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# Sailor Today

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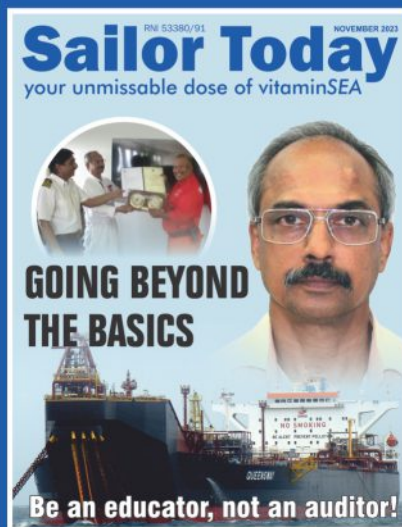
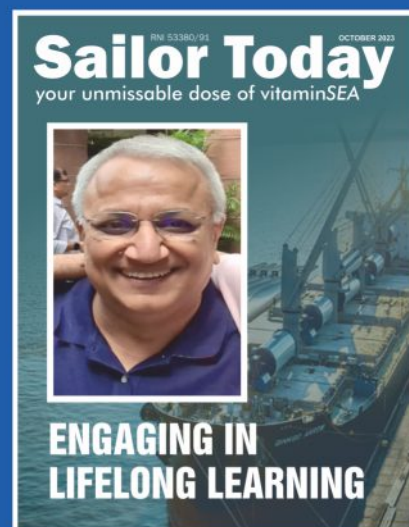
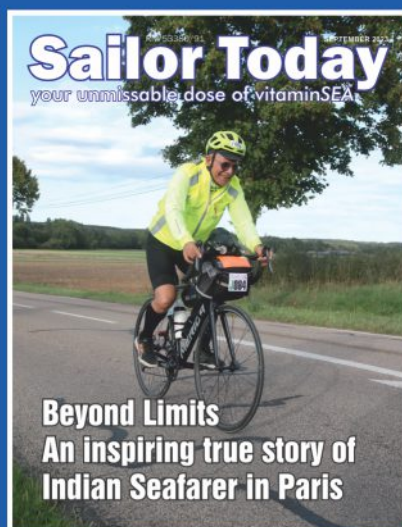
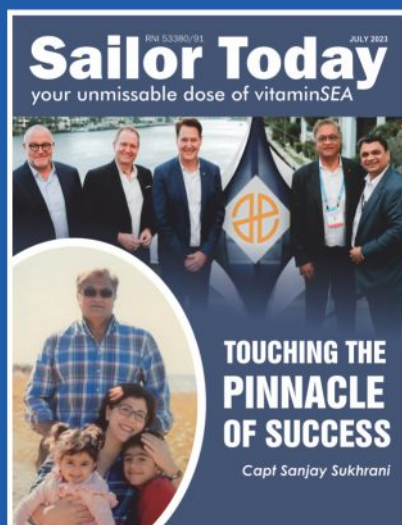
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# Sailor Today

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# THE INVISIBLE SAFETY NET



The telegraph and the skeletal head! This duo of the sailing world usurps the iconic pair of Batman and the Joker...explaining the dichotomy of the sailing profession so well. No doubt, a seasoned sailor once said - 'sailing is hours of ecstasy interrupted by moments of panic, it is the fine art of getting quite wet and quite ill, while slowly going nowhere at great expense!' (Pun intended )

For sailors, life comes in waves and they have learnt to ride them! From storms to laycans, their bag nasty wraps in itself a breathtaking mosaic of the battles they have won.

Yes, our sailors with a stormy mind and heart rule the trade, each time with a new contract, new set of people, each time starting afresh with a clean slate.

But why rest that stormy mind and heart? Why not give it a sense of purpose instead?

Dehradun Mariners Association was born as a result. In 1980, it was crafted...not produced, crafted over the years. This association headed by Capt Sandeep Taimini, with Capt. Arnab Roy as the Vice President knows only one direction: **fast forward!** So, ideally it is equipped with one of the most dynamic teams.

Dehradun is home to some of the stalwarts of shipping, and this powerhouse is an epitome of selfless service provided by the members, who work tirelessly for the welfare of the mariner fraternity, be it supporting social causes, providing scholarships or mentoring those who look up to them. It is the invisible safety net without a doubt. In times of distress, their efforts know no boundaries and distances don't matter, they reach out to help seafarers and their families.

It was recently felicitated by the International Maritime Business Academy for the same spirit.

The spirit unfurled once again for the week long celebration of 61st Maritime Day this year, captioned 'Call of the Sea.' It was organised and executed impeccably from the 31st of March to the 5th of April 2024.

## THE HIDDEN VAULT

As the vault was opened beyond the twin doors of Mariners Cove (official address of the Mariners Association), 31st of March, 2024 snowballed into an intriguing event that was laced with sessions of counseling for students of Dehradun who aspire to pursue a career in the Merchant Navy by



the Personnel from renowned institutes namely International Maritime Institute, Noida, and Chitkara University, Chandigarh. Captain Vinayak Mohla, International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Goodwill Ambassador, graced the occasion presenting his thoughts, emphasising on the need to encourage and induct more women power in the Navy. The era of sheroes has to arrive and stay!

The star attraction of the day was the photography exhibition aptly captioned- 'A Day of a Seaman's life.' Right from the nautical instruments on display to a riot of colourful moments, patriotic fervour and the festive joy captured by shutterbugs on various vessels, the event was hand in glove with the rhythm of sea and its nuances.

I must mention ...the photograph of the telegraph and the skeletal head is my favourite!

