

TANKEROperator

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- **Industry leaders meet in Athens**
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The third session addressed the issues of safety, environment and the relevant changing attitudes, followed by a discussion on the theme. "Is shipping being left behind in the race for green solutions?"

Harilaos Psarftis, professor, National Technical University of Athens and former ceo, Piraeus Port Authority, referred to the need for proactive attitude and proactive regulation as the key drivers to a greener shipping industry. He commented that regulation should be in place before the catastrophic event and formulated properly to prevent the catastrophic event, instead of being ad hoc adopted "in the aftermath of catastrophic events".

Proactive safety regulations need to be integrated with the formal safety assessment (FSA) and the goal-based standards (GBS). FSA was defined by the IMO as "a rational and systematic process for assessing the risk related to maritime safety and the protection of the marine environment and for evaluating the costs and benefits of IMO's options for reducing these risks".

GBS focuses more on the construction of the ship, the objective being to introduce a system of standards to measure against the safety of a ship during its design, construction and operation. These standards "should be broad, over-arching goals against which ship safety should be verified", while they are not intended to "set prescriptive requirements or to give specific solutions", Psarftis said.

He continued by referring to the GBS 'safety level approach (SLA) debate. He asked how and when can the FSA and GBS be linked and integrated? Before this integration, there was a need to address certain deficiencies in the SLA, and specifically the "individual risk acceptance criteria" and its one-dimensional existing risk index. Psarftis underlined that there had been no FSA for environmental risk, instead there were only

assumptions, therefore significant effort is needed to "develop environmental risk assessment criteria". Psarftis concluded by offering practical suggestions for further steps towards this direction, including full discussions at the IMO by relevant correspondence groups and the preparation for onward discussion at MSC 82, Istanbul in November-December 2006. His overall concept strategically linked "shipping safety" with "environmental safety".

Michael Cabibbo, managing director, Worldwide Ecological Shipping & Transport [WEST], presented what he considered to be an innovative, practicable and environmentally-efficient technology solution. WEST recently patented a propulsion system that enables merchant ships to be fuelled by treated municipal and industrial wastes, biomass or other types of refuse derived fuel (RDF), meeting the UNI 9903 (RDF) requirements. The energy produced from RDF combustion can be used for the ship's propulsion, as well as all of its electrical and heating requirements, while reducing the air emissions by up to 98% when compared to a traditional maritime propulsion system. In addition, WEST's system was claimed to give substantial economic benefits to ship owner/operators and also provide a hedge against the constant fluctuation in bunker prices.

This system is fully compliant with all the latest European directives regarding the use of renewable energy sources and in particular Directive 2003/30/Ce - 'Promoting the use of bio-fuels and other renewable fuels for transport'. Cabibbo covered all the aspects of this environmental technology - the logistics and environmental issues, the implications for RDF production plants and waste treatment plants, the ship design considerations, and RDF availability. When referring to the economic competency of his technology,

“Recruitment is the single biggest issue facing the maritime industry, an area needing significant investment, while the human factor is the catalyst to a competitive advantage.”

Cabibbo stated that the increased costs associated with WEST's patented system are quickly recovered through:

- (a) The elimination of the majority of the fossil fuel costs
 - (b) The profits derived from acceptance of the RDF (tipping fee).
 - (c) The possibility of increasing the cruising speed of the vessel.
- As a further illustration, Cabibbo presented the net present value of the after tax cash flow benefits.

In concluding, Cabibbo stated that improving the environmental conditions of coastal ecosystems means reducing the emissions from ships. "The WEST propulsion system allows for a reduction in air pollutants by a factor of 10, while providing the owner/operator of the ship with a new and significant revenue stream from the tipping fees received from use of RDF", he claimed.

Recycling

DNV's **Hanna Lee Behrens** presented the class society's proposal for ship recycling through the culture of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

After briefly presenting DNV's ship recycling practices regarding health, safety and environmental issues, Behrens stressed the class society's commitment to make the maritime industry environmentally sound by striving to achieve efficient regulatory framework, examining cost-effective measures, and supporting the industry to reach environmental compliance.

The fourth session, which pulled in the most delegates and

proved to be the most interesting session during the conference's first day, endeavoured to give a holistic analysis of the human factor challenges.

A discussion between the speakers and audience followed the theme: "How can the decline in the number of Europeans entering certain maritime professions be reversed and the safety and attractiveness of jobs ensured?"

Manning shortage

Roberto Giorgi, ceo, V Ships, started his address with a startling question: "Where will tomorrows' crews come from?" Recruitment is the single biggest issue facing the maritime industry, an area needing significant investment, while the human factor is the catalyst to a competitive advantage. Giorgi presented a combination of adverse elements - a global shortage of suitably qualified officers in conjunction with growth in the world fleet, increasing industry regulation, plus wages' inflation caused by competition.

He referred to a new approach to increase the supply of quality seafarers in that crew must be viewed by shipowners as 'customers'. There should also be long-term strategy implemented for discovering and developing talent. Key factors to this new approach are 'training' and 'retention'. According to Giorgi, as China appears already unable to meet current demands, the next crews will probably come from the new and aspiring EU nations, as well as from Russia and India.