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# Sailor Today

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*Between Steel and Sea*

***My Journey with  
Fugro Mapper***

***Navigating the  
Mind at Sea*** Part Two

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Issues of Shipping, IWT &  
Seafarers

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# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Calm seas or crowded halls  
communication is the new  
seamanship?

Once upon a time, the only crowd a Master faced was his bridge team, and the Chief Engineer's stage was the engine room. Today, they are being invited to conferences, panels, and podcasts such as INMEX SMM India and India Maritime Week to share insights on leadership, sustainability, and the future of shipping. Suddenly, the question arises: Do seafarers now need to learn public speaking?

After all, a ship's Master can handle a crisis in the middle of the ocean, but hand him a microphone in front of 300 delegates and his pulse may race faster than during a man-overboard drill. One senior Chief Engineer joked at a Mumbai seminar, "I can fix a turbocharger at sea, but on stage, I'm the one overheating."

Times are changing. With the maritime industry finally opening up to media interactions, sustainability forums, training webinars, and youth events, seafarers are becoming storytellers. Conferences want speakers who can explain life at sea, inspire cadets, and represent their companies with confidence.

Even veteran mariners agree it is a much-needed evolution. Capt. Sanjeev Sinha, a retired Master Mariner turned maritime trainer, recently said, "Communication is now a leadership skill at sea and ashore. You can't influence anyone if you can't express what you stand for."

It is not far-fetched to imagine short "Public Speaking for Mariners" courses becoming part of pre-promotion training alongside BRM and ERM. The modern Master or Chief is no longer just managing ships; they are ambassadors of the maritime world.

In the end, the sea teaches calm under pressure, and with the right training, even a packed auditorium can feel like smooth sailing.



# Navigating the Mind at Sea

By Capt Sunil Nangia

Part Two



## The Three Bodies and the Ocean Within



The second cup of coffee was growing cold, but our conversation only grew warmer. What began as casual talk about ships and schedules had drifted into uncharted waters the kind that don't appear on any nautical chart.

Across the table, Capt. Amresh Kumar Jha, Master Mariner and Vice President of Kanoo Shipping India, leaned back, his eyes calm yet piercing, like a man who has spent a lifetime studying both storms and silence. "Sunil," he said with a quiet smile, "when we talk about shaping our destiny — what are we really talking about?

More voyages, bigger ships, a better life? Or something deeper?"

### Charting the Inner Map

He began sketching invisible diagrams in the air as he spoke. "We humans have three bodies," he explained, "the physical, the subtle, and the causal. Think of them as three layers of existence."

"The physical body is the vessel — made of flesh, bone, and routine. It changes little. The causal body — the soul — is perfect and unchanging. It doesn't need fixing. But between the two lies the subtle body — the real playground of evolution."

He paused for effect. "That's where your mind, emotions, and vibrations live. And that's where the real navigation happens."





### The Subtle Body: Your Inner Ocean

"The subtle body," he continued, "is like the ocean itself. Sometimes calm and still, sometimes roaring with waves of thought and emotion. How you manage that ocean decides how you sail through life."

I nodded, picturing the bridge of a ship during a storm — radars buzzing, wind howling — and realised how similar it was to the turbulence within us.

"Through meditation," he said, "we purify and simplify that field. When the inner waters settle, clarity surfaces — like a ship emerging from fog."

The Instruments of the Inner Voyage  
Capt. Amresh spoke of four instruments that guide this invisible voyage:

- Chit (Consciousness) – the sea itself, vast and limitless.
- Manas (Mind) – the waves of thought and feeling.
- Buddhi (Intellect) – the compass of reason and judgment.
- Ahankar (Ego) – the captain's sense of 'I', steering the ship of identity.

"When these four are balanced," he said, "the voyage is smooth. But when the ego grabs the wheel, storms follow."

### Evolving Beyond Knowledge

He leaned forward, his tone soft but sure. "Consciousness doesn't evolve through information — it evolves through experience. You can study navigation all you want, but only a storm teaches you what calm means." Heartfulness meditation, he explained, is the sailor's inner training ground — strengthening the subtle body so awareness expands and reactions transform into responses. "It's like cleaning the bridge glass — once the smudge clears, the horizon appears."

### Anchored in Awareness

Outside, the evening light slanted through the blinds, turning the office golden. Our conversation had drifted far from ships, yet somehow, it felt more maritime than ever.

"At sea or ashore," Capt. Amresh said finally, "the real voyage isn't just across oceans — it's across layers of consciousness. When your inner compass is steady, no storm, inside or out, can throw you off course."

He smiled, finishing the last sip of coffee. "That's what true seamanship is — command not just over your vessel, but over yourself."





# DIGITAL PROCUREMENT STRATEGY



GenPro (GP General Procurement Company Limited) has acquired SeaConnect from Procurelink to strengthen its digital procurement services for shipowners. The supplier-facing platform will be rebranded and integrated into GenPro's digital suite, OPTIMA, as an optional end-to-end procurement solution.

"This acquisition meets the industry's demand for smarter, faster, and more sustainable procurement," said Maria Theodosiou, Managing Director of GenPro. "It's about offering choice, control, and transformation at each company's own pace."

SeaConnect will be introduced as a value-added service while suppliers are gradually onboarded to ensure standardisation and compliance with GenPro's framework. The integration aims to create a unified digital backbone reducing reliance on third-party systems, improving data ownership, and enabling future tools such as invoice verification, sustainability reporting, and AI-driven decision support.