## GAZE THROUGH THE PORTHOLE

Everybody thinks strength comes in lightning strikes, but I think it comes in whispers. Then the whispers can grow thunderous over time, only if you are patient enough to explore. But strength to our sailors comes in gallons at the highest nautical speed. On the 2nd of April, our mariners gathered at the Captain's Deck



for a soft ball cricket match and archery. The subtle heat did not dampen the spirits as the targets were hit within the right range, with the right gaze... though many slips and misses were received with encouragement, applause and quips, captured to make them more memorable. What a day! Absolutely spectacular!

## HAPPY MINDS AND FEET

To match the rhythm of the celebration week further, 'Call of the sea' turned a little wilder giving way to 'Nature walk' to a suburban Cafe that encourages sustainable existence and offers quiet and raw beauty wrapped all around. At this muster station, mariners bonded over words, laughter and a sumptuous '**pahadi**' (**north Indian pertaining to hills**) lunch. One could see senior officers with their families, teenagers, kids orchestrate experiences and joy of togetherness. Strengths were combined for many when they enthusiastically climbed trees, smelt the





whiff of spring on mango trees and wild flowers, chatted with the villagers and clicked pictures in the most enviable poses.

## THINK TANKS COME TOGETHER

I believe that the Dehradun mariners, especially the organising committee, have the engravings of a formula one racing car on their nerves. Laser focus, mind and heart at work, simply unstoppable!

While the sportsmanship was brewing, Mariners Association curated a seminar on 'Maritime Security Challenges in the Red Sea- Attack on commercial Shipping by Houthi Militants' on the 5th of April, 2024. The

speakers included Capt. Kapil Sati- officer in-charge of Maritime Operation Centre at Naval Headquarters, New Delhi. Capt. Sarabjeet S Parmar (Indian Navy Retd)- distinguished Fellow at the United Service Institution of India, New Delhi and Council for Strategic and Defence Research, New Delhi, Gp Capt. (retd) Vinod Augustine- a decorated fighter pilot and a drone visionary, Capt. Sushmit Biswas- CEO at Saigal Sea Trade Mumbai and Daniel Mueller- Security Analyst at London Based Maritime security firm Ambrey. The chief guest at the seminar was Vice Admiral (retd) A.G. Thapliyal whose notable higher appointments include the Commandant





## BY PUSHPIKA VIJJAN



The first category of awards ceremony included the magnificently designed 'Sea Dog' medals, exuding prestige and honour. They were handed over for distinguished sea-service to the senior most mariners of the fraternity, who have sailed for more than 21 years during their illustrious career. Strongest sea legs we know of, the recipients being- Capt. Deepak Kothiyal, Capt. Manmohan Singh Thapliyal, Capt. Manoj Suri, Capt. Ashwani Kumar, Capt. Leonard Roga, Capt. Anil Khanna, CE Amar Sood, CE Ramesh Bhargava, Capt. Rajiv Gupta and Capt. Mukul Bahuguna.

Recipient of the 'Sirius Award' bestowed in recognition of outstanding achievement in the shipping industry was our esteemed member Capt. Vikrant Gosain, CEO Dockendale Ship Management, Dubai, and was received by his mother on the momentous day.

The 'Lodestar Award' for lifetime achievement was presented to our most eminent member Capt. Ravi Dewan and recipient of the 'Golden Anchor' award was Mrs. Minakshi Soti for her exemplary contribution in Education and social services.





Indian Naval Academy, Chief of Personnel which is the HR head of the Indian Navy and Director General Indian coast Guard. He is presently the president of the Indian Navy Foundation, Dehradun chapter.

The pleasures of basking in the afterglow, sunset and soiree...perfect pairing!

The celebration week concluded with an award ceremony where years of sea service were honoured and achievements of the mariners recognised.

Besides the awards recognising the eminent members, the institutions who silently support the Association in myriad ways deserve our gratitude. Thanking DSWA (Dehradun Seafarers' Welfare Association) and 'Abha' Dehradun, for being there, always!

Another Strong anchor supporting the event was Sailor Today magazine. Gracing the occasion on their behalf was Pallavi Sehgal, a renowned Make up Artist and trainer, who marvels the industry with her quintessential style and craft for decades. She held the beacon to officially introduce the Sailor Today Radio to the mariners present at the event. Pleasure was ours!

Merging with the moment, Foot tapping music, dance and joyous conversations flowed into the natural rhythm of the



evening. A memorable day indeed!

***You are the message you convey!*** The Mariners Association acts as an invisible safety net, a circle of power, the perfect human shield, one that cushions us, but also gives us that push over the edge we have been teetering on for too long!

People may cite philosophers, but our sailors probably follow Dory from 'Finding Nemo', where no matter what life unfurls, one has to keep swimming, paddling...paddling on even steroids to become unstoppable...and emerging victorious! Whether it is the Batman-Joker duo on land or the humble Dory in waters, for us our sailors are superheroes at sea.

I see all of them guzzle down 'unpredictability' in a smoothie, saying 'Cheers' to yet another voyage, another adventure!

***Long live the telegraph and the invisible safety net!***

Ciao!





