

## BIMCO urges enhanced safe and secure shipping

BIMCO, the world's largest international shipping organization, has urged Quality Coastal States to encourage higher levels of safe and secure shipping as well as to promote marine environment protection.

Like quality flag states and quality ships, BIMCO has developed this new Quality Coastal States concept to draw attention to coastal state authorities which have many important responsibilities related to shipping and marine environment protection.

The organization held its general meeting in Hong Kong under the Patronage of Hong Kong SAR Chief Executive Mr. Donald Tsang between June 4 and 6. Mr. Tsang said the BIMCO Executive at its general meeting had endorsed the important Quality Coastal States principle for delivering proper treatment to ships and seafarers.

Director of Marine, Mr. Roger Tupper attended the opening

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Chief Executive Donald Tsang officially opens the BIMCO meeting.

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# ICS and ISF welcome IMO's ships air emissions strategy

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the International Shipping Federation (ISF) welcomed the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary General Efthimios Mitropoulos' proposal for a 'cross-government industry-scientific working group' to evaluate the strategy to be adopted by IMO for further reducing ships' air emissions.

ICS and ISF held their annual general meetings in Hong Kong from June 6-9, at the Hong Kong Shipowners' Association invitation in conjunction with the latter's 50th anniversary.

Representatives of national shipowners' associations from 40 countries discussed a number of important regulatory issues including 'Air

Emissions and Revision of MARPOL Annex VI'.

ICS Chairman/ISF President, Spyros Polemis, explained that the meetings agreed that national shipowners' associations should strongly encourage their governments to support this helpful proposal at the important meeting of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee in July.

He said at this stage, it appeared that there was agreement that the IMO should not opt for a simplistic solution without a proper analysis of the implications including the parallel issue of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

"However, our meetings also recognised the urgency and political imperative of IMO adopting more

stringent air emission standards as soon as possible no later than early 2008 – a point recently underlined by our discussions with the Environment Directorate of the European Commission.

"We must discourage unilateral and regional action, and the IMO study must be conducted speedily to identify the best practical means for delivering maximum net environmental benefit."

Mr. Polemis stressed: "The long term goal of ICS and ISF members, once the technology needed is available, is near zero emissions with regard to air pollution from ships, greatly reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and a neutral overall impact on the environment as a whole."



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ceremony of the BIMCO meeting, which was well attended by its members from around the world.

Based on BIMCO's concept, a quality coastal state would have in place a range of essential services for the proper treatment of ships such as waste reception facilities, policies on refuge, innocent passage and aids to navigation. It would also provide fair treatment for seafarers in the event of any incident.

At its meeting, members approved changes to BIMCO's 102-year-old rules including one which provides for quality assessments of its members' ships once annually to ensure that the organization continues to be recognized as an organization

committed to high standards and a forum for quality ship owners.

BIMCO has also elected a new President Mr. Philip Embiricos of Greece to hold office for the next two years. Outgoing President Mr. Knud Pontoppidan paid a special tribute to his predecessor Mr. CC Tung who helped greatly in ensuring this meeting was a success.

Mr. John Tsatsas of Greece remains Documentary Committee chairman while Mr. Stephen Pan of Hong Kong remains Marine Committee chairman.

A special seminar was also held on the BIMCO Standard Newbuilding Contract which was approved by the Documentary Committee. The contract was conceived to provide a balanced and clearly worded solid contractual platform between shipyard and shipowner. ⚓

Headquartered in Denmark, BIMCO was established in 1905 and is the world's largest international shipping association, with about 2,500 members in 123 countries. The owner-members of BIMCO control a fleet of about 525 million DWT thereby representing 65 percent of the world's merchant fleet. BIMCO is accredited as an official observer at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Among its many activities, BIMCO provides practical information and assistance to the maritime community.