"Digitalisation in procurement is about building infrastructure for better collaboration and long-term value," Theodosiou added. "With SeaConnect and OPTIMA, we're delivering exactly that."





# THE ART OF COMMUNICATION: BRIDGING SEA AND SHORE



**"TRUE COMMUNICATION IS  
BUILT NOT ONLY ON DATA BUT  
ON EMPATHY."**

In today's maritime world, the sea is no longer silent. The hum of engines is now joined by the constant ping of emails, alerts, and instant messages, reminding us that communication between ship and shore has become almost immediate. But with this speed comes a new kind of challenge. What was once a deliberate, thoughtful exchange through radio or telex has transformed into an ongoing stream of messages. While this has made the industry more connected than ever before, it has also blurred something essential: understanding.



By Avijit Dutta

**"Ships are now floating  
offices, connected by  
technology but still steered by  
human judgement."**

## When both sides listen and respect each other, communication turns into trust



### WHEN THE SHORE SPEAKS FASTER THAN THE SEA WAVES

*For seafarers, every message from shore carries weight. It may bring clarity, or it may bring pressure. Out there, amid heavy seas and shifting winds, a decision is rarely black and white. Yet on shore, where data flows in real time, there is often an expectation for instant answers and immediate action.*

Many seafarers today quietly feel that the rhythm of the sea is being replaced by the tempo of office hours. Ships are now floating offices, connected by high-speed data, monitored round the clock, and constantly reporting their every move.

But unlike offices, they face unpredictable weather, machinery challenges, and human fatigue, realities that cannot be managed by email or spreadsheet alone. What looks like hesitation from land is often caution at sea. What seems like delay is sometimes the difference between risk and safety.

#### The Missing Element: Empathy

Communication is not just about transmitting information; it is about connecting experiences. The most effective messages are those that carry not only facts but also empathy, a sense of what the other side might be going through. For shore teams, this means remembering that the person reading that email could be standing on a rolling bridge deck, dealing with alarms, weather warnings, and the welfare of a multinational crew. It means asking, not ordering; suggesting, not assuming.

For seafarers, it means expressing their reality with clarity and confidence, painting the full picture so that those on land can truly understand why a certain course of action was taken, or why a delay was necessary. When both sides communicate not just to instruct, but to understand, trust begins to rebuild.

#### Technology Connects, But People Unite

The irony of today's maritime communication is that the more connected we become, the more disconnected we sometimes feel. A message sent instantly may still take hours to be understood. That is why the human touch matters more than ever. A note of appreciation from shore, a respectful tone in communication, or a brief call that begins with "How are things on board?" can go a long way. Small gestures have a big impact. They remind every seafarer that beyond the systems, spreadsheets, and sensors there are people ashore who care. And they remind shore personnel that beyond the reports and data there are men and women keeping the ship,

#### From Command to Collaboration

True maritime communication is not about who speaks louder or faster; it is about who listens better. It is about collaboration, not command. When shore offices slow down enough to listen, and ships speak up to explain, something beautiful happens: communication turns into coordination. And coordination, guided by respect, turns into trust. Because at the heart of every voyage lies a shared purpose: to bring every ship, and every soul on board, safely home.



# OneOcean unveiled

***OneOcean combines digital and training solutions to deliver real-time visibility, compliance support and greater efficiency for shipowners and operators***



Lloyd's Register (LR) has officially unveiled OneOcean, a new global brand formed through the integration of LR OneOcean and Ocean Technologies Group.

OneOcean builds on the strong legacies of both LR OneOcean, a leader in digital maritime solutions, and Ocean Technologies Group, a trusted name in training and crew management.

The new brand brings together voyage compliance management and crewing expertise into a single, comprehensive, integrated portfolio, which aims to reduce fragmentation and improve efficiency across the maritime industry.

Covering five proven product areas — human capital management; technical ship management; governance, risk and compliance; voyage planning and management; and voyage performance and optimisation — OneOcean supports customers from ship to shore, from training and people operations, to voyage compliance and optimisation.

OneOcean's portfolio unites fragmented systems, enabling regulatory compliance, and unlocking operational efficiency, using real time intelligence and predictive analytics to deliver valuable actionable insights.

A crew member can be trained, certified, scheduled and supported through OneOcean's Human Capital Management portfolio. A vessel operator can plan voyages with confidence, balancing safety, compliance and fuel efficiency, while managers ashore gain real-time visibility of fleet performance through Voyage Management tools. Regulatory changes, emissions targets and operational risks can also be managed proactively through the Compliance suite, ensuring that challenges are addressed before they become critical.

## Read Sailor Today



# Need for Forward-Looking Strategies in Maritime Talent Attraction

*A significant update in outlook is essential if the maritime sector is to tap into the new generation of young talent, a seminar organised by Indian Register of Shipping heard during London International Shipping Week (LISW25).*



Titled 'Reimagining Seafaring: Elevating Maritime Careers', IRS led the discussion on what the industry needed to do to attract the tech-savvy college and university students towards maritime, when they already had the choice of any number of land-based roles fighting for their services.

Indian Register Of Shipping has elevated its participation at LISW 2025 as an International Partner – India. The seminar, held at the first ever LISW Global Hub at County Hall, was well attended by industry stakeholders across the maritime spectrum.

