Russia's crude has to be hauled to get it to a buyer, which, in turn, raised the length of time cargoes are on the water and the number of vessels needed to maintain the flow.

The trade-weighted average journey of a barrel of Russian crude exported from the country's main export terminals in the Baltic rose from less than 3,000 miles in January 2022 to more than 9,000 miles a year later. The initial increase was driven by a slump in flows to customers in the Baltic region — Poland, Lithuania, Finland and Sweden — and northern Europe — principally the Netherlands and Germany. They were initially replaced by buyers in the Mediterranean, where a refinery owned by Lukoil PJSC boosted its processing of Russian crude.

By April, India was emerging as a major buyer of Russian Baltic crude, with China also taking significant volumes. The ebb and flow of these two markets drove the trade-weighted average distance over the summer of 2022.

A slump in shipments to the Mediterranean in the final months of 2022, with the European Union import ban coming into force on Dec. 5, drove almost all cargoes to Asia, pushing the average journey to its current level.

Longer journeys mean more time at sea and require more ships to keep the flow moving. Voyage times on key routes measured from vessel tracking data show that it takes 66 days for a tanker to complete a round-trip journey from the Baltic or Arctic to the west coast of India, as long as there are no significant discharge delays when it reaches its destination.

Most deliveries to China are discharged at ports in Shandong province, entailing a round-trip journey from the Baltic of 123 days, or more than four months.

Russian cargoes are typically carried from the Baltic on Aframax-sized vessels, capable of carrying about 700,000 barrels of crude. Ships of this size are also used within the Black Sea and to Turkey. Cargoes loading in the Arctic and those moving from the Black Sea to India are typically carried on larger Suezmax vessels, which can carry about 1 million barrels of crude.

In January 2023, Russia exported 91 crude cargoes from its export terminals in the Baltic, Arctic and Black Sea, of which 68 went to India and another nine to China. Maintaining exports at this level to the same destinations over the coming months would require a dedicated fleet of 203 crude tankers — 162 Aframaxes and 41 Suezmaxes.

Russia's state-owned shipping company Sovcomflot PJSC has a fleet that includes 10 Suezmax tankers and 32 Aframaxes. That's nowhere near enough to carry all of Russia's crude exports from its western ports.

Even adding a shadow-fleet of vessels with Moscow-friendly owners, that's not yet proving enough to meet the nation's needs.

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Source: gCaptain230216

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IMO mulls adding an extra digit to its identification number scheme

Sam Chambers February 17, 2023

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is looking at adding an extra digit to its under fire identification number scheme. IMO numbers, first introduced in 1987, became mandatory for all ships built after July 1, 2005.



Each ship registered under the identification scheme is allocated a unique identifier made up of the letters IMO, followed by seven digits either at the time of build or when first included in the register. As well as being permanently and visibly marked on a ship's hull, the number must be noted on a ship's certificates, and on plans, manuals and other documents required by IMO conventions.

A study is being conducted to increase the number of digits from seven to eight, with the UN body aware that by the 2040s it will run out of available numbers.

In its current seven-digit format, there are approximately 900,000 number combinations. By the end of September 2022, just over half of those had been assigned. It is estimated that enough identification numbers are still available to cover the needs of the maritime community for the next two decades. Any future change to the number format will not impact upon existing IMO ship identification numbers already issued, the UN body has said.

The vessel identifier system has come in for plenty of criticism of late with many sanctioned ships found to be laundering their identity- including one which recently blew up in a Thai ship repair yard.

C4ADS, a Washington DC-based non-profit organisation, has detailed a process in which one or more vessels adopt a different identity on automatic identification system (AIS) transmissions in order to allow sanctions-hit ships to assume clean identities, and where at least one vessel in this operation assumes an identity that is obtained by defrauding the IMO.

Vessel identity laundering is significantly more sophisticated than previously observed instances of vessel identity tampering, in which vessels modify their physical appearance or broadcast false data on AIS transmissions.

Huge Iceberg Breaks Off from Antarctica's Brunt Ice Shelf

Mike Schuler January 26, 2023

An iceberg the size of metro London has broken off of Antarctica's Brunt Ice shelf.

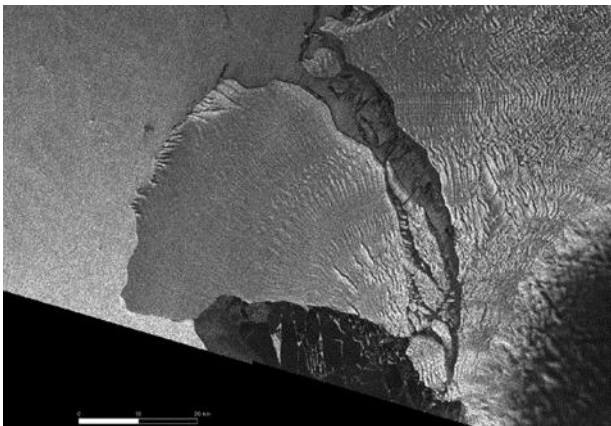


Image courtesy British Antarctic Survey

The calving event was confirmed Monday by the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) which first detected growing cracks in the 150-meter-thick ice shelf about a decade ago.