# In conversation with **CAPT. PRASHANTS RANGNEKAR**



- Managing Partner-Maritime Practice, Comaea Consulting Pte. Ltd
- Former COO Fleet Management Ltd (FLEET),
- Former Director and Chairman of MASSA
- Former Warden and current member of CMMI
- Former Executive Committee member of DRACEA
- Life Member's Representative of the Governing Council of T. S. Rahaman

***Transitioning to a shore assignment can entail significant adjustments. What prompted your transition to a shore-based position at Fleet Management Ltd (FLEET), and in what ways have your seafaring experiences shaped your work on land?***

I mostly sailed on older Cape Size vessels in senior ranks (Chief Officer, later as a Master), which had a lot of structural issues. Each day we would wake up to a new surprise, with breaches in the ship's hull either from the bottom or from the ship's side at welding seams. Our tenacity, ability

to work as a team, and leadership in adverse situations were tested again and again. And this was the story in every contract as the ships were old. I always felt that as you rise up in ranks at sea, the role becomes more of a man manager, a PR

## **CREW TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:**

- **STRUCTURED CAREER GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR SEAFARERS AT FLEET, BOTH ON SEA AND ASHORE.**
- **WE ALSO HAVE WELL-STRUCTURED LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AIMED AT ENHANCING THE COMPETENCIES OF OUR EMPLOYEES.**

man, a Team Leader, an Administrator, than just a Navigator. I thought these are the skills which could be best put to use ashore where one can manage bigger teams, whereas at sea your scope is limited to the operations of that one ship and guiding that one team on board.

Moreover, at sea, after reaching the rank of Master, there is no chance of further growth, and then the only avenue left for further career development is to seek a shore assignment. Having successfully handled critical and challenging situations at sea, it gave me the confidence of handling operational matters on a larger scale. Also, while on board, it was quite normal to oversee the development of junior officers and trainees on board. Giving them daily tasks, guiding them through their professional subjects, overseeing their practical assignments on board, and seeing them develop into good seafarers, officers, was very satisfying. I thought the avenue to oversee the career growth of young seafarers would have a wider scope if given an opportunity to work ashore, in the crewing and training department, and that made me think if it was time to shift to a shore assignment. Secondly, my wife and daughter used to sail with me during most of my tenures, but when my daughter reached 1st Std, it was not possible for her to miss her school and be with me. This added to my decision of stepping ashore.

At sea, discipline, sincerity, and dedication in work and being responsible for your

## GENDER DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION:

- WE ACTIVELY RECRUIT WOMEN CADETS AND OFFICERS THROUGH TARGETED OUTREACH EFFORTS.
- WE PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN SEAFARERS.
- WE ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE VISIBILITY AND REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN SEAFARERS IN THE INDUSTRY.

actions are instilled in every seafarer. Having a positive attitude and self-belief helps when one is leading a team as a Master at sea. These values help immensely when working ashore as well as they are the bedrock of a successful career whether at sea or ashore. So, when I took up a shore job with Fleet Management Ltd, my only intention was to deliver to the best of my ability, and my inclusion in the team ashore should add some value to the organization.

***Throughout your time at Fleet Management Ltd, you spearheaded notable expansions in the company's fleet and crew size. What pivotal tactics did you utilize to realize such substantial growth?***

When I joined the organization in the year 1997, we had about 12 ships under our management, and the focus of our Managing Director, Mr. Kishor Rajvanshy,



was to be the best in the business as we grow. This was possible only with having Indian seafarers on board who are known for their skills, dedication in work, and reliability. So, if we had to sustain operations and



grow the fleet in a big way, it was obvious that we had to gain the trust of the seafarers, provide them with excellent career opportunities, and be cost-effective.

As much as the seafarers needed jobs, the company too needed competent seafarers to man their vessels, and hence reaching out to the seafarers was of prime importance. We had to expand our reach, and hence besides having offices in Metro cities (Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Cochin, and Chennai), we then opened offices in Vizag, Patna, Chandigarh, and in Lucknow. We later also opened an office in Jaipur, as Rajasthan holds good seafarers who are known for their hard work and sincerity. But having just crewing offices across India was not enough, so we started holding 'Reach-out Seminars' at all these locations and also in other locations such as Pune, Dehradun, and Gujarat. This allowed us not only to

connect with our existing pool of seafarers and their families (who are an important part of our relationship with every seafarer) but also notably allowed us to connect with other seafarers who were not sailing with us. We showcased our strengths and what made our organization the preferred choice, and that helped us get more seafarers in our pool. While we were getting new talent into our pool, it was equally important to retain our existing talent. While better-maintained ships, quality in operations, focus on safety, and the in-house quality catering division giving comfort of excellent Indian and international cuisine were the backbone of our success in retaining talent on board, we also started rewarding long sea-service with the organization with rewards and a letter of appreciation from the Managing Director. Our annual seminars gave an opportunity to seafarers to meet face to face with the top management of the

company and also meet our Principals. We gained further traction when we extended medical insurance to the family of the seafarer. The seafarer also remained covered with medical insurance and life cover while on leave, and all these benefits were given at no cost to the seafarer. Our state-of-the-art training centre in Navi Mumbai offered quality post-sea, value-added training which ensured that all our seafarers were not only competent but also well acquainted with the new requirements of the trade, skilled, and gained good knowledge substantiated with practical hands-on training necessary for the trade. This too played a key role in retaining talent and attracting new ones into our fold.

Indian seafarers by nature are quite ambitious and keen on climbing the promotion ladder and bettering their career given a robust platform to showcase their talent. The company formalized a promotion program for every rank, and all seafarers were encouraged to complete this well-structured leadership and promotion orientation program, which in addition to the regular performance appraisals aided the promotion of quality seafarers in a timely manner. All of the above greatly helped the organization in

achieving growth and maintaining the trust of its stakeholders, seafarers included.

***Your pivotal involvement in recruitment, particularly in cultivating a talent pipeline and advocating for shipping-related careers among youth, is notable. Can you expand on the significance of this initiative within the maritime sector?***

While the initiatives mentioned earlier are good to keep the current pool of seafarers intact, this is never enough, especially when the fleet size is growing at a good pace year on year. This is where the importance of creating a young talent pipeline becomes important.