Moderated by Raal Harris, Vice President of InterManager, the high-quality panel of maritime experts included Arun Sharma, Executive Chairman of IRS; Andreas Hadjipetrou, Chief Commercial Officer of Columbia Group; Mark Charman, CEO of Faststream; Captain Pradeep Chalwa, CEO and Founder of MarinePALS; and Captain John Lloyd, CEO of the Nautical Institute.

During the keynote address Arun Sharma said: “We need to raise the profile of seafaring by attracting high-quality talent from premier institutes. Once seen as a glamorous and promising career, its appeal has faded over time – we must change that.”

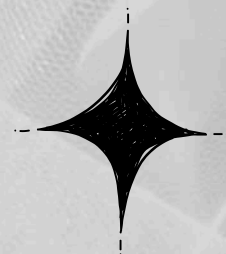
The panel agreed, Captain John Lloyd saying: “The expectations from young people today are very different than before. As an industry we are still looking backwards rather than forwards. We need the agility to manage this generational shift.”

Andreas Hadjipetrou said the maritime industry needs to shed its perceived inflexibility and act in a completely different way. He commented: “We need to give seafarers the flexibility to move from one company to another.”

Mark Charman added that the old practices of the past need serious updating, saying: “Some recruiting practices are 20 years out of date. Today’s seafarer is coming ashore younger; this then puts a pressure on senior officers as they lose their young seafarers.”

Captain Chalwa stated that seafarers today are far more competent in their skills, however they are burdened with significant administrative work which impacts their ability to deliver.

The seminar concluded with a shared commitment from all panellists that the maritime industry must embrace innovation, flexibility, and modern career pathways to remain competitive with other sectors. By reimagining seafaring and aligning with the aspirations of today’s generation, the industry can not only secure a steady pipeline of skilled professionals but also restore pride and prestige in a career at sea.





# VLGC Shivalik on Maiden Voyage



The Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. (SCI) welcomed its new Very Large Gas Carrier (VLGC) Shivalik at Visakhapatnam Port, marking her maiden voyage under the Indian flag and SCI ownership. Inducted on 10 September 2025 and named after the Shivalik mountain range, the 82,000 CBM vessel is SCI's third VLGC, following Sahyadri. The Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, along with senior dignitaries, graced the event and toured the vessel, symbolising the government's support for expanding Indian-flagged tonnage. Shivalik began her maiden trade voyage carrying over 46,000 metric tonnes of LPG from Ruwais, UAE, for Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). Equipped with advanced systems for safe and efficient operations, the vessel enhances India's participation in global gas trade and strengthens energy connectivity with the Arabian Gulf.





# EXPERTS DISCUSS CONTEMPORARY ISSUES OF SHIPPING, IWT & SEAFARERS



A thought-provoking conference on “Contemporary Issues of Shipping, Inland Water Transport (IWT) & Seafarers” was recently held at the India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. Organized by the Nautical Institute (North India Branch) in association with the National Inland Navigation Institute (NINI), the event brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and maritime professionals to deliberate on challenges and innovations shaping the sector.

Shri Jayant Singh, Chairman, Land Port Authority of India, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and emphasized the importance of synergy between shipping and inland waterways for sustainable trade growth.

In his welcome address, Capt. (Dr) I.V. Solanki, Chairman, NI (North India Branch) & Project Director, NINI, highlighted the need for integrating technology and policy reforms to strengthen India’s maritime ecosystem. The keynote speaker, Cmde. (Dr) Arun Pratap Golaya (Retd), VSM, spoke on innovation and indigenisation in naval and commercial domains, while Capt. Anish Joseph, Dy. Nautical Advisor, DG Shipping, shared regulatory insights.



Capt. John Lloyd, CEO, Nautical Institute, London, addressed global training standards and the evolving role of seafarers. A Lifetime Achievement Award was also presented during the inaugural session.



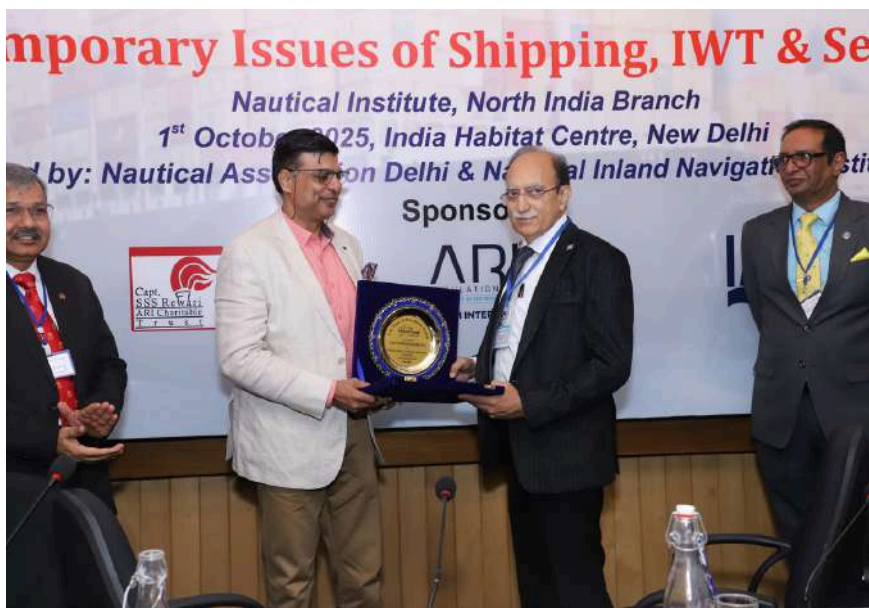


Capt. Indresh Kharbanda, Master Mariner and Fellow of the Nautical Institute, began his maritime career on 1 January 1976 with Mogul Lines Pvt. Ltd., serving on a wide range of vessels including Super Panamax, OBO, reefer, and passenger ships. After over eight years in command, he came ashore in 1997 to head IMC/MSI Shipping's North India operations, where he served with distinction for 29 years until June 2020.