The BAS iceberg calved when the crack known as Chasm-1 fully extended through the ice shelf during a spring tide on Sunday, January 22, between 1900 and 2000 UTC.

The huge iceberg, measuring approximately 600 square miles, has been given the name A81.

The event marks the second major calving from this area in the last two years after an iceberg, known as A74, calved in February 2021. This new iceberg, which is slightly larger than the A74, is expected to follow a similar path in the Antarctic Coastal Current as it drifts west into the Weddell Sea.

BAS scientists study the Brunt Ice Shelf from the Halley Research Station, which in 2016 was relocated several miles inland from Chasm-1 as it widened.

"Our glaciologists and operations teams have been anticipating this event. Measurements of the ice shelf are carried out multiple times a day using an automated network of high-precision GPS instruments that surround the station," said Professor Dame Jane Francis, Director of BAS. "These measure how the ice shelf is deforming and moving, and are compared to satellite images from ESA, NASA and the German satellite TerraSAR-X. All data are sent back to Cambridge for analysis, so we know what is happening even in the Antarctic winter – when there are no staff on the station, it is dark for 24 hours and the temperature falls below minus 50 degrees C (or -58F)."

Scientists confirm that this latest calving is the result of natural forces and unrelated to climate change.

"This calving event has been expected and is part of the natural behaviour of the Brunt Ice Shelf. It is not linked to climate change. Our science and operational teams continue to monitor the ice shelf in real-time to ensure it is safe, and to maintain the delivery of the science we undertake at Halley," said Professor Dominic Hodgson, a BAS glaciologist.

Source: *gCaptain* 230127

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Liquidators appointed to oversee demise of fledgling Australian container line

Sam Chambers February 17, 2023

Stand by... The future of shipping is coming! A bold statement on the homepage of the short-lived Focus Container Line, which has become the latest new entrant into container shipping to run into financial difficulties.



Graham Flett / MarineTraffic

Liquidators in Brisbane have been appointed this week to oversee the demise of the trans-Tasman liner, which launched a service connecting Ningbo in China with Australia and New Zealand just four months ago.

Its bankruptcy has left many containers stranded at ports in Australia and New Zealand. The company had two ships on charter and had leased 3,000 containers. The ships are the multipurpose *BBC Denmark*, currently at anchorage in Auckland, and the 1,700 teu *San Giorgio*, which is near Papua New Guinea en route to China.

The dramatic drop in earnings – combined with high charter costs – has seen a number of smaller liner operators pull back, with the first financial casualty registered in the UK, where an administrator was appointed in December to oversee the bankruptcy of Allseas Global Project Logistics, which had entered the Asia-Europe trades in the middle of 2021.

Many new container entrants are hurting. China United Lines (CU Lines) gave notice two months ago for the early termination of the charter of 12 panamax ships that it deployed on routes to the US and Europe. CU Lines has slashed its capacity by more than a third over the past 12 months, according to data from Alphaliner.

Source: *Splash247 230217*

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Subsea 7 and Siemens Energy link up for floating wind subsea hubs

Adis Ajdin January 30, 2023

Subsea engineering and offshore construction specialist Subsea 7 and German energy equipment supplier Siemens Energy have joined forces to develop a subsea high voltage plug and power hub dedicated to the emerging floating offshore wind sector.



The technology is expected to enable the connection of multiple wind turbines into one subsea hub, allowing for more flexibility in floating offshore wind farm architecture and construction.

“The flexibility offered will contribute to lower capex and higher power availability by enabling efficient maintenance of offshore floating wind systems,” the partners said in a release.

Global floating wind commissioned capacity at the end of 2022 was less than 200 MW. According to research carried out by analytics firm Intelatus Global Partners floating installed capacity is forecast to reach 63 GW by 2035. This translates to the installation of close to 4,000 floating turbines.

Source: *Splash247*

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Bulgaria Defuses Drifting Sea Mines Along Black Sea Coast

Reuters January 24, 2023

SOFIA, Jan 24 (Reuters)

Bulgaria’s navy on Tuesday defused a naval mine that had drifted close to its Black Sea coast, a day after it carried out a controlled explosion of another mine, the defence ministry said.



