



The Foghorn

Newsletter of the Maritimes Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada
www.mastermariners.ca



April 2021

From the Master Captain Marshall Dunbar

Good Day Everyone,

Obviously the big news is the Annual Opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway and oh yes, the Ever Given creating a slight blockage in the Suez Canal. Kind of ironic that it is painted green, Evergreen is the company name and yet all people are seeing is red (stoppage of ships, red faces over rising prices of consumer good). Not to worry for all, as some will see green \$\$ (tugs, dredges, insurers and lawyers). Back to the first item and as it is a great day for trade in Canada when the Seaway opens. Let's hope that it is a very good year and it will be quite interesting to see short sea container shipping between Picton and Halifax. Truly hope that they can make a go of it and provide more jobs for Canadian seafarers. To follow on about seafarers we see McKeil's buying Theodore Too and will take it to the Great Lakes, no doubt Hamilton to start. It will be used to generate public interest in the industry and hopefully attract young persons into the industry. Good for them for taking this step.

The MMC Views and Positions Committee has a developed a position on the current and future shortage of seafarers. Some of these seafarers will some day come ashore and work in marine based shore jobs. One thing that we do hear about or experience is the workload that can come with accepting a shore based job. Like all businesses, we see where someone leaves the company and intention is that they are to be replaced, but at the same time business dries up and in the short term they chose not to replace the outgoing employee until business improves. In the end, even if business improves they do not replace that employee and the workload remains. Then a new project or legal requirement arises and the workload increases again. With the ever present laptop and mobile phone, work never really goes away. At some point a qualified, experienced and valued employee chooses to move on to what they hope is a better work / life balance or even worse, they leave the industry. This leaves us with shortages in the industry and one that we need to recognize and ensure we work towards retention and suitable levels of employees.

Like all industries, we are always looking at ways to generate interest and now social media is now a mainstay for these efforts. One platform is LinkedIn and the MMC LinkedIn has a lot of great posts. Check it out and hit that like button to show support and spread the news about the marine industry.

Many thanks to everyone who helps our industry and the MMC and join in on the conversation by attending a meeting.
Safe sailing.

Marshall



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Meeting

April 14th beginning at 1900 via ZOOM. This will be our Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers for the upcoming year. If you are interested in taking a leadership role in the Division, please contact Capt. Dunbar, our Master/Vice President.

Contact information for the ZOOM meeting will be sent out shortly.

Canadian Coast Guard 60th Anniversary

The year 2022 is the 60th year that the Coast Guard has operated under that name. The national CCG Alumni Association is working on different plans and the Nova Scotia Alumni group is looking to reactivate and join with other regional Alumni groups to celebrate. If you are interested in joining, or rejoining, the Nova Scotia group, please contact David Parkes, dparkes@divercertification.com.



Meeting of March 10th

With no guest speaker for this meeting and only 10 members participating via ZOOM, an open meeting took place.

The Treasurer noted that our financial situation was good and that we will make a \$1200 donation to the NSCC Marine Institute Skills Competition. A call for auditors was made to



The Foghorn

Newsletter of the Maritimes Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada
www.mastermariners.ca



April 2021

examine the 2020 financial report. Captains Calvesbert and Dunbar have volunteered.

A re-cap of the NSCC Skills Competition was given indicating that, in spite of the Covid restrictions, it was well conducted. Activities were videoed and sent to the judges for evaluation.

Capt. Connor, as Chairman of the National Views and Positions Committee confirmed that the two recent positions have been forwarded to the Minister and indicated that this is another indication of the relevance of the MMC.

A wide ranging discussion of opportunities to see our membership grow took place. Mention was made of the possible confusion caused through our name (MMC) confusing that fact that membership is open to "those qualified to command" and how this could be remedied.

The marine pool is shrinking worldwide and not just in Canada. Immigration issues and the ability to exchange certificates may be part of the problem in finding senior officer level personnel.