In August 2020, he took charge as Head of the Delhi Office, ESM, demonstrating resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring business continuity in challenging times. A former Chairman of the Nautical Institute's North and East India branches, Capt. Kharbanda is widely respected for his expertise in crewing and recruitment, his close coordination with maritime authorities, and his commitment to seafarer welfare.

A Freemason and avid sportsperson, he is admired for his humility, mentorship, and efforts to promote wellness and teamwork across the maritime community.

The technical session, chaired by Capt. Sanjiv Verma, Director, Oceans XV, featured discussions on geopolitics, insurance, artificial intelligence, and seafarer welfare. Eminent speakers included Cmde. (Dr) Shishir Shrotriya, Mr. Sanjiv Singh, Capt. Mohit Kapoor, Capt. Amit Bachchhas, and Mr. Bhanu, Chief Officer. A maritime quiz conducted by Capt. Saujanya Sinha and an interactive open house added a lively close to the event. The conference concluded with a vote of thanks by Capt. P.K. Mittal and Mr. Arunveer Dhanda, followed by a networking lunch that fostered meaningful dialogue among delegates.



**Lifetime Achievement Honouree  
Capt. Indresh Kharbanda**





# Ties with Indian Shipyards

## DMC Strengthens Ties with Indian Shipyards: Equipment for 14 Newbuilds

In a development that underscores India's growing role in global shipbuilding, Damen Marine Components (DMC) has signed contracts to supply steering gear, rudders, and propulsion nozzles for 14 multi-purpose vessels (MPVs) being built at Udupi Cochin Shipyard (UCSL) and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd. (MDL). This collaboration marks a fresh milestone for India's shipbuilding sector, reinforcing confidence among international owners and suppliers in Indian yards' capability to deliver world-class commercial vessels.

### First Partnership with Udupi Cochin Shipyard

DMC's first order from UCSL, a subsidiary of Cochin Shipyard Ltd., covers eight 6,300 DWT MPVs for a Scandinavian client. The Dutch manufacturer will supply piston-type steering gear and Atlantic-type rudders, custom-designed for these ships.

"This project highlights our long-standing commitment to India and our ability to tailor equipment to global standards," said Bogdan Mocanu, DMC's Sales Manager. "Our partnership with Udupi Cochin Shipyard has been smooth and promising."

### High-Tech Collaboration with Mazagon Dock

At MDL, Mumbai, six 7,500 DWT MPVs are under construction for Danish shipowner Navi Merchants—the yard's first commercial newbuilding order with DMC. The scope includes rudder systems, hydraulic steering gear, and propeller nozzles to boost propulsion efficiency.

"Working with MDL is a milestone," Mocanu added. "Their naval heritage ensures uncompromising quality, making this a landmark project for us in India."

### Strengthening Maritime India Vision

With deliveries set to begin later this year, these twin projects align with Maritime India Vision 2030, boosting technology transfer, local employment, and India's position as a competitive global shipbuilding hub.





# RELIEF FOR COMPANIES EMPLOYING UKRAINIAN SEAFARERS

A new remote office handling seafarer passport applications and qualification upgrades abroad is providing a major relief—not just for Ukrainian seafarers, but also for the companies that employ them. Since opening on September 17th, over 387 seafarers have registered, with October appointments nearly full and some November slots already booked.

The service eliminates the need for seafarers to return home for essential documents, reducing delays, disruptions, and contract uncertainties. Henrik Jensen, CEO of Danica Crewing Specialists, called it a “game changer,” noting that companies can now rely on uninterrupted crew availability.



The service is provided by the Morrichservice State Enterprise, a Ukrainian government agency under the Maritime Administration, which issues Seafarer’s Identity Documents and Seaman Service Books. Its Warsaw office processes applications remotely under Cabinet Resolution No. 730, ensuring seafarers abroad can continue working without disruption.



## India Joins the Debate on Shipping’s Green Future

At London International Shipping Week, the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) led a bold discussion on the future of maritime decarbonisation, declaring that nuclear energy might be the only way to meet the IMO’s 2050 net-zero goals.

Industry leaders, including IRS Executive Chairman Arun Sharma, joined global experts like Dr. Martin Stopford and Capt. Savraj Mehta to debate whether nuclear propulsion is the “missing piece” in shipping’s green transition. The message was clear: without government backing, investors won’t take the leap—and without nuclear, shipping may fall short of its climate ambitions.

With alternative fuels making up less than one percent of global use, experts warned that the industry is “buying time, not transforming.” For India, a rising maritime power, embracing innovative, clean technologies like nuclear propulsion could define its leadership in the race toward a zero-carbon future.



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▶ 7 mins

Global Village

▶ 14 mins

Dubai Marina

▶ 18 mins

Burj Khalifa & Dubai Mall

▶ 20 mins

Dubai International Airport

▶ 22 mins





# **REGULATIONS MUST STEER MARITIME ACTION ON SEAFARER MENTAL HEALTH**

*"The burden of change cannot rest on seafarers," Hedman added. "Compliance-driven action will make support systematic, not optional."*



As the world observed World Mental Health Day (October 10), maritime healthcare leader VIKAND emphasised that genuine progress in seafarer mental health would come only through stronger regulation and compliance, not voluntary goodwill.

