

HONG KONG MARITIME NEWS

香港海事通訊



Study confirms Hong Kong can handle mega containerships



Hong Kong port is capable of receiving the next generation of container vessels and Kwai Chung's alongside water depths are currently adequate to meet navigational requirements of large containerships, a study has revealed.

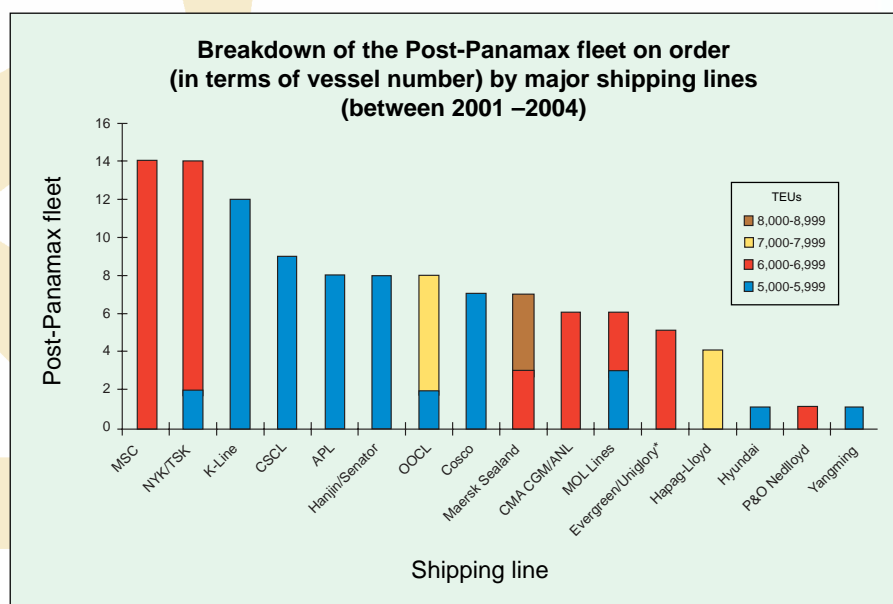
The study, namely, "Yesterday Evening and Tomorrow Morning of Container Fleet" concludes that Kwai Chung is able to serve not only large containerships currently in service, but also those expected to be in operation within the next few years.

"As for future five-digit containerships, given their draft is still uncertain, there is a need to regularly review their development in terms of physical dimensions so that dredging can be planned in good time to meet their operational conditions," the study said.

The Marine Department's Planning and Development Branch carried out the study which was completed early this year. Coincidentally, it dismissed the doubts of some people in the maritime sector over Hong Kong port's capabilities in receiving giant containerships.

"The proportion of future five-digit containerships is expected to account for a small percentage of the total containerships calling at Hong Kong based on the current distribution of large containerships visiting Hong Kong," the study said.

Mr Tsang Cheuk-yin, the Senior Marine Officer of the Planning and Development



Branch responsible for the study, said: "The study was initiated during the second quarter of last year to find out exactly whether Hong Kong could handle containerships which were increasingly becoming larger."

Besides this issue, the study assessed global development of the container trade, current trend of world fleet of container vessels and their implications for Hong Kong up to 2011 as well as the latest distribution in containership sizes visiting Hong Kong.

The study said the trend towards larger containerships to achieve better economies of scale and to lower operating costs would continue, with indications that

a sizeable fleet of 10,000 to 12,000 TEU (20-ft equivalent unit) ships would come on stream between 2005 and 2010. But it was "uncertain at present" regarding the advent of ships of 15,000 TEUs or more.

Future mega-containerships would continue to visit Hong Kong so long as the territory was able to maintain its high efficiency in container handling operations, the study said.

It recommended Hong Kong maintain water depth of 15.5 metres in the approach channels and alongside berth to meet future requirements up to 2005, with a need for regular review to keep its

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Exercises on search & rescue/ anti-oil pollution to test systems



As thousands of people commute to and from Hong Kong daily by high-speed ferries, the Marine Department's Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) and ferry companies held a simulated search and rescue exercise on November 28 to test the efficiency of their alert and response systems.

The annual drill, code-named "SAREX 2002", co-ordinated by the MRCC, tested the contingency plan on board ferries and their safety procedures aside from the responsiveness and communication systems among various parties involved.