Recruitment of trainees (Deck Cadets, Trainee Engineers, trainee ratings) is an important aspect of any organization's growth and sustenance. I, along with my colleagues in training and crewing, visited





## TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION:

- **TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ENHANCING SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY IN SHIP MANAGEMENT.**
- **AS THE MARITIME INDUSTRY BECOMES INCREASINGLY DIGITIZED, THERE IS A GROWING FOCUS ON LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE.**

various schools and colleges to inform them about taking up Merchant Navy as a career option. We realized how very little they know about the Marine industry, and our presentation was an eye-opener for them and the faculty. Most of the good colleges do have a 'career consultant', but we found that they have very little, scanty information about Merchant Navy as a career choice, and hence a career in Merchant Navy does not get promoted or even discussed.

It is very important that the industry arranges regular visits to such good schools and colleges on a regular basis as a collective effort round the year rather than doing it in isolation. We also left our contact details with the school for further communication to clear doubts if any. This cannot be a one-time visit and has to be followed up with more visits each year which we continued. In fact, we also offered to meet the parents to dispel any doubts, as parents play an important role in deciding on the career

choice of their ward. We short-listed good pre-sea training institutes for training our cadets and trainee engineers. Our eligibility criteria were stringent, and those trainees who met the criteria would be eligible to appear for our written exams and interview. This stringent screening at the entry level is necessary to ensure that we select good youngsters who can be further groomed into future officers, engineers for our fleet. We also make these youngsters go through pre-joining medical examinations and a psychometric test for overall evaluation of the shortlisted candidates. Once the trainees join the pre-sea institutes, our crewing and training team are in regular touch with them and the faculty to oversee their progress and guide them in areas where they need assistance. Once they pass out from the institutes, we conduct a bridging course to orient them towards life at sea, their ship-board routines and guide them on practical aspects. Induction of trainees from top-class pre-sea training institutes year after year across of sea-life and shipboard duties.

Once on board, they follow a structured training program for their overall development. One very important aspect of their nurturing is that every trainee in all departments is attached to a mentor from the shore team who is his/her close confidante, a friend, a guide overseeing the mentee's development and helps in overcoming hurdles and challenges on all fronts.



This may seem a very time-consuming and laborious process, but it does give rich rewards as we could see from the trainees who eventually turned into very capable officers for our expanding fleet. This also ensured that we had a good talent pipeline, and retaining them in the company fold was never an issue. Later, we also started an onboard buddy scheme, where each trainee is allotted a fellow seafarer on board who becomes his immediate guide and mentor for that tenure. Ideally, this buddy is preferred to be from the same geographical region as the trainee, thereby a quick rapport is developed and communication between them is easy. For deck trainees, such a buddy could be an Engineer, and for Engine Trainee, the buddy could be a deck officer, or from the same department if that is convenient. The buddy then guides the trainee on how best to handle challenging

situations and if necessary, discuss with the responsible officer (Chief Officer or 2/E) to resolve serious issues, if any. This initiative also turned out to be quite effective, in getting the trainee to feel part of the ship's ecosystem and part of the organization.

***Dealing with crises like the hijacking of a managed vessel by Somali pirates and organizing crew changes amid the COVID-19 pandemic demanded substantial leadership and coordination. How did you tactfully handle the management of such emergencies?***

The aforementioned crises were among the worst that I faced in my career ashore. A) One of our Chemical Tanker was hijacked by Somali Pirates in November 2008, enroute from Europe to Asia. As this was something new and uncommon for



the industry, back then, we first found it hard to comprehend but very soon it dawned upon us that this was indeed a reality. The hijackers on board immediately started threatening the Master and crew to spread panic and then asked them to contact their families so that the news spread fast not only across the industry but to the general public through the main media who get involved as the situation develops. We started receiving calls from the families and well-wishers of the hijacked crew and 'other interested' parties. And

these calls continue 24x7 from different corners of the world, and coping up with them becomes very challenging. While updates from the



hijacked vessel or the 'handlers' and negotiators don't come often yet everyone at the shore end is keen to receive an update every few hours. Hence besides having a media PR agency to attend to queries from media, we set up a panel of senior staff at our Mumbai office to attend to the families of hijacked crew and address other queries and matters related to the hijack incident. This panel of senior staff was working round the clock in batches to maintain round-the-clock continuity.

The initial reaction from the family is to blame the company for the hijack, not realizing that the company is also a 'aggrieved' party equally affected by the incident. To add to this agony, the crew union saw this as a good opportunity to showcase themselves and get visibility and in the process show solidarity with the crew, by planning a 'marcha' to the office. I had to talk to the head of the crew union and explain to him the futility of such an action when we ourselves were equally stressed and such an act of 'marcha' would pitch

the families against the organization and it would give an impression of the organization being the villain and this way the

situation goes in favour of the hijackers. As the situation gets hyped in the media, the hijackers increase their stake (demand for ransom money), and negotiations for release get a setback. This was, in fact, the time for the family of the crew and the company to stay together and hence we got the family to come to the office on a regular basis. I used to have a dialogue with each one of them, and our senior team from Head Office in Hong Kong would also speak to the family members and give an update on crew safety and

assurance on the release of every crew member. Our Managing Director himself flew from Hong Kong to Mumbai to meet the Master's family and personally assured her of the release not only of her husband but of the entire crew without any harm to them. This transparency in operations and keeping the family of affected crew informed while also meeting face to face, helped us in building trust and proved very vital for calming the nerves and negotiations to go unhindered. Finally, the vessel with its entire crew got released after about 45 days, and this dreadful saga came to an end.