Despite growing awareness, stigma and cost concerns had continued to limit investment in crew wellbeing. VIKAND's OneHealth telehealth data showed that only 2.1% of consultations related to mental health, revealing how many seafarers still suffered in silence. "Expecting stigma to vanish or owners to act voluntarily wasn't realistic," said Martin Hedman, Director of Mental Wellness Practices. "Real progress needed regulatory frameworks that compelled companies to act."

Global measures such as the 2022 MLC Amendments, STCW provisions on harassment, and the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) were already reinforcing accountability for crew welfare.


For Indian seafarers, who form a major share of the world fleet, such compliance offered reassurance that mental health care was a right, not a risk.

VIKAND's 24/7 tele-counselling, resilience training, and Crew Wellness Pulse Check had enabled confidential support and proactive intervention. "The burden of change could not rest on seafarers," Hedman said. "Only regulation ensured lasting protection for seafarer wellbeing and industry sustainability."



# BETWEEN STEEL AND SEA

## My Journey with Fugro Mapper



There's something deeply personal about joining a ship. She's not just a vessel of steel and systems; she's a living, breathing being with moods, memories, and soul. When I was appointed to take command of the offshore survey vessel Fugro Mapper in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I felt that familiar surge of pride and quiet anticipation. To a seafarer, command is not just a rank; it's a bond. You don't merely steer a ship; you become her guardian, her voice, her conscience.

My mission was clear: complete a small portion of the ongoing offshore survey, then take Fugro Mapper to Dubai for her third special survey, dry dock, and statutory inspections. I have always relished dry docking, a test of both seamanship and leadership. It is where a ship reveals herself completely and where a Master must balance the technical, operational, and human sides of command.



But even before the sea could greet me, bureaucracy stood in the way. The visa process for KSA was halted due to the Haj season, leaving our travel suspended in uncertainty. The vessel waited silently at Ras Al Khair, her officers rotating home as their visas expired. Waiting on land is a strange punishment for a sailor; the body stays still, but the mind keeps sailing.





After weeks of delay, the company found a way out. Our passports were retrieved from the KSA agency and we were sent to Bahrain for getting our visas processed there. Three anxious days later, the visas were finally stamped. A long drive across the desert, and at last, I saw her, Fugro Mapper, resting quietly under the Saudi sun, waiting for her Master.

## Command and Responsibility

Taking command of a vessel is a moment every mariner remembers, the first firm step on the gangway, the exchange of command with your predecessor, and the silent nod to the sea that now holds you accountable. As I signed the command papers, I could feel the weight of responsibility settle, not as a burden, but as a purpose.

Leadership at sea is unlike any other form. It demands technical competence, emotional intelligence, and a steady hand in both calm and chaos. Managing diverse nationalities, maintaining morale, and ensuring every soul aboard felt valued and safe was as important as maintaining machinery or passing audits. A ship, after all, runs on more than engines; it runs on people.





# The Dry Dock Ballet

When we reached Dubai, the transformation began. The dry dock there is a marvel. Massive blocks mounted on rails lift the vessel clear off the sea and transport her across land with surreal grace. Watching Fugro Mapper move on rails like a steel giant awakening was unforgettable.

Soon, workshops came alive, welders, surveyors, and technicians swarming around her, sparks flying against her hull. The first task was scraping away the marine life clinging to her bottom. Billions of blue-blistering barnacles, as Captain Haddock would have said, each a tiny witness to the ship's journeys across the world. I took photos, not just of the barnacles, but of the dignity of the vessel herself, standing tall and patient as we worked to renew her.

The days were long and demanding, yet fulfilling. Supported by Suchna Marine Services and the technical guidance of Fugro Survey India, we coordinated every repair, inspection, and class requirement. It was hard work, but the kind that gives a seafarer quiet joy, the kind that keeps you connected to why you first went to sea.







# The Sea Always Waits

When Fugro Mapper was finally refloated, gleaming after her renewal, I stood on the bridge, the place I call home. The platform with the vessel on blocks was lowered into the dock, and seawater slowly kissed her hull again. That first touch, after weeks on land, is pure poetry. It's as if the sea whispers, "Welcome back, old friend."

Every ship I've commanded has taught me something new about leadership, endurance, and humility. Between steel and sea lies a relationship built on trust, duty, and love, a relationship only a sailor truly understands.







✦ ✦  
Seafarer's BEDTIME STORIES

# COLREGs *at* Midnight

**Near-miss tales that de-mystify  
Rules 5, 7, 8, and 15-19  
(without the yawns)**

At 23:50, the bridge of MV Midnight Muesli looked like a dim cockpit and smelled like coffee that had once been fresh. Third Officer Tara had the watch, a pencil behind her ear, and a quiet prayer that nothing interesting would happen before handover. The radar wore a respectable beard of echoes. ARPA and ECDIS purred - confident, well-groomed liars. Out on the starboard bow, a green light appeared, the sort of green that says "I promise I'm fine" right before it drives into your biography.

Tara did what every good watchkeeper does at midnight: "COLREGs, don't fail me now."