As a further means of demonstrating MMC's relevance, we should be looking at the potential to attract more corporate members in order to diversify our abilities.

A comparison of the abilities of MMC and those of The Nautical Institute took place.

Further discussion of membership opportunities will take place at the National level.

MMC is looking at the possibility of instituting email addresses that would clearly define a position within the organization as a means of eliminating confusion when personnel changes occur. As an example – TreasurerMaritimes@mastermariners.ca

Capt. Connor brought forward the point that there is no organization in Canada that considers Seafarers to be essential/rotational workers for COVID inoculations.

Our April 14th meeting will be our AGM and Election of Officers.



Mission to Seafarers Shines Again!

The Algerian container ship "Imedghassen" finally got away during the last week of March after being here since January 9th. Machinery problems, equipment supply issues, and a Master who had been aboard for two years and required replacement.

The Mission to Seafarers did a wonderful job of looking after the crew while they were here and living under the COVID restrictions. Trips to the grocery store, the pharmacy, to the Mission and, of course, donuts from "Timmies" were a part of those efforts. I think that we all understand the effect that enforced immobilization can have on a crew but the Mission did everything possible to reduce the adverse effects of their prolonged stay.



Here is a letter from the Master to the Manager of the Mission, who is one of Honorary Members.

From: Imedghassen GMA
<imedghassen@gma-dz.com>
Sent: March 24, 2021 3:32 PM
To: Helen Glenn
<hGlenn@missiontoseafarershalifax.ca>

Subject: Letter Of Recognition

Hello Mrs. Helen,

The man worthy of listening is the one who uses speech only for thought and thought only to speak truth and virtue. Far from any philosophy and far from being ungrateful we are part of a corporation unique in the world and worthy of our elders who taught us the profession of navigator, Oh



The Foghorn

Newsletter of the Maritimes Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada
www.mastermariners.ca



April 2021

how noble it is because of its importance on the world economy.

Having said that, I have just conveyed with this modest message, on my own behalf, on behalf of my colleague Captain Kamel BENRABAH and on behalf of all my crew members and on behalf of my Owner, my deep gratitude and sincere recognition for all the efforts that you, your staff and all the volunteers of your club (THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS at HALIFAX) have made for the well-being of the crew.

We can simply thank you, my thanks a few times do not reflect all the efforts and goodwill clearly displayed by your team towards all the sailors of the ship M/V IMEDGHASSEN in particular and the sailors of the world in general, so I bow to your charity and especially your dedication to assisting and assisting all the sailors who call at the Port of Halifax in Nova Scotia.

Dear Mrs. Helen Glenn, you are leading a mission of extraordinary nobility of which you and your team members can be proud and if only the High Authorities of the wonderful country that is CANADA could appreciate your efforts and consequently grant you a grant equal to the work you do.

Nevertheless, one thing is certain, I and all of my crew will show you our gratitude.

To conclude my message, I say a big THANK YOU and I tell you that you and Mr. Joseph LOOT, you wonderful people and God bless you.

Best Regards
Kindly Abdelkader AKROUR

Capt Abdelkader AKROUR
Master of M/V « IMEDGHASSEN »
Registered n° : AL3460
IMO N° 9459125



Helen Glenn and Joseph Loot,
Mission to Seafarers



Annual Dues Renewal Time

As everyone is aware, our annual dues run from January 1st to December 31st and they remain the same as last year. Full membership is \$300 and Senior (over 65) is @150 and cadet membership is \$20.

E-transfer is the easiest method and can be sent directly to our Treasurer, Capt. Wilkie at wilkie@gmail.com The bank account is set up to automatically deposit transfers, so that there is no requirement for a "secret password".

The end of March is normally considered the period of grace so it would be appreciated if you can renew, or contact, the Treasurer as soon as possible.