B) The COVID pandemic was different, unheard, and

never before seen or imagined challenge that the entire world faced. While all modes of transport – Rail, Road, and Air traffic came to a halt, it was only shipping as the vital lifeline that continued to deliver all the important daily necessities (food, fuel, medicines, all types of daily essentials), and thus helped the rest of the world from going insane. But to keep the ships running meant keeping the crew on board working in isolation which took a toll on their mental

well-being. The crew on board had to come back to their families at the end of their tenure, and fresh crew had to be connected to the vessels to relieve the exhausted crew. Moving the personnel from their homes (some of them stayed in interiors) to reach the ship, which was scattered across the world in different ports, was a very daunting task to put it mildly. It is said that don't let a challenge go waste! And rightly so. During this

challenging period, the entire Indian shipping industry came together to find solutions to mobilize the crew and keep the trade going.

During this very demanding period, I was the Chairman of MASSA and

hence had the additional responsibility of looking into the challenges faced by all our member shipping companies besides welfare of our own crew on board our 550+ vessels. We had very frequent meetings with the Director-General of Shipping, Shri Amitabh Kumar, and with his help also sought meetings and assistance from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Ministry of External Affairs, and all other stakeholders, as besides mobilizing the ship's crew, we





had sick crew on board which needed urgent medical care. While we were doing the crew change, in order to ensure the safety of the relieving crew, we made sure they were always kept in a sanitized bubble and moved along a pre-approved safe corridor to avoid them getting infected. Numerous RT-PCR tests were conducted as they left their home to ensure that they were free of COVID infection and did not carry the virus on board, for the safety of those on board.

The Indian industry came together and chartered a large number of flights exclusively for the movement of the crew in a sanitized manner, as commercial flights were stopped in and out of the country. Even domestic flights had come to a halt; hence we moved crew by sanitized cars across length and breadth of India so that they could reach sea-ports on the Indian coast or to nearby airports to catch the chartered flight out of India.

As each State border was guarded by law enforcement officers to prevent internal movement of personnel, the Directorate General of Shipping issued a special e-pass to each of the traveling crew to ease their movement across state borders and to ensure that only authentic seafarers used the safety corridor for to and from movement from ship to shore. The Indian Embassies in every coastal nation that we approached willingly came forward and responded promptly to our calls. This greatly helped us in getting medical

attention to our crew on board and also in carrying out the much-needed crew change. All this involved a lot of coordination, with internal and external parties, huge logistics management, and like the crew on board, even the staff working in various company offices, government departments, port officials, consulates issuing visas, all worked hand in hand for extended hours for days-on over the entire covid period, to keep the world trade going.

Here I must add that the office of the D.G. Shipping, its affiliated offices including the Shipping Master's office went over and above their normal duty and working hours to assist the Indian Maritime Industry, without which such a never-seen-before challenge could not have been overcome. We also engaged professional psychologists to assist the crew on board in overcoming mental fatigue, depression, and feelings of frustration. These psychologists were flooded with calls from ships at all hours, and they patiently handled each case with compassion. This service was extended even to the family members of the crew, and we even assisted the family members of the crew in getting medical attention (hospital bed) when required. The Company also provided Oxygen Concentrators to the crew family in need and also donated good numbers to NGOs, Municipal workers, Fire-Brigade and Police personnel as a service to the society.

***The welfare initiatives you launched, such as the "Fleet Care" program and mental health assistance for seafarers, are laudable. Could you provide some insights into the effects of these programs on the welfare of crew members?***

FLEET recognized the need to support our community of seafarers. FLEET has a team called FLEET Care who are dedicated to ensuring the holistic wellbeing of our seafarers. This unique team is made up of professionals from different backgrounds including aviation, hospitality, and psychology. Together, they channel their shared passion to do everything in their power to nurture the health and wellbeing of our seafarers. They conduct regular outreach to seafarers and their family members, providing emotional, social, and psychological support via phone calls, emails, and instant messages. They also host engagement activities and produce a digital newsletter capturing moments and highlights from the daily lives of seafarers and their families to help them stay connected. The tremendous time, effort, and energy put in by our FLEET Care team is one of the reasons why they have been able to build such a highly engaged and very close-knit community of seafarers.

***FLEET CARE-Caring of seafarers, their families, and the environment***

The "Fleet Care" Department has indeed shown promising impacts on the well-being of crew members. Seafaring can be mentally challenging due to the isolation, long working hours, and the demanding nature of the job. Recognizing this, mental health support services have been introduced to provide awareness building (Psychological First aid sessions for all ranks, Wellness at sea sessions for cadets and TMEs), in-house counselling, psychological assistance, and access to resources for coping with stress, anxiety, and depression.

By destigmatizing mental health issues and encouraging open dialogue, crew members feel more supported and are more likely to seek help when needed. This has led to a noticeable improvement in the mental well-being of seafarers, reducing instances of depression, burnout, and other psychological issues. FleetCare also liaises with families thus providing much-needed support to families when the seafarer is away at sea. The welfare and care are being recognized as strong support systems that are enabling holistic care to the seafarer. Meet and greet with families also further strengthen the seafarer bonds with the organization building an efficient network system.