This is for that moment - not a lecture, lullaby, or courtroom, just the rules that matter at oops-o'clock, told through near-misses we all collect and never proudly mention in union meetings. We'll keep it to Rule 5 (Look-out), Rule 7 (Risk of collision), Rule 8 (Action to avoid collision), and the night-shift quartet 15-19 (Crossing, Give-way/Stand-on, Restricted Visibility). If you want Rule 2 (Responsibility), it's always there, judging us gently from the bookshelf.





## Seafarer's BEDTIME STORIES

# COLREGs *at* Midnight

## Tale 1

### The Handsome Green Light (Rules 5, 7 & 15)

Good visibility. Two ships on near-reciprocal headings, each secretly convinced the other will blink first. ARPA draws a pretty vector; ECDIS invents a future where the target will pass “0.3 nm ahead—perfectly fine, why are you sweating?” Tara’s Mark-I eyeballs notice something ruder: constant bearing, decreasing range (the romance language of Rule 7), with the aspect staying stubbornly green.

At night, the brain wants comfort; ARPA happily provides it - until it doesn’t. Rule 5 demands a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means. That is not decoration. No single tool gets custody of your soul. Rule 7 in one line: constant bearing + shrinking range = risk, even if ARPA prints a cheerful emoji. Bearings wobble; echoes swap; vectors lie after updates; aspect rarely lies. If the light doesn’t move left or right, it plans to meet you where you are.

## Tale 2

### The Slow-Motion Kiss (Rules 8, 16 & 17)

Different ocean, same midnight. Two bulkers converge. Each OOW is sober, sensible—and tragically polite. Give-way makes a tiny three-degree starboard adjustment. Stand-on watches CPA trickle down like an old battery. At 1.2 miles, nobody likes anything.

Rule 8 doesn’t say “move a smidge.” It says early and substantial—big enough that the other bridge can “see” your mind. Prefer course changes (immediately visible) over speed changes (a rumor until the next plot). Once you alter, keep altering until you’re clearly past and clear. This proactive approach keeps you in control of the situation.



- Rule 16 (Give-way): Shall take early and substantial action to keep well clear. If you're waiting for a written invitation from stand-on, you misunderstand both etiquette and physics.
- Rule 17 (Stand-on): Keep course and speed until it's clear the give-way ship isn't doing the job; then you may act, and shall when collision can't be avoided by give-way alone. Being stand-on is not a force field- it's the right of expectation, not the right of impact.

Train your team with pre-agreed triggers: "If CPA dips below 1.5 nm and no bold alteration is seen by 2 nm → Master maneuver."

## Tale 3

### The VHF Opera

(Rules 8 & 17, cameo by Rule 2)

Congested lane. A container ship calls on 16: "Blue bulker on my port bow, this is Green Express, propose I pass ahead of you." The bulker replies, "OK, please pass ahead." Somewhere, a COLREGs angel drops a mug. VHF does not rewrite the rules. If the vessel is give-way (the other is on her starboard side), her duty is to keep well clear - full stop. Asking to "pass ahead" puts the stand-on vessel at risk and exposes it to unknown consequences if anything else drifts in.

Use VHF to confirm a rule-compliant plan, not to invent one. Clear and confident communication is key. On the bridge whiteboard, sketch the lawful picture first (who is give-way/stand-on, expected alteration), then any VHF notes beneath. If the notes fight the picture, the notes lose.

## Seafarer's BEDTIME STORIES

### Tale 4

### Head-On? Or Do My Eyes Deceive Me?

(Rules 14 & 8)

Yes, Rule 14 isn't our headliner, but its logic matters. If you're meeting head-on (masthead lights in a line or nearly so, both sidelights visible), both alter to starboard - boldly, not coyly. Many near-misses begin with "We're slightly to port of each other," and end with two timid nudges that cancel out. The key to avoiding this is early decision-making. Decide early, pick a visible amount, and execute. A 10-20° swing at range beats a timid 3° micro-poem that grows grey hair on every deck officer in the bay.


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## Seafarer's BEDTIME STORIES

### Tale 5

## Fog - Where Rule 19 Eats Your Assumptions

Some nights the sea becomes milk, and you become a philosopher. Rule 19 (Restricted Visibility) rewrites the choreography:

- Go safe, not stylish. Proceed at safe speed with engines ready; your stopping distance is the real law.
- Make no assumptions about another vessel's identity or heading from a single echo.
- Alteration logic flips: For a target forward of the beam, an alteration to port is generally bad juju (unless overtaking). Course changes to starboard are your friend; speed reductions help, but do not create a passing arrangement anyone can see.
- Rule 19(e): If you detect a vessel ahead by radar alone, avoid altering to port (and certainly not into a head-on).

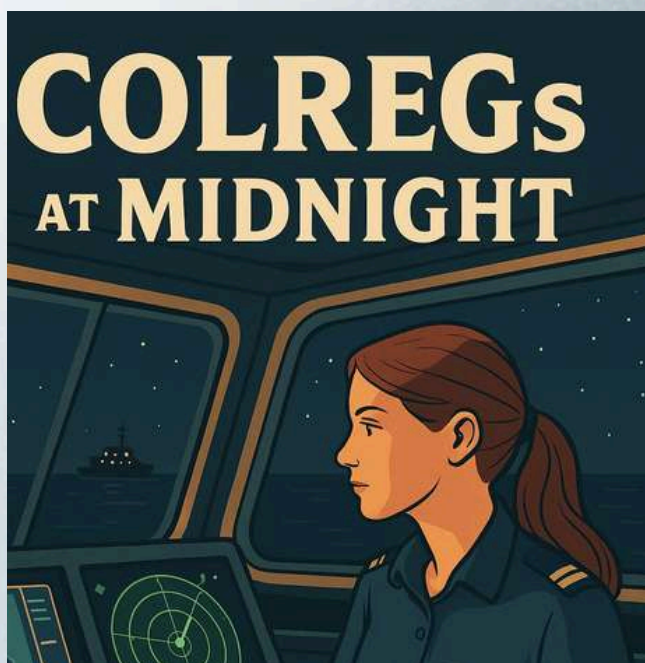
The near-miss we fear: two cautious OOWs shave speed, neither makes a bold, unambiguous alteration, and they sit on zero bearing rate like two polite ghosts. Survival is mechanical: state your plan aloud, mark it in the radar log ("Tgt 021°R/6 nm, altering 20° stbd now"), and follow through. Can't see the intention? Be intentional.

