About ICHCA – International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association

The International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association (ICHCA) is an international, independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the safety, security, sustainability, productivity and efficiency of cargo handling and goods movement by all modes and through all phases of national and international supply chains. ICHCA International's privileged non-government organisation (NGO) status enables it to represent its members, and the cargo handling industry at large best, in front of national and international agencies and regulatory bodies. Its Expert Panel provides practice advice and publications on a wide range of practical cargo handling issues. ICHCA Australia Ltd is proud to be part of the ICHCA International Ltd global network (www.ichca.com). To access past newsletters and other useful information go to the ICHCA Australia website at www.ichca-australia.com.

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Season's greetings

Dear members and readers, on behalf of the Board and Management of ICHCA Australia, I wish you and your families all the very best for the festive season and a happy and prosperous 2025.

We, like others, see supply chains around the world remaining volatile as changes to geopolitics continue to impact global trade, the investments in artificial intelligence, and the progressive transition to lower emissions, placing renewed focus on planning, risk management and execution. Let's hope that your businesses can remain resilient during 2025 and learn to adapt to these stresses. We hope that ICHCA can continue to help you plan and operate safely and we look forward to continuing to work with industry to advance safety and operational best practice for our members.

Scott McKay, Chairman ICHCA Australia

TT Club Innovation in Safety Award event in London, UK

ICHCA International and TT Club invite you to the presentation of the TT Club Innovation in Safety Award at the TOC Offices, 240 Blackfriars Road, London, on Wednesday 26 February 2025. Any ICHCA Australia member travelling in London at that time is welcome to attend at no cost. The event will also be available online, with details of the link available closer to the event.

For the seventh year, this event sees the celebration of creative health and safety professionals throughout the cargo industry. This year saw another long list of entrants, with a wide range of innovative approaches to improving safety. However, to find out which entrant demonstrates the greatest improvement in safety for cargo handling and transport and shows the greatest potential for widespread adoption, we will have to wait until the award event on 26 February.

You can register by emailing: secretariat@ichca.com.

AI and the shipping industry – benefits and challenges

In 2024, extreme weather events, geopolitical tensions, environmental considerations and rising material costs all caused significant disruptions and put extra pressure on budgets across the industry. As we move into 2025, the shipping industry, and global trade generally, is increasingly adopting artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance efficiency, safety and environmental sustainability.

AI is a general term for systems that simulate human intelligence and perform complex tasks by consuming and learning from vast amounts of data. As a result, AI systems can outperform traditional software by analysing patterns and relationships within data sets that are often imperceptible to humans or non-AI systems.

AI capabilities are proving extremely useful in managing and optimising workflows across almost every aspect of the shipping industry. AI can be used to improve operational efficiency by analysing data across the entire logistics chain, forecasting demand, optimising inventory levels, and enhancing the coordination of cargo loading and unloading operations. Europe's largest port, the Port of Rotterdam, is using AI-based systems to digitise the port and optimise cargo handling and stowage planning. The systems use data analytics to predict the best loading and unloading sequences for containers to reduce the time ships spend in port and improve the utilisation of cargo handlers and equipment. The Port of Rotterdam has reported a more streamlined flow of goods, reducing congestion and environmental impacts from idling ships.

Importantly, AI systems can also be used to monitor work environments such as assembly lines, storage facilities and shipping vehicles, to flag conditions that could impact the safety of workers. They can monitor and enforce the use of personal protective equipment and verify that workers follow company safety protocols and standards. When monitoring equipment, AI can detect malfunctions and other potentially dangerous situations by employing predictive maintenance to foresee and prevent equipment failures. Further, when accidents and failures do occur, AI can perform root-cause analysis to discover the exact causes in order to prevent repeat incidents.

One major aspect of AI in the shipping industry is the development of autonomous vessels. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has defined a maritime autonomous surface ship (MASS) as a ship which can operate independently of human interaction. This includes using technology to carry out various ship-related functions, such as navigation, propulsion, steering, and control of machinery, all of which will include the use of AI. The IMO has defined four degrees of autonomy:

1. Ship with automated processes and decision support. Seafarers are on board to operate and control shipboard systems and functions. Some operations may be automated and at times be unsupervised but with seafarers on board ready to take control.

2. Remotely controlled ship with seafarers on board. The ship is controlled and operated from another location. Seafarers are available on board to take control and to operate the shipboard systems and functions.

3. Remotely controlled ship without seafarers on board: The ship is controlled and operated from another location. There are no seafarers on board.

4. Fully autonomous ship: The operating system of the ship can make decisions and determine actions by itself.

The use of AI and the increased use of autonomy in shipping raises a number of unanswered legal questions. The major question in the case of MASS is, on whom does the burden of responsibility for the vessel lie if there is no master or crew on board. Does the AI system on the vessel have responsibility or does that responsibility rest with the personnel monitoring the AI system?