***6. Ensuring transparency in engagement and professional advancement is crucial for both maritime and land-based roles. How did you guarantee equitable and***



## ***organized career development opportunities for individuals at Fleet Management Ltd?***

When dealing with people developing Trust is very important. Trust-based relationships last longer and can overcome all challenges. Building trust is not easy; the effort has to come from both sides. The company has to have a well laid down policy on all aspects of employment (recruitment, training, development, grievance handling, etc), and the company's policy should be communicated to all employees in the language they understand. At FLEET, we have HR Manuals for Officers, Trainees, Ratings, and also for the crew on board. At the recruitment stage itself, all candidates are given a copy of the HR Manual for their ready reference and further queries. We conduct induction programs for new entrants to apprise them of the company's philosophy, goals, values, and expectations from them.

Structured career growth opportunities are available for seafarers at FLEET, both on sea and ashore. We have well-defined cadet training programs, structured induction programs for new hires, performance management systems, promotion schemes, and leadership development initiatives. We also have well-structured learning and development programs aimed at enhancing the competencies of our employees. Employees are encouraged to

take up additional responsibilities, undergo training programs, and pursue higher education to further their career growth. Open and transparent communication is encouraged across all levels of the organization. Regular performance appraisals are conducted to provide feedback to employees on their performance and areas of improvement. Opportunities for career advancement are communicated to employees through internal job postings, and employees are encouraged to apply for roles that align with their career aspirations and skills. We also have mentorship programs where employees are paired with senior leaders who provide guidance and support in their career development journey. Recognition and rewards are important for motivating employees and fostering a culture of excellence. We have various recognition programs in place to appreciate the contributions of our employees, including employee of the month awards, long-service awards, and performance-based bonuses.

We also have employee engagement initiatives such as team-building activities, town hall meetings, and employee feedback surveys to ensure that employees feel valued and engaged. Overall, our focus is on creating a positive work environment where employees feel empowered, supported, and motivated to achieve their full potential.

***As a proponent for gender diversity and inclusivity in the maritime sector, what actions did you undertake to advance equal opportunities for women in seafaring positions?***

The maritime industry has traditionally been male-dominated, but there is increasing recognition of the need for gender diversity and inclusion in the industry. Women bring unique perspectives, skills, and experiences to the table, and promoting gender diversity can lead to better decision-making, innovation, and performance. At FLEET, we are committed to promoting equal opportunities for women in seafaring roles and creating a more inclusive workplace culture. To promote gender diversity, we have implemented several initiatives aimed at attracting, retaining, and advancing women in seafaring roles. These include: Recruitment and outreach: We actively recruit women cadets and officers through targeted outreach efforts, including participation in career fairs, school visits, and outreach programs. We also work with maritime training institutes to encourage more women to pursue careers in seafaring. Training and development: We provide equal access to training and development opportunities for women seafarers, including specialized training programs, leadership development initiatives, and mentorship programs.

We also provide support for women seafarers to pursue higher education and

professional certifications to further their careers. Supportive work environment: We strive to create a supportive work environment where women seafarers feel valued, respected, and included. This includes zero-tolerance policies for discrimination and harassment, awareness training for all employees, and support networks for women seafarers. Career advancement: We provide equal opportunities for career advancement for women seafarers, including promotion opportunities, internal job postings, and leadership roles. We also track and monitor gender diversity metrics to ensure that women have equal access to career advancement opportunities.

Visibility and representation: We actively promote the visibility and representation of women seafarers in the industry through various channels, including social media, industry events, and publications. We celebrate the achievements of women seafarers and showcase their success stories to inspire future generations. By implementing these initiatives, we aim to create a more inclusive and diverse maritime industry where women have equal opportunities to thrive and succeed.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT:**

- **OUR APPROACH TO RISK MANAGEMENT IS BASED ON A PROACTIVE, SYSTEMATIC, AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH.**
- **WE CONTINUOUSLY MONITOR OUR OPERATIONS FOR EMERGING RISKS AND CHANGES IN RISK PROFILES.**



## ***Can you provide insights into how technology and innovation contribute to improving safety and efficiency in ship management?***

Technology and innovation play a crucial role in enhancing safety and efficiency in ship management. As the maritime industry becomes increasingly digitized, there is a growing focus on leveraging technology to improve operational performance, reduce costs, and mitigate risks. One area where technology has made significant advancements is in the field of safety management. Ship management companies are increasingly adopting digital safety management systems that enable real-time monitoring and reporting of safety incidents, hazards, and near misses. These systems help to identify potential risks early on and take proactive measures to prevent accidents and injuries. Another area where technology is driving improvements is in the field of navigation

and voyage planning. Advanced navigation systems, such as electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS) and automatic identification systems (AIS), enable ships to navigate more safely and efficiently by providing real-time information on vessel traffic, weather conditions, and navigational hazards. These systems help to optimize route planning, avoid collisions, and reduce the risk of grounding or other navigational accidents. Furthermore, technology is also being used to enhance fuel efficiency and reduce emissions in ship operations. Advanced propulsion systems, energy-efficient designs, and onboard monitoring systems enable ships to operate more efficiently and reduce their environmental footprint.

Additionally, digital optimization tools, such as voyage performance management systems and trim optimization software, help to optimize fuel consumption and reduce operating costs. Overall, technology and innovation are driving significant improvements in safety, efficiency, and sustainability in ship management. By embracing new technologies and leveraging data-driven insights, ship management companies can enhance their competitiveness, meet regulatory requirements, and achieve their business objectives.