### Tale 6

## Hierarchy Hiccups (Rule 18 cameo)

A trawler, a tug with a tow, and a bulker walk into a narrow channel. Not a joke- just Tuesday. Rule 18 says power-driven vessels keep clear of those not under command, restricted in ability to manoeuvre, constrained by draught, engaged in fishing, and sailing (spirit over letter here). At midnight, fatigue makes every shape a Christmas ornament.

Recognize what you're dealing with early. Two whites vertical on AIS is not a lighthouse; towing lights deserve the whole ocean. Fishing at night is a small galaxy of deck lights that erase sidelights. If in doubt, assume you are give-way and start acting like a nice person.





# Seafarer's BEDTIME STORIES

## Decode the Rules in One Breath

- Rule 5 – Look-out: Eyes + ears + radar + AIS + brain. No single tool is sovereign.
- Rule 7 – Risk: Constant bearing + shrinking range = risk, even with a pretty CPA.
- Rule 8 – Action: Early. Substantial. Visible. Prefer course change. Follow through to well clear.
- Rule 15 – Crossing: If she's green on your starboard bow, you give way to starboard, boldly.
- Rule 16 – Give-way: Take action early and substantially.
- Rule 17 – Stand-on: Hold course until it's clear the other won't; then act. Being a stand-on ≠ bulletproof.
- Rule 18 – Hierarchy: Know who deserves space; when in doubt, you yield.
- Rule 19 – Restricted visibility: Safe speed, engines ready, no port turns for targets ahead, and no fiction built from one echo.



## The Midnight Toolkit (Stuff that keeps you out of reports)

1. Window-frame pelorus: Tape two pencil marks on the bridge window; track bearing drift against them. If it doesn't drift, it's a date.
2. CPA sanity rule: If CPA looks "fine" but the time to CPA is short (say <12 min) and bearing change is nil, treat it as not fine.
3. Two-step alteration: First commit (10–20° starboard at range), then assess. If still murky, commit again—no endless micro-twitching.
4. VHF discipline: Use it to confirm, not negotiate fantasies. "We will alter starboard to pass astern of you," not "We will try a thing and hope destiny approves."
5. Bridge choreography: In close quarters, one conns, one talks, one writes. Don't let the conning officer also be the receptionist.
6. Stand-on triggers: Pre-agree: "If by X range we see no bold alteration, we will do Y and call the Master." Codify courage.
7. Restricted-visibility Post-it: Safe speed; engines ready; extra lookout; fog signals; radar ranges set; no port turns for targets ahead; log every plan/alteration.
8. Ego management: The great-circle isn't great if it's a straight line to paperwork. Be right quietly; be safe loudly.



## The Three Classic Errors (and how not to audition for them)

- The Two-Degree Tango: Tiny course changes that don't create a recognisable passing arrangement. Cure: think cinema, not haiku. Big moves, early.
- The CPA Cult: Treating a numeric CPA as fate, not a fragile forecast. Cure: bearing of the eye > promise of the screen.
- The VHF Romance: Trading lawful geometry for verbal promises to pass ahead. Cure: law first, chat second.

### Back to Tara on the Midnight Muesli

The handsome green light drifted right as Tara's bold starboard alteration bit. CPA opened to a number that no longer wanted to kill her. The Master arrived, glanced at the picture, looked at Tara's bearing notes on the window, and gave the rare nod that equals a raise you'll never see. The other ship crossed her wake like a courteous whisper. ARPA, pleased with itself, updated to show exactly what had already happened.

Tara wrote in the log—not because the company loves ink, but because memory loves paper. She left three crumbs for the next watch:

- "Constant bearing earlier than ARPA showed."
- "Altered 20° to starboard early; speed kept."
- "VHF not used; geometry spoke loud enough."

She poured what was technically coffee, handed it over, and went to bed with the only COLREGs lullaby that matters: I made it obvious. I made it early. I made it safe.

## Seafarer's BEDTIME STORIES

### Last Word

(the one you remember at 23:59)

- COLREGs aren't philosophy; they're choreography - who moves, when, and how much. The ocean forgives bold clarity more often than timid correctness. At midnight, when the green light stares and the radar hums lullabies, remember:
- Look properly (Rule 5).
- Decide from bearing, not wishfulness (Rule 7).
- Act big, act early, keep acting (Rule 8).
- If she's green to starboard, you go right (Rule 15/16).
- Being stand-on isn't being bulletproof (Rule 17).
- In fog, be the plan that the other can't see (Rule 19).
- Do that, and your near-miss tales will stay near and miss - leaving your midnight as it should be: the quiet hum of machines, the soft tick of the log, and the pleasant thought that somewhere a magazine article did, for once, keep two ships polite.