Parts of the Black Sea were mined after Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

The ministry said the navy was alerted to the object that was some 14.8 nautical miles east off the coast near Cape Kochan late on Monday by a motor boat sailing under a Ukrainian flag.

Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey, all of which have coasts along the Black Sea, have had special diving teams defuse mines that drifted into their waters.

Since the war started, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine have destroyed roughly 40 mines in western waters of the Black Sea.

(Reporting by Tsvetelia Tsoleva; editing by Vin Shahrestani)

(c) Copyright Thomson Reuters 2023.

Source: *gCaptain 230125*

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History of the Welland Canal: is it the most important canal in North America?

GCaptain February 14, 2023

While not as famous as Central America's Panama Canal, the Welland Canal is older and is a vital waterway in the Great Lakes region of North America. It is a man-made canal that connects Lake Ontario to Lake Erie, allowing ships to bypass Niagara Falls. The canal is an important part of the St. Lawrence Seaway, which is a system of locks, canals, and channels that connect the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.



The littoral combat ship *USS Freedom* transits through one of many locks as she makes her way up the Welland Canal. Freedom is the first of two littoral combat ships designed to operate in shallow water environments to counter threats in coastal regions and is currently in route to Norfolk, Va.

larger ships. In 1959, the canal was further widened and deepened to accommodate even larger ships. In 1973, the canal was widened and deepened yet again to accommodate the largest ships in the Great Lakes.

Today the canal features eight consecutive navigation locks, which enable vessels to ascend or descend 326.5 feet from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie, circumventing Niagara Falls. Each lock chamber measures 766 feet in length, 80 feet in width, and 30 feet in depth.

The Welland Canal is an invaluable asset to the Great Lakes shipping industry, providing a safe and efficient shortcut for ships to bypass the treacherous rapids of the Niagara River and the Niagara Falls. This shortcut saves time and money for shipping companies, allowing them to transport goods more quickly and cost-effectively. Additionally, the Welland Canal helps to improve shipping in the Great Lakes region by giving ships to access to valuable cargo in the mid-west. This cargo includes iron ore, coal, grain, limestone, cement, salt, sand, steel, petroleum products, and other commodities.

St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation

The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC) is a Canadian Crown corporation responsible for the management and operation of the Welland Canal. The Seaway is a system of locks, canals, and channels that connect the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. The SLSMC is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of the Seaway, as well as the maintenance and improvement of its infrastructure.

The SLSMC was established in 1959 as a joint venture between the governments of Canada and the United States. The SLSMC is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Seaway, as well as the development of new technologies and services to improve the efficiency and safety of the system. The SLSMC also works with other government agencies and private sector partners to promote the economic development of the region. SLSMC also works to promote the development of new technologies and services to improve the efficiency and safety of the system.

The Great Lakes-Seaway shipping system is a vital part of the North American economy. It is the most efficient and cost-effective way to move bulk commodities and manufactured goods between the United States, Canada, and overseas markets. The system supports thousands of jobs and generates billions of dollars in economic activity, thanks, in part, to the Welland Canal and St. Lawrence Seaway.

Source: *gCaptain 230216*

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Welland Canal Expansion

The Welland Canal has been expanded and improved several times over the years. In 1932, the canal was widened and deepened to accommodate large-



Thousands of ships set to be hit by India's age restrictions

Sam Chambers February 2, 2023

Greek data firm MarineTraffic has provided some details of the ramifications of the upcoming Indian ban on older ships.

New Delhi is readying age restrictions for ships calling at the world's second most populous nation.

Under the new rules no bulk carrier, tanker or general cargo ship aged 25 or older will be allowed to call at Indian ports. For gas

carriers, offshore vessels and boxships the age limit will be set at 30 years. Locally flagged ships will be deregistered when they hit these new age limits. Furthermore, owners will not be able to locally flag any second-hand acquisitions that are 20 years old or above.



MarineTraffic data shows that 3,802 tankers and bulkers built prior to 1998 arrived in India in 2022.

Regarding the new rule, ITO ban ships older than 20 years from registering with the Indian flag, MarineTraffic notes there are currently 753 ships built prior to 2003, which are registered under the Indian flag, 133 of which are tankers and 61 bulkers.

According to Xclusiv Shipbrokers, India is responsible for 17% of the world seaborne iron ore trade, 19% of the world's seaborne coal trade and 2% of the world's seaborne grain trade. On the wet market, India

is responsible for 12% of the world's seaborne crude oil trade and 7% of the world's seaborne oil product trade.

"Although operators of older vessels only face losing access to one country, India's growth is only set to make this restriction more significant as time goes by," a recent report from Allied Shipbroking suggested.