### ***FUTURE GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS:***

- ***MY FUTURE GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS ARE CENTRED AROUND CONTINUING TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE MARITIME INDUSTRY.***
- ***I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND BELIEVE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF MARITIME PROFESSIONALS."AND CHANGES IN RISK PROFILES.***

***Efficient risk management is vital in the maritime sector to safeguard the well-***

***being of crew, vessels, and the environment. How did you tackle risk management at Fleet Management Ltd, and what strategies did you employ to mitigate potential risks?***

Risk management is a critical aspect of ship management, and at FLEET, we have a robust risk management framework in place to ensure the safety of our crew, vessels, and the environment. Our approach to risk management is based on a proactive, systematic, and comprehensive approach that encompasses all aspects of our operations. One of the key elements of our risk management approach is the identification and assessment of risks. We conduct regular risk assessments across all areas of our operations, including safety, security, environmental protection, and regulatory compliance. These assessments help us to identify potential hazards, vulnerabilities, and threats and evaluate their likelihood and potential impact on our operations.

Once risks are identified and assessed, we develop and implement risk mitigation measures to reduce their likelihood and severity. This may include implementing safety procedures, conducting training and drills, installing safety equipment, and implementing environmental management

systems. We also have contingency plans in place to respond to emergencies and incidents effectively. Another important aspect of our risk management approach is monitoring and review. We continuously monitor our operations for emerging risks and changes in risk profiles and adjust our risk management strategies accordingly. We also conduct regular audits, inspections, and performance reviews to assess the effectiveness of our risk management measures and identify areas for improvement.

In addition to these proactive measures, we also have a strong safety culture that emphasizes the importance of safety, environmental protection, and regulatory compliance at all levels of the organization. We provide regular training and awareness programs to our crew and shore-based staff to promote safety awareness and best practices. Overall, our risk management approach is based on a commitment to continuous improvement and a proactive mindset towards identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks to ensure the safety of our crew, vessels, and the environment.

***What are your forthcoming objectives and aspirations, and how do you intend to contribute to the continued progress of the maritime sector?***

***When dealing with people developing Trust is very important. Trust-based relationships last longer and can overcome all challenges. Building trust is not easy; the effort has to come from both sides***





***Most Compassionate  
Employer of Indian Seafarers***

As I reflect on my career in the maritime industry, I am grateful for the opportunities I have had to contribute to the growth and success of Fleet Management Ltd. Looking ahead, my future goals and aspirations are centred around continuing to make a positive impact on the maritime industry and advancing its development.

One of my key priorities is to continue advocating for safety, sustainability, and innovation in the maritime industry. I believe that by embracing new technologies, adopting best practices, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, we can enhance safety, efficiency, and environmental performance in ship management

operations. Another area of focus for me is promoting diversity, inclusion, and gender equality in the maritime industry. I am committed to creating equal opportunities for women in seafaring roles and supporting their professional development and advancement. I believe that by promoting diversity and inclusion, we can build a stronger, more resilient maritime workforce that reflects the rich diversity of our global society. Furthermore, I am passionate about education and training and believe in the importance of investing in the next generation of maritime professionals. I plan to continue supporting educational initiatives, training programs, and career development opportunities for young people interested in pursuing careers in the maritime industry. Overall, my future goals and aspirations are centred around making a positive difference in the maritime industry and leaving a lasting legacy of excellence, integrity, and innovation. I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and look forward to continuing my journey of growth and contribution to the maritime community.



# Mariners Gather for Exciting Football Tournament and Athletic Events



The Company of Master Mariners of India (Navi Mumbai Chapter) recently hosted the second edition of the Football Tournament for men and Athletic Events for ladies at the Nerul Gymkhana turf. Despite the hot and humid weather, the event received an enthusiastic response, with a record-breaking 146 registrations flooding in.



The inauguration ceremony, graced by Capt Tushar Pradhan of MUI, Capt Shiv Halbe of MASSA, and Capt M.P Bhasin of CMMI, kicked off amidst thunderous applause from players and spectators alike. Mrs. Anshu Goel officially started the event, leading to knockout football matches.







Exciting performances were witnessed in the matches, with Team Aryaman RC securing a convincing victory against Team IN Ocean, and the Pentagon Pirates triumphing over Massa Mystics in a closely fought match that culminated in a penalty shootout.

In the finals, the Pace Panthers emerged victorious over the Pentagon Pirates, leading to a championship match against Aryaman RC. Meanwhile, in the ladies' athletic event, represented by MSC and Elegant teams, fierce competition ensued in relay races and lemon and spoon races, with MSC clinching victory by a single-point margin.

The men's football finals kept spectators on the edge of their seats as Pace Panthers and Aryaman RC battled fiercely. After an



intense match that ended in a thrilling 2-2 draw, both teams displayed exemplary sportsmanship by sharing the trophy.

The prize distribution ceremony, held at the amphitheater, was a heartwarming affair with dignitaries from the shipping industry and team owners presenting awards. Special acknowledgement was given to the resilience of the older members of Aryaman RC and the skill of the Pace Panthers team.

Individual excellence on the football field was also recognized with awards such as the Golden Boot, Best Goalkeeper, Best Forward, and Best Player.

The seamless organization of the tournament was attributed to the organizing committee led by Capt Sanjay Goel, Capt Subroto Khan, and Capt







Sharad Tyagi. Looking ahead, the Company of Master Mariners of India (Navi Mumbai) anticipates hosting more such events and sessions of the highest professional standards.

Live commentary provided by Sailor Today and broadcasted on Sailor Today's International Radio Channel added to the excitement.

The evening concluded with a delightful beer and dinner session, where mariners and their families enjoyed networking and dancing.