Abandonment, Repatriation, Neptune Declaration

Joseph Loot,
Mission to Seafarers Halifax

I shared about the case of abandonment of the five crew members onboard the MT Iba by Alco



The Foghorn

Newsletter of the Maritimes Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada
www.mastermariners.ca



April 2021

Shipping, the tanker's owner and employer of the abandoned crew. I also noted the role of the Mission to Seafarers in securing the welfare of the crew. News reports have further mentioned the Mission's role in mediating the negotiations for payment of unpaid wages. The negotiations resulted in an agreement whereby the crew accepted and received from Shark Power Marine Services, the tanker's new owner, the amount equivalent to 65-70% of what was owed. With the wage settlement, the crew is expected to be repatriated by the first week of March 2021. The Mission will undoubtedly function to ensure that the crew

On Monday, the CBC interview of Rev. Andy Bowerman, the Mission's MESA Regional Director, would hopefully provide information on the nature and extent of the Mission's function in resolving the Mt Iba abandonment case.

Abandonment is oftentimes mistakenly construed as a failure of repatriation in the context of the existing crew change crisis and the global pandemic. Both abandonment and repatriation are similarly provided in the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC) as essential standards in promoting the seafarers' wellbeing. However, abandonment (as in the MT Iba case) is distinct from repatriation (involving about 400,000 seafarers under the crew change crisis).

Repatriation is a legal right that entitles the seafarer to go home on the following conditions: (1) expiry of the employment contract (a); (2) termination of the contract; or, (3) inability to perform the duties under the contract. The shipowner bears the costs of repatriation. Due to the restrictions imposed by States resulting from the global spread of COVID-19, the regular conduct of crew change is disrupted, and numerous seafarers cannot enjoy their right to repatriation. States, shipowner and seafarer associations, and civil society organizations have issued several joint statements recognizing seafarers as essential workers and calling for their exemption from travel and immigration restrictions. One significant joint statement is the Neptune Declaration, which was adopted on 01 December 2020 by over 450 shipping companies and seafarer welfare organizations globally.

Shipowners also violate the right to repatriation when they fail to cover the repatriation costs. Rogue shipowners commonly do this either to minimize significant labour expense or exploit the seafarers' labour due to their incapacity to seek redress for grievance. Failure to cover the repatriation costs is one of the grounds for abandonment. Two other grounds involving unlawful actions of shipowners include: (1) failure to provide the crew with support and maintenance (food, medicines, etc.) onboard; and, unilateral severance of ties with the seafarer including non-payment of contractual wages for at least two months. Also Shipping committed, at least, these two grounds of abandonment of the seafarers onboard MT Iba.

Understanding the difference between abandonment and repatriation adds to the knowledge of seafarers' distinct hardships onboard (even extending offshore). The difference also calls for action that responds to the issues under resolution. From my work at the Mission, I learned that other than charity and prayers, the function of quasi-judicial action is also crucial in maritime ministry.



Seafarer supply is expected to tighten heralding higher manning costs

The attractiveness of a career at sea has been an industry concern for a number of years. Long periods away from home, increasing administrative demands for paperwork on board, and the threat of criminalisation being major factors. Covid-19 impacts, which have been particularly harrowing for seafarers, have added to these issues, presaging an inflection point in global seafarer supply. As a consequence, labour market conditions are expected to tighten, adding to seafarer wage inflation and vessel operating costs.

Drewry projects that the current officer shortfall to crew the global merchant fleet will widen, due to the reduced attractiveness of a career at sea and rising man-berth ratios. The effect of the former will be to slow the growth of seafarer supply, while extended leave periods and reduced tours of duty to maintain the attractiveness of a career at sea, will raise demand. A more detailed analysis of these



The Foghorn

Newsletter of the Maritimes Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada
www.mastermariners.ca



April 2021

projections can be found in Drewry's Manning Annual Review and Forecast 2020/21 report.