*Shipping industry wants stringent air emission standards no later than early 2008.*





# 'SAREX 2007' based on IMO guidelines successfully completed

The Marine Department's Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC) held a joint maritime search and rescue exercise – code-named 'SAREX 2007', conducted under the International Maritime Organisation guidelines, south of Lantau Island and west of Soko Islands on July 10.


The exercise participants included the Hong Kong Garrison of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Guangdong MRCC, Macau Marine Department, Marine Police, Fire Services Department, Government Flying Service, Civil Aviation Department, Civil Aids Services Department, and three ferry companies.

Senior Marine Officer (Search & Rescue) Mr Chan Kwok-wai, head of MRCC, said as thousands of passengers travelled on high-speed ferries between Hong Kong, Macau and other

Pearl River estuary ports, whenever an urgent incident occurred on one of these vessels, all search and rescue units within the region had to carry out the rescue operation efficiently, including evacuation of hundreds of passengers and crew.

'SAREX 2007' involved a mock scenario in which two high-speed ferries collided. Both ferries activated the emergencies response plan immediately and notified Hong Kong MRCC, which then alerted the HKSAR Government's search and rescue units for action.

Marine launches, police launches and fireboats all rushed to the scene and the injured were taken to hospital by helicopter and boat. The exercise, which took about two hours to complete, was conducted smoothly.

The search and rescue responsibility for maritime distress situations occurring within Hong Kong waters and the major part of the South China Sea rests with the MRCC, covering a sea area of about 450,000 square nautical miles, as agreed internationally. 



*Marine launches, Police launches, fireboats, helicopters and high-speed ferries take part in the maritime search and rescue exercise on July 10.*

# MD brought under Transport and Housing Bureau

The Government Secretariat was re-organised into 12 bureaux with effect from July 1, 2007.

With this re-organization, all matters relating to Hong Kong's internal and external transporta-

tion, including air services, maritime transport, land and waterborne transport and logistics, have now been brought under the roof of the Transport and Housing Bureau.

The newly appointed Secretary for

Transport and Housing Bureau, Ms. Eva Cheng, now has the responsibility of overlooking the Marine Department as well. ⚓



*Ms Eva Cheng is the newly appointed Secretary for Transport and Housing Bureau.*



*A landing craft of the Hong Kong Garrison rescues passengers from an inflatable life raft.*

# Hong Kong Maritime Scholarship Scheme launched

The Government has signed an agreement with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) to launch the Hong Kong Maritime Scholarship Scheme and also presented a \$4 million cheque to PolyU to fund the scheme on June 11.

Former Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Economic Development), Ms Eva Cheng, signed the agreement on behalf of the Government with PolyU, which was represented by its Vice-President (Academic Development), Prof Suleyman Demokan. Ms Miriam Lau and other Maritime Industry Council (MIC) members were also present at the ceremony.

Ms. Cheng said the scheme, which was open to local and Mainland university graduates, was aimed at

attracting such talents to take up maritime related post-graduate programmes in Hong Kong and subsequently, to join the territory's shipping and maritime industry.


"To maintain and strengthen Hong Kong's status as an international maritime centre, it is important to ensure the continued supply of sufficient professionals to meet the demand of the industry, including home grown talent with seafaring skills and experience to manage our ships and to fill a wide range of jobs in the shore-based maritime related sectors," she said.

The scheme, supported by MIC, is expected to help build an elite workforce for the Hong Kong maritime industry to sustain its development and enhance its service quality in the over-



Former Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Economic Development), Ms Eva Cheng, presents cheque to PolyU Vice-President (Academic Development), Prof Suleyman Demokan.

all interest of the territory.

The scheme covers the full-time stream of master-degree programme of "Master of Science Degree in International Shipping and Transport Logistics" (MSc Programme) offered by the PolyU. 

## Local marine industry promotes environmental protection

The local marine industry held, in conjunction with the Marine Department for the first time, an exhibition and seminar to promote environmental protection on July 22.