Another question raised by MASS is the requirement for seaworthiness, which is generally met when a vessel is properly constructed, prepared, manned and equipped for the voyage. However, in the case of autonomous vessels, how can a shipowner warrant that a vessel is properly manned for the voyage when some or all systems are controlled by AI? The responsibility for seaworthiness may shift from the shipowner to the manufacturer of the AI system or to the programmer of the system.

AI cannot be implemented overnight and can be expensive and difficult to operate. As with any new technology, integrating AI into work environments takes time and requires training the personnel who will interact with and operate the systems, which can be costly. Other than the training costs, there are also significant startup costs involved with implementing AI systems. The algorithms used don’t need to be built from scratch but to realise their full potential, companies should train the systems using their own data. The process of preparing this data can be a time consuming and expensive task. Further, operating AI

systems is not a one and done effort, it's an ongoing process that requires powerful platforms and constant monitoring to identify and fix glitches in order to keep performance high.

Despite the challenges involved, operators are taking steps to implement AI across the shipping industry. Earlier this year CMA CGM, a leading worldwide shipping group, announced a strategic partnership with Google to accelerate the integration of AI across CMA CGM's operations worldwide. The collaboration aims to "*revolutionize shipping by enhancing efficiency, responsiveness, and adaptability to market fluctuations and disruptions, resulting in faster and more responsive customer service. As part of the partnership, CMA CGM will actively seek to optimize vessel routes, container handling, and inventory management to ensure efficient and timely delivery of goods while minimizing costs and carbon footprints*."

This article was supplied by HFW, sponsor of Inside ICHCA.

IMO award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea

The 2024 International Maritime Organization (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea has been presented to two sets of nominees: the captain and crew of the oil tanker *Marlin Luanda*, for containing a fire after the ship was struck by an uncrewed aerial device; and the captain and crew of the tugboat *Pemex Maya*, for their rescue of six shipwrecked persons from four different vessels, during a hurricane.

They received the medals and certificates during the annual IMO Awards Ceremony held in London recently. The ceremony followed the first day of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 109) session, which took place from 2 to 6 December 2024.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez commended the worthy recipients of the IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea: “It is truly an honour to have this opportunity to recognize the valiant efforts and dedication of these heroic individuals, who took it upon themselves to act in the face of extreme danger at sea, to save lives. Their bravery is an inspiration for all of us.”

Regulation of seafarers’ work/rest hours are being broken

A three-year exhaustive study has shown the structures supporting the implementation of work/rest regulations at sea are being broken with close to two-thirds of seafarers adjusting their work/rest records. Under the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC), a seafarer has the right to regulated hours of work and hours of rest. Hours of work are stated as either maximum hours of work, or minimum hours of rest. The maximum hours of work must not exceed 14 hours in any 24-hour period, and 72 hours in any seven-day period. The minimum hours of rest must not be less than 10 hours in any 24-hour period, and 77 hours in any seven-day period. A record of a seafarer’s daily hours of rest or hours of work must be kept onboard in the working language of the ship and in English and must be signed by the seafarer and the master or other authorised person. The seafarer must be given a copy.

In his PhD dissertation for the World Maritime University, funded through support from the ITF Seafarers’ Trust, Bikram Bhatia surveyed 6,304 seafarers, interviewed 55 port state control (PSC) officers, and went through the data of 16,551 PSC inspections. A key finding of the research is that 64.3% of seafarers adjusted their work/rest records, while PSC officers are struggling to detect non-compliance. More worrying is the coercion from shore. Two-thirds (66.7%) of respondents had reports questioned by their company, 60.1% were expected to adjust their reports, and 49.1% were instructed to. High compliance rates reported by PSC officers masked seafarers’ reported non-compliance, creating what Bhatia has described as a “false narrative at policy levels”.

Reconciling wellness with excessive demands appears implausible, suggested Steven Jones, the founder of the Seafarers Happiness Index, in a recent article. “Crews face overwhelming demands while grappling with

chronic underreporting of work hours, and the threat of punishment for infractions," Jones argued, adding: "Seafarers face a difficult choice: being honest about over work can lead to punishment, while dishonesty may allow them to escape consequences. This creates a troubling lack of incentive for proper, effective, open, and transparent recording of work hours."

Rightship to revise inspection schedule

RightShip recently announced a revised timeline for implementing its vessel inspection age trigger, reducing the inspection threshold from 14 to 10 years through a four-phased approach. This update reflects extensive industry engagement and underscores RightShip's commitment to a collaborative approach.

The initial announcement of the inspection age trigger in October 2024 led to valuable feedback from stakeholders. Constructive dialogue with RightShip's customers and respected industry associations, including INTERCARGO, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), and the Union of Greek Shipowners whose membership represents a substantial portion of the global dry bulk and general cargo fleet, has been instrumental in refining the approach to align with operational realities while reinforcing our shared commitment to safety.