The simulated scenario involved the collision of two high-speed ferries in the waters about one mile south of Lamma Island Power Station in which numerous passengers on both vessels reportedly sustained injuries and required immediate medical assistance and evacuation.

Another annual joint exercise to deal with oil pollution was held on November

7. Code-named 'Oilex 2002', the exercise was carried out at the waters off Pearl Island in Tuen Mun to test responses and efficiency of various Government departments and oil companies in combating oil spills.

The exercise involved a 30,000 deadweight tonnes mock tanker "Oilex 2002" that was simulated to have run aground off Pearl Island spilling some 200

tonnes of marine fuel oil into the sea from her damaged cargo tank, resulting in a huge oil patch which was subsequently brought under control.

Co-ordinated by the Marine Department's Pollution Control Unit, the seven-part exercise involved seven Government departments and five private companies with 80 overseas observers.



◀ *Rescue of a passenger by a helicopter*



▲ *Demonstration of oil recovery by skimmers*



▲ *Deploying oil containment booms to surround the polluted area*

MD to consider outsourcing less priority services



The Marine Department (MD) will critically review the level of some of its activities that are of a lesser priority than in the past and consider outsourcing them, the newly appointed Deputy Director of Marine Roger Tupper said.

He said in working towards meeting its savings targets over the next five years, MD would examine opportunities to partner with the private sector in delivering such services.

"It is too early to be specific which areas will be subject to adjustment, however, I would re-emphasise that we aim to maintain or improve essential services as we move ahead," he added.

As Deputy Director, Mr Tupper said his task was to fulfill MD's well defined future strategy to ensure safe and efficient vessel movements in port, maintain the quality Hong Kong Shipping Register and support establishment of new shipping firms in the HKSAR.

In addition, Mr Tupper emphasised

MD's commitment to streamline service delivery to Hong Kong's maritime customers through simplified legislation such as the Local Vessel Ordinance and through greater use of information technology.

Regarding the Shipping Register, MD would carry out greater liaison work with the International Maritime Organisation

Kong flag owners whose vessels experience difficulties overseas.

To ensure Hong Kong port is among the safest for shipping, MD was constantly reviewing vessel traffic levels and introducing new measures to minimise risk, like recent traffic pattern changes in Ma Wan area and major upgrade of its vessel traffic services system using latest vessel tracking automatic identification system technology.

Mr Tupper, who joined MD in 1980 as Marine Officer, was promoted to Senior Marine Officer in 1990 and then to Principal Marine Officer in 1993. He served as Assistant Director of Marine from 1996 and was seconded to the then Economic Services Bureau as Deputy Secretary to the Port and Maritime Board from 1997 to 2001 before returning to the MD as

Assistant Director. He became the MD's Deputy Director on October 2, 2002.



▲ Newly appointed Deputy Director of Marine Roger Tupper

and International Labour Organisation as well as step up customer services efforts through providing faster response to Hong

Hong Kong Shipping Register sets new milestone

Overwhelming support from shipowners boosted the Hong Kong Shipping Register (HKSR) to cross the 16 million gross registered tonnages (GRT) on November 15, setting another new record.

The total tonnage on HKSR has risen to 16.08 million GRT with the registration of the 103,168 tons oil tanker *Oriental Tiger*.

The tanker, owned by Titan Oriental Tiger Ltd, is of 54,205 net tons. Titan Ocean Pte Ltd runs the ship management while Titan Oriental Tiger Ltd is her Hong Kong representative.

"In addition, about 20 more vessels are

in the pipeline awaiting registration before the end of this year," a Marine Department spokesman said.

In another encouraging news, the US Department of Transport's website of the Top 20 International Shipping Registers has ranked the Hong Kong Shipping Register in the 9th place as at July 1, 2002.

Separately, Valles Steamship Company Ltd held a christening ceremony for its Hong Kong registered oil tanker "*Seatransport*" of 106,638 deadweight tonnes at the Tsuneishi Shipyard in Japan on October 11 attended by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.

And Deputy Director of Marine Roger Tupper attended a naming ceremony for the 8,720 GRT Liquefied Petroleum Gas/Ethylene carrier "*Norgas Sonoma*", the second in a series of six vessels at the Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai on October 31. The Hong Kong flagged vessel is already trading.