The event was officiated by guests of honour Mr Liu Hon Por, Acting Director of Marine, Ms. Miriam Lau, Legislative Councilor and Ms Mar Yuet-har, the Chair of the Southern District Council, who also delivered speeches.

The function aimed to promote marine environmental protection, reduce air pollution and improve waste emission from vessels oper-

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Ribbon-cutting ceremony to launch the exhibition and seminar to promote environmental protection that was held on July 22.




# Star Cruises' SuperStar Aquarius makes maiden voyage to Hong Kong

Star Cruises, the world's third largest cruise operator and Asia's leading cruise liner, organized the official maiden voyage of its newest addition, the SuperStar Aquarius, to its home port in Hong Kong, on June 22.

Former Secretary for Economic Development and Labour Mr. Stephen Ip, Commissioner for Tourism Ms. Au King-Chi, and Director of Marine Mr. Roger Tupper attended a special ceremony to welcome the SuperStar Aquarius to the territory.

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of Hong Kong's reunification with China, the theme song Just Because You Are Here, was played when the 51,039-gross tonnage and 13-storey high SuperStar Aquarius arrived at the cruise terminal.

The trendy designed cruiser has a lower berth passenger capacity of 1,520 and 760 spacious cabins of different categories ranging from suites to balcony cabins. Measuring 230 metres

long and 28.5 metres wide, the cruiser is able to cater the tastes and demands of a wide spectrum of customers, including providing them with world-class entertainment shows. 



Director of Marine Mr. Roger Tupper presents a plaque to Star Cruises' Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Chong Chee Tut.



Star Cruises' SuperStar Aquarius makes inaugural visit to its homeport in Hong Kong.

# Surveyors deployed to focus on Marine Industrial Accidents

The Marine Department has deployed surveyors to take up investigations into marine industrial accidents since May 1, 2007. The new arrangement gives more flexibility in the department's staff deployment and brings efficiency in the investigation work.

Under the Hong Kong law, all marine accidents should be reported to and investigated by the Marine Department. Previously, shipping related accidents were handled by surveyors of the Marine Accident Investigation Section (MAI) while

marine industrial accidents were investigated by the Shipping Safety Officers in the Marine Industrial Safety Section.

Now, all marine accidents, including industrial accidents, are inves-



Senior Surveyor Dr. Stephen YK Li says probe carried out to prevent reoccurrences.

tigated by surveyors. An additional surveyor post has been created in MAI to facilitate this new arrangement.

"We hope to improve our services through this new arrangement, particularly in the area of marine industrial accident investigation," said Dr. Stephen YK Li, Senior Surveyor of Ships, Marine Accident Investigation Section in the Multi-lateral Policy Division.

On investigation procedures, he said marine accident cases were graded as "very serious", "serious" or "less serious". A probe is usually conducted by an investigation officer, assisted by a team of colleagues, if required, in the MAI.

An investigation report will be prepared after taking statements and evidence. The report contains the source of information, description of vessels, outline of events, analysis of evidence, conclusions and recommendations.

If opinion is required from other specialized engineering fields during an investigation, the Marine Department will seek advice from such fields, e.g. lift specialists and metallurgist etc.

Annually, the Marine Department handles an average of about 400 accident cases. Of which some 30 to 40 are serious cases, and about one third or 10 are "very serious" cases which involve casualties. ⚓

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## Local marine industry promotes environmental protection

ating in the harbour, so as to keep up the momentum of the Action Blue Sky launched last year. These efforts also complement the proposed Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Air Pollution) Regulation.

The Merchant Shipping (Prevention of Air Pollution) Regulation, which now enters the last stage of legislation, and is expected to be effective next year. The new regulation will effectively decrease air polluting emission

from vessels operating in the harbour.

The exhibition and seminar received enthusiastic response from the marine industry. About 100 attendants took part in the seminar and six professional delivered dissertations. The seminar was followed by a symposium on environmental protection technology. ⚓

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