One of the major impacts of Covid-19 has been to expose increasing numbers of seafarers to extended tours of duty due to crew change challenges. In many cases, tours have been extended to nine months or more, when three to four months is the norm for senior officers. However, some nationalities such as Filipinos are used to six-month tours for junior officers and nine months for ratings in normal circumstances. Although difficult, crew changes are taking place and responsible companies are doing their best to make life on board more tolerable with increased food budgets and internet bandwidth. Pandemic-induced crew change complications have also swelled the ranks of out of contract crew, forced to remain at home and unable to join vessels as scheduled. Most of these have been without income for the length of the crew change delay, forcing some to seek alternative shore-based employment and the likelihood of not returning to sea. To counter this some employers have been paying 'at home wages' to retain seafarers which is mitigated some of these risks.

But it also remains the case that officers are generally well paid compared to other jobs available in the local economy. Taking the Philippines as an example, 2nd Officer wage rates are as much as three-times higher than average earnings, as measured by GDP per capita of work population (see chart). An AB wage, relating to the basic ILO ratings rank, is lower than the average by around 20%.

Hence, the unpredictability of employment at sea, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and particularly affecting ratings, may be the biggest threat to future seafarer supply.

The Philippines has long been the biggest supplier of ratings with China, Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam commonly cited as viable alternatives. However, these countries have issues of their own. Myanmar has recently experienced a military coup; China is providing ratings mainly for its domestically flagged fleet; and Indonesia and Vietnam lack the infrastructure necessary to fill any significant gap left by a potential fall in supply of Filipino ratings. India is another big supply nation but

wage rates for ratings are no lower than for Filipinos.

Officer rates of pay for most nationalities and on most vessel types remain well within the 'professional classes' range. Combined with often favourable tax treatment, opportunities for comparable shore-based employment are relatively limited. While risks remain that officers nearing the end of their careers may bring forward retirement or shore-based work plans, it is unlikely that the many ambitious junior officers will relinquish a career at sea for a relatively short-lived crisis which now seems near to resolution. Reliable Covid-19 vaccines are now in global deployment and worldwide co-operation to facilitate crew changes is gaining momentum, as is recognition of seafarers as key workers.

If there is a crisis of supply it therefore seems likely that it will be mainly in ratings ranks where opportunities ashore are more comparable and available. Employers will therefore need to watch rating recruitment and retention very carefully and prepare accordingly. However, the short training period for ratings provides a lot more flexibility than would apply to officers. If Master and Chief Engineer retirements were to accelerate, this could well create a skills gap with lower ranks being promoted in turn, perhaps without the desired experience. This may lead to wage inflation of Chief Officers and 2nd Engineers able to step up to Master and Chief Engineer ranks with little additional training. In turn experienced 2nd Officers and 3rd Engineers may be promoted, increasing demand from companies looking to secure their senior officer succession planning.

The impact of these developments is rising wage inflation which will add to pressure on already rising vessel operating costs. Source: Drewry



Capt. Thomas Kearsey Safety Award

This years winner of the award which is presented by the Maritimes Division of the Master Mariners of Canada is 3rd year Nav Cadet, Ryan Warren, of Monastery NS. He has sailed with Algoma twice during his sea phases. On the first stage aboard the Algoma



The Foghorn

Newsletter of the Maritimes Division of the
Company of Master Mariners of Canada
www.mastermariners.ca



April 2021

Spirit, and during the second stage aboard the Algoma Harvester. He expects to join the Algoma Mariner when he finishes school this term.

Capt. Dunbar had submitted a video for the presentation since Covid precluded an in-person ceremony and Capt. John MacIssac, a member of the teaching staff at NSCC MI, make the actual presentation.

Ryan has always been engaged in the class discussions and his "Master's Review" in his workbook indicate that he "Exceeded Requirements" with respect to "Assessment and avoidance of risk", and he "displays emergent Leadership qualities" A clear endorsement from the Master.



F.W.E. for this edition

Capt. Jim Calvesbert, Editor



3rd Year Nav Cadet Ryan Warren received the presentation from Capt. John MacIssac