At that night at the same shipyard, a second naming and launching ceremony was held for the gas tanker "*Norgas Napa*", the sixth in the series. All vessels in the series owned by I.M. Skaugen ASA will fly the Hong Kong flag.



◀ (From left) Director of Valles Steamship Co Ltd Eric Koo, Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu and Executive Director of Valles Steamship Co Ltd David Koo attend the christening ceremony of *M.T. "Seatransport"* in Japan



▲ Deputy Director of Marine Roger Tupper (left) presents a souvenir plaque to I.M. Skaugen ASA chairman Erik Eik after the naming ceremony of the "*Norgas Sonoma*" in Shanghai

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objectives in line with future development of five-digit containerships.

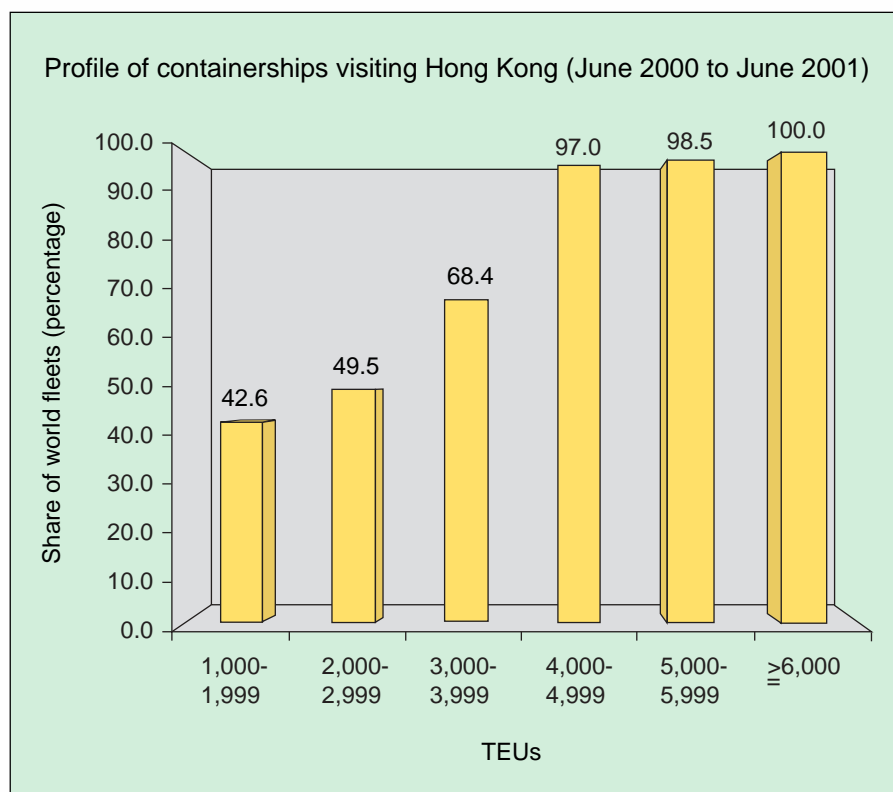
The study said the arrival or departure drafts of the largest containerships calling in Hong Kong range from 10 to 13 metres and that the draft of five-digit containerships was unlikely to go beyond 15 metres in the next five to six years.

Presently, Container Terminal 9 is being built at Kwai Chung and its quayside draft will be up to 15.5 metres to enable its berths to handle containerships that are even bigger than the 7,500 TEU containerships now being handled in Hong Kong.

From another perspective, due to the prevailing imbalance in container trade, the share of empty containers accounted for around 21 per cent of total container throughputs handled in Hong Kong between 1998 and 2000.

"This implies that even if a containership is full in terms of the number of boxes carried on board, she may not be loaded down to her summer draft (maximum draft) simply because a proportion of her cargo would be empty," the study said.

It said should five-digit containerships be introduced, it was envisaged that they would only serve a network of mega-hubs



dealing with off-shore transshipment, with only about four or five of them at the most, all on the main East-West trade routes.

As to whether Hong Kong will be one of these mega hubs, the study says there

is no simple answer to this question and it really depends on whether the territory could maintain its competitive edge in the face of mounting competition from regional ports.