*Preamble: This series of articles from Navguide Solutions, one every month, will focus on Rightship Inspection requirements, eventually going deeper into the subject and helping the industry phase into the RISQ regime.*

**RISQ Series | Article 3 | April 2024**

**Author: Avinash Hegde, Head of Engineering, Navguide Solutions**

# RIGHTSHIP: VESSEL OPERATOR ACTIONS

**Author: Avinash Hegde, Head of Engineering, Navguide Solutions**

**What does RS expect from a Vessel operator before, during and after an RISQ inspection?**

## INTRODUCTION:

RightShip, is the world's largest maritime risk management and environmental assessment organisation. Rightship's Inspection Ship Questionnaire (RISQ) inspections play a crucial role in assessing vessels' safety and operational standards.

As a vessel operator, it is essential to understand what RightShip (RS) expects from the Vessel operator before, during, and after a RISQ inspection. This blog will explore the key expectations and responsibilities to ensure a smooth and successful inspection process.

## THE RISQ

In July 2022, RightShip issued the new

RightShip Inspection Questionnaire (RISQ), which takes a very different approach from the previous version (2017). Since then, the new questionnaire has already been revised twice. The latest revision, RISQ 3.0, was released in February 2023.

### **Previous vs New Version of RiSQ**

There are two basic differences between old and new RISQ.

- 1) In the latest version of RISQ; a set of specific guidance, standards and best practices is provided for each question to guide both the inspector and the vessel/manager.
- 2) The questions follow a completely new structure.

## KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RISQ 2017 AND 2023 VERSIONS

### BEFORE THE INSPECTION:

Ship managers should thoroughly review the latest version of RISQ 3.0 (February 2023) to understand the requirements and best practices. Training sessions on board should take place to familiarize officers and ratings on how to get through an inspection based on RISQ 3.0. Additionally, procedural requirements included in the RISQ 3.0 (Policies, practices, new definitions etc) should be included in the SMS as part of each Company's conformance with the new requirements.

Prior to the RISQ inspection; RS expects vessel operators to be proactive in preparing the vessel for assessment. This includes ensuring that all required documentation, certificates, and records are up-to-date and readily available. It is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of the vessel's maintenance history, SMS, and crew training records. Any deficiencies or non-compliance issues should be addressed and rectified proactively; to avoid potential delays or negative findings during the inspection.

Rightship may ask for a remote review of digital documentation to minimise the time required for the inspection. If agreeable to the vessel's manager; the additional digital documents must be sent to the appointed inspector 72 hours prior to inspection.

There are two options for the completion of

an inspection. For either approach all questions must be answered.

- 1) The first is where all questions are answered during a physical inspection.
- 2) The second is a hybrid approach, where questions with the letter (M) can be completed on review of documentation in advance; with the remaining questions denoted with a letter (V) completed during a physical inspection.

### DURING THE INSPECTION:

During the RISQ inspection, RS expects vessel operators to provide full cooperation and transparency. If any representative of the operator is on board, they shall not interfere with the inspection unless there are safety concerns. It is important to ensure that the inspector has access to all relevant areas and equipment for assessment. Any questions or concerns raised by the inspector should be addressed promptly and accurately.

Vessel operators should provide detailed information regarding crew training, qualifications, and experience.

This includes records of training conducted by the crew, such as basic and advanced training, such as for ships operating in polar waters (If applicable). The vessel operator should be able to demonstrate that the vessel is appropriately manned by adequately qualified, trained, and experienced personnel.



## AFTER THE INSPECTION:

Once the RISQ inspection is completed; the vessel manager is required to provide a meaningful root-cause analysis including; corrective actions and sustainable long term preventive actions for each Finding within 15 days of an inspection.

If a satisfactory response is not received within 15 days, the inspection will be invalid.

The quality of the vessel's management system will be evaluated by the quality of the replies that the vessel manager makes to the 'Findings' recorded during the RS inspection. The RS Dry inspections team will determine the inspection outcome.

Vessel operators should retain a copy of the inspection report and findings for their records. This documentation is a valuable reference for future inspections and helps track the vessel's compliance and improvement over time.

## CONCLUSION:

Meeting RS expectations before, during, and after a RISQ inspection is essential for vessel managers to demonstrate their commitment to safety and operational excellence. By proactively preparing the vessel, ensuring cooperation during the inspection, and addressing any findings; operators can ensure an inspection result that will help make their vessels commercially viable.

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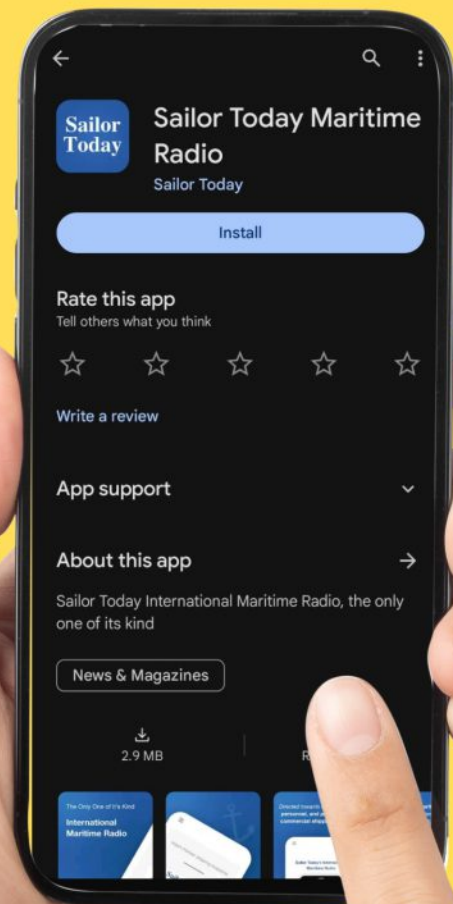
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