Steen Lund, CEO of RightShip, was encouraged by the collaborative spirit leading to the updated rollout: "Industry stakeholders have through this dialogue concluded a shared understanding that co-operation is essential for safety. While the decision to lower the inspection age from 14 to 10 years remains unchanged, we have carefully considered stakeholder feedback and adjusted the rollout timeline. The revised approach is designed to strike an optimal balance: advancing the industry toward safer operations while giving vessel owners, operators, and crew the necessary time to adapt effectively."

Key Highlights of the Revised Rollout Plan

RightShip has introduced the following updates in response to industry concerns, including the need for more time to negotiate budgets with vessel owners, adjust office staffing to manage inspections, accommodate the significant efforts needed for vessel preparation and crew training, address the challenges of aligning inspections for 10-year-old vessels with the Second Special Survey Dry Dock, and capacity to handle inspection volumes.

- **Extended Timeline with Four Phases:** The rollout has been expanded to a four-phase implementation, giving vessel owners and operators more time to adjust budgets, train crew, and plan for inspections. All vessels now have at least 12 months' notice from the initial announcement before Safety Score impacts take effect. This phased approach also allows RightShip to accredit additional inspectors.

- **Alignment with Dry Dock:** For Phase 4, inspections for vessels aged 10 years will now align with the Second Special Survey Dry Dock, with a three-month buffer post-completion before inspection requirements take effect.

To ensure a smooth transition, RightShip has also introduced:

- **Flexibility in Scheduling:** A three-month window between inspection requirements and Safety Score applicability aims to stagger inspection volumes and reduce operational pressures.

- **Increased Inspector Capacity:** RightShip aims to achieve a 90% increase in accredited inspectors by October 2025 to meet demand while maintaining inspection quality.

- **Early Inspection Incentive:** Vessels built after 1 October 2011 that complete inspections between January and June 2025 are eligible for a $1,000 inspection fee credit, encouraging early participation and reducing peak inspection volumes.

More details can be found here: **https://rightship.com/insights/rightship-announces-revised-timeline-vessel-inspection-age-trigger-collaboration-with-industry-stakeholders**

New Harbour Master for Ports Victoria

Ports Victoria has announced the appointment of the new harbour master for the Port of Melbourne, Captain Mike Dunn. Captain Dunn comes to the role after 12 years as harbour master of some of the major ports in the UK.

Announcing the appointment, Ports Victoria CEO Craig Walker said Captain Dunn was the standout contender from a stellar field of local and international applicants. “We’re delighted to welcome Mike to the team. He has an outstanding international reputation and his wealth of experience across many years of ports management, and before that as a respected mariner, will be a great bonus for the Port of Melbourne,” he said. “I look forward to Mike building upon the work of previous Melbourne harbour masters and taking our operations to the next level.”

Captain Dunn said of his appointment, “I would like to thank Ports Victoria for offering me this tremendous opportunity. I am thrilled to be taking on this new role and the major international move for myself and my family.” He is expected to start his new role in early March 2025.

Another crane ship in trouble

A recent incident has left the Chinese-flagged heavy lift ship *Shang De Wu Yi Shan* damaged after two gantry cranes it was transporting fell into the sea off the Spanish coast. The cargo shift occurred on 6 December as the vessel encountered rough weather while transiting past the port of A Coruña, Galicia. The stormy conditions caused the two ZPMC-built cranes to be torn loose, with most of the cranes sinking into the ocean. The falling debris also caused significant damage to the ship’s hull and deck.

Source: Google images

The *Shang De Wu Yi Shan*, which had departed Bremen earlier in the week bound for Thailand, was carrying the towering gantry cranes above the main deck. At approximately 10:40 PM (CET), the crew alerted Spanish maritime authorities, citing safety concerns. Salvamento Marítimo responded promptly, dispatching a rescue boat and the tugboat *Alonso de Chaves*, which escorted the vessel to a sheltered bay near Ares, Galicia, for further inspection. A helicopter was also deployed to visually inspect the vessel's condition and ensure the safety of the crew.

Updates from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Holiday operating hours

The Department's Canberra office will be closed from close of business on Tuesday 24 December 2024 until the commencement of business on Thursday 2 January 2025. The Canberra switchboard will not be operating during this time.

The Department's general enquiries line (1800 900 090) will not operate during the periods noted as 'Closed' as per the information on the Department's website (link given below). Self-Assessed Clearance assessment services will operate as normal over the shutdown period.

Further details can be found here: 288-2024: December 2024 / January 2025 Holiday Shut Down Operating Hours - DAFF

DCCC communique

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Cargo Consultative Committee (DCCC) is a committee for the Department and other stakeholders to consider tactical and strategic biosecurity-related international trade and logistics issues. The DCCC aims to provide effective biosecurity outcomes delivered without unnecessary impediments to trade.

The last DCCC meeting was held in mid-November, with Peter van Duyn representing ICHCA Australia. More information about the outcomes of the meeting can be found in the DCCC Mtg 99 Communique of 14 November 2024, published on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Cargo Consultative Committee webpage.

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