Hong Kong search & rescue service of high standards



Hong Kong is one of the “shining stars” in Asia with one of the most highly developed standards of service in search and rescue, Mr Urban Hallberg, Chairman of the Joint International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Working Group on Harmonisation of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue said.

“What makes Hong Kong important is that when a call for help is raised, we are sure someone will hear you,” he added.

Over 35 search and rescue experts from 11 countries, including China represented by Hong Kong, attended the 9th session of the joint working group held between September 30 and October 4 in Hong Kong.

Members of this joint working group included maritime and aeronautical search and rescue experts from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, the United

Kingdom, the United States and Hong Kong, China.

Speaking at the reception for the participants and observers, Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu said the Hong Kong Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre last year handled 216 incidents, including 76 which developed into real search and rescue cases.

Some cases required the concerted efforts of different search and rescue

techniques and procedures where both aeronautical and maritime interests were involved, he added.

The Head of the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, Captain R.N. Dewan, said that with the recent addition of two long-range search and rescue Superpuma helicopters to the Government Flying Service, Hong Kong has vastly improved its search and rescue capabilities.



◀ *Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu delivers the opening speech at the reception of the Joint ICAO and IMO Working Group on Harmonisation of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue*



◀ *Mr Urban Hallberg, Chairman of the Joint ICAO and IMO Working Group on Harmonisation of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue, speaks about Hong Kong's high search and rescue standards*

Good response to Shipping Seminar



About 150 shipping industry representatives from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland attended a seminar hosted by Shipping Institutes of their respective areas from November 16-17.

The Marine Department (MD), a co-organiser of the event, which was held in Shenzhen, took the opportunity to promote both the Hong Kong Shipping Register and the image of the MD.

Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu, who attended the seminar in the capacity of Hong Kong Institute of Seatransport Honourable President, gave a speech at the dinner reception on November 16 on behalf of the Hong Kong shipping industry.

At the seminar, Mr So Ping-chi, General Manager of the Shipping Registry and Seafarers' Branch, presented a paper



▲ General Manager of the Shipping Registry and Seafarers' Branch So Ping-chi shares experience at the seminar

on Ship Registration and Company Registration in Hong Kong.

New regulation takes effect at Kap Shui Mun



A new regulation designating the Kap Shui Mun Fairway between Lantau Island and Ma Wan Island as a special area to enhance navigation safety came into effect from November 1, 2002.

Under the provisions stipulated in the Shipping and Port Control (Amendment) Regulation 2002, all

vessels exceeding 10 metres shall not enter the special area from Tang Lung Chau's southwestern and northeastern sides, except for vessels with authorisation.

For more details, go to the Marine Department's website: www.gov.hk/mardep or call 2385 2791.

Beijing MSA clarifies policy queries at regular meeting



Many policy queries were clarified and on-going issues pushed forward at the regular meeting between the Marine Department (MD) and the Beijing Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) held on October 23 in Beijing at the MSA Headquarters.

Issues covered at the meeting included some on-going matters related to operation of ships between Hong Kong

and the Mainland, particularly on the traffic separation scheme in the Pearl River mouth, vessel traffic services information system in the Pearl River Delta, coastal ship safety standards and insurance for Mainland non-international trading ships.

Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu led the MD delegation, which included Assistant Director (Port Control) Lee Ka-

mo, General Manager of the Ship Safety Branch Lee Wai-kuen and Senior Surveyor of the Cargo Ships Safety Section Cheung Sik-woon.

The Beijing MSA delegation led by Executive Director General Liu Gongchen included Director of the Department of International Co-operation Miao Hongde, Deputy Director of the International Affairs Jiang Xue-mei and five other Deputy Directors holding other responsibilities in MSA.

Separately, at the eighth meeting between MD and the Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration (GDMSA) held on October 29 in Hong Kong, issues concerning safety measures such as overloading of sand barges and coastal container vessels were discussed.

MD also briefed the Chinese officials about the latest development of the Hong Kong port. The Guangdong delegation, led by the GDMSA Director General Wang Xiang Tao, was welcomed by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.



▲ MSA Executive Director General Liu Gongchen (fifth from left), Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu (sixth from left) with members of the Hong Kong team and Beijing MSA

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