Source: Spash247

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Eneos seeks to ship hydrogen in existing oil tankers

Grant Rowles January 31, 2023

Hydrogen could soon be shipped in regular oil tankers at ambient temperatures if a Japanese pilot project in Australia proves successful.



Eneos, Japan's largest oil company, will open a demonstration plant in Brisbane next month where methylcyclohexane (MCH), a liquid hydrogen carrier, will be made.

MCH is typically produced by taking hydrogen stored in tanks and reacting it with toluene — an organic chemical compound — using synthesizing equipment. Eneos is developing an electrolyser that turns water and toluene into MCH in one step. Hydrogen would be extracted from the MCH once it arrives at its final destination. Eneos plans to commence mass production of hydrogen by 2026.

Currently hydrogen has to be stored at minus 253 degrees Celsius for it to remain liquefied — an expensive process that has limited ship-

ping possibilities to date with just one small liquefied hydrogen ship — the *Susio Frontier* — in operation.

Earlier this month Dutch oil and chemical storage group Vopak announced it was partnering with Hydrogenious LOHC Technologies to establish a joint venture company for hydrogen storage, transport and supply utilising conventional liquid-fuel infrastructure in a similar way to Eneos.

The German-based joint venture, named LOHC Logistix, will use Hydrogenious' liquid organic hydrogen carrier (LOHC) technology which is based on thermal oil benzyl toluene that can be handled like a fossil liquid fuel in existing tankers at ambient pressure and temperature.

Source: Splash247 230131

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Apprentice search

To mark the beginning of National Apprenticeship Week, Associated British Ports (ABP) launched recruitment for its Apprenticeship Programme, which seeks to find the next generation of talent to join the maritime and logistics industry and keep Britain trading sustainably.

Apprenticeships on offer cover a range of specialisms, including IT, marine, engineering, pilotage, commercial and business administration. They will be split across ABP's different locations, including the Humber, East Anglia, Southampton and South Wales.

The UK port industry is the second largest in Europe and ABP is the largest ports group in the country, with 21 ports around Britain, supporting around 119,000 jobs across the supply chain. With a strong commitment to sustainability, ABP continues to invest in decarbonising its own operations and enabling the UK clean energy transition. The company has decreased its absolute carbon footprint by more than 35% since 2014, and 17 of ABP's ports have renewable energy generation projects.

Kerry Thompson, head of ABP Academy, said: "Apprenticeships offer a fantastic opportunity to combine learning on the job with earning an income, which in the current economic climate is an especially appealing prospect for job seekers."

The closing date for applications is Sunday, 5th March 2023.

More information about the different Apprenticeships is available on the ABP web site.

Source: Maritime Advocate 823

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In a rare crossover between modern maritime commerce and the realm of literature, an evocative and lyrical poem by the maritime analyst **Salim Bhimji** won a position on the short list for last year's Montreal International Poetry Prize. The Montreal International Poetry Prize was founded in 2010 by the poet and critic Asa Boxer. It sponsors a crowd-funded competition, awarding one prize of \$20,000 to one poet for a single poem every two years. It is a global competition, supported by an international jury of poets from around the world and participants from more than 100 countries. It is managed by the Department of English at McGill University.

Dereliction: And the Ocean Too Weeps

Through restless centuries I have powered
 Heroic onslaughts by commanders
 Of the great empires.

Across the ages, man has longed to unravel
 The mystique that shrouds me.
 The scholars of science reach

For me to uncover secrets of the past.
 Pioneering men seeking out new lands
 Deemed me the crowning conquest.

Mighty industries flourish because of me
 And dynasties shaped, by men
 Who wove their steel through me.

For entrenched within, like incipient gems,
 I meld the very elements with which kingdoms
 Power prosperity. Yet no man can own me.

Agile and self-replenishing
 I am a mirror of the heavens,
 Nestling every rhythm, in cycles rippling.

To the unwitting I am formidable.
 But the same seek solace in me,
 In the soft, soothing songs
 That dance through my being.

I am the cradle of life for billions.

Yet, for all my elegance, I am now bereft;
 Wounded. The turning tides, so harsh,
 Have left me ravaged; in anguish.

How I yearn to be cherished again. *Grant me the dignity
 I deserve.* That dignity, which was once unspoken,
 Then, almost broken.

To survive, I must search, reach, clutch
 At new ways to reinvent myself.
 A mere ritual since times long past.

Except these are dark days
 And I face ferocious thunders ahead.
 Yes, I am wrenched by the unknown.

Though known by many names, I am unique.
 That I might look invincible
 Is simply part of the mystique.

Beyond the drifted ocean,
 A heroine's grief, spoken.

(With thanks to the Maritime Executive)