# Re -Imagining Maritime Competence

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.

## Life is a ship of beautiful dreams, but “Beware of the Propeller”

We have all heard that classic by “ABBA”

I have a dream. A song to sing, to help me cope with anything. If you see the wonder of a fairy tale, you can take the future. Even if you fail

Well, life at sea is a dream; everyone involved has a dream.

□ Ship owners dream that their ships operate efficiently and generate substantial commercial profits.

□ Ship managers dream that the number of ships they oversee continues to increase and that their ships stay safe, operate optimally, and remain efficient.

□ Masters and Chief Engineers dream that their contracts are secure, successful, and that the ships operate smoothly.

□ Ship’s officers and ratings dream and aspire to perform their duties well, answer confidently during vetting inspections, receive good appraisals, earn promotions, and receive their salaries on time so they can achieve their dreams.

□ Vetting inspectors, PSC inspectors, and Flag state inspectors dream and hope that the ships they visit are safe, follow good safety standards, adhere to proper safety procedures, and prioritize the safety of the crew, cargo, and environment.

Inadvertently, everyone in our marine industry shares a dream. However, setbacks, pitfalls, and barriers can arise along the way. Some things we overlook may catch us unprepared. Life is a ship filled with beautiful dreams, but “Beware of the propeller.”

We've all gained a wealth of experiences, some good, some not so good, but hopefully, many of us have used these experiences as stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks.

□ Maritime institutes dream and aim to uphold the highest teaching standards, comply with regulations set by authorities, and attract a steady flow of cadets, trainee marine engineers, and ratings.

Often, these dreams are interrupted, and we wake up to the harsh reality at sea.

Let's start with us seafarers. Sometimes, overconfidence and complacency set in; we tend to think we know it all and have seen it all. That's when we are most vulnerable. Add to that the attitude we sometimes display – it's arrogance. We tend to believe we are the best decision makers and often overrule safety procedures and company protocols, which can lead to our downfall. However, just imagine the wealth of knowledge we have gained over the years if it were channelled the right way. We could be great mentors to our juniors, excellent role models, and assets to the company.





Ship managers and superintendents, often called ship doctors, frequently face stress and feel overwhelmed. Each superintendent oversees more vessels than they can reasonably handle. Imagine when this superintendent is away attending to a ship; emails, reports, and requisition approvals quickly accumulate. There is no steady communication with his fleet, leading to delays and breakdowns, and the superintendent ends up playing catch-up. When he returns to the office, he must complete two or three ship reports, including photographs, along with the defect list and RCA. These tasks are certainly challenging and are sometimes taken for granted.

The HSEQ department certainly stays on top of all regulations, SMS updates, PSC CiC, vetting, and PSC findings, regularly sending documents, PDFs, lists of top findings, and more to the vessel. They believe they are doing their best to share information with the fleet. The question is: How effective is this approach? Many of us have been there, done that. Some print whatever information they receive and post copies on the notice board. All we require is for every crew member to sign an acknowledgement sheet, confirming they have read and understood the circular or any relevant information displayed. After an inspection, the HSEQ manager often expresses surprise, having sent all the available material to the ship, yet the vessel gets numerous findings at vetting and PSC inspections. The question remains: Is this way of sharing information truly effective?

It's a cash crunch out there; owners are trying to keep their ships managed within the smallest possible budget. If they're not satisfied, they simply switch to another management company. But how effective is that when no extra budget is allocated for training or additional personnel? Everything remains the same, except now the ship is managed by a new operator – but it's the exact same old wine in a new bottle.

As far as inspections are concerned, surely with the new inspection regime of Sire 2.0 and Rightships RISQ 3.1, there has been a lot of improvement. The quality of observations has improved as the inspectors know they are scrutinised and watched too. Most of them have undergone training and have a positive mindset and approach towards inspection with no personal bias.

Returning to us, the seafarers, we need to take great pride in our work and do it to the best of our abilities. Recognising that the ratings and juniors trust us and that our decisions can impact them both physically and emotionally.

Just like the lyrics of the ABBA classic, "I Have a Dream. A song to sing, to help me cope with anything.

At Navguide Solutions, we are doing exactly that, ensuring all your aspirations and dreams come true

For owners and managers, we have created a dashboard that enables you to view outstanding observations on any ship within your fleet, including the actions taken so far, the root cause, and the expected closure of each observation with a single click.

For the Superintendents, we understand that you have only about 10 to 12 hours onboard to conduct your inspection. In all likelihood, you will be boarding another flight to inspect another vessel or stepping onto a pilot ladder of another vessel at anchor in the same port. We've got you covered – not only can you complete your inspection, but all the snaps taken are automatically compressed, and your report will be ready before you leave the vessel.

For all seafarers, we want to empower you to perform inspections like an inspector. Therefore, we have included guidance notes, photographs, and videos to ensure you understand and carry out the inspection effectively. This inspection app also acts as a mentor, always ready to assist and guide you.





Our maritime institutes have done a fantastic job and helped us prepare effectively through the pre-sea and post-sea courses; however, gaps can still exist. Our app Guide2inspections bridges this gap by integrating theory, practical knowledge, and skills, ultimately benefiting seafarers.

## Conclusion

As part of the maritime chain, we must ensure that the safety of the crew, the ship, cargo, and environmental protection are top priority

Company procedures are meant to be followed strictly. If you find a loophole or an issue, it's not enough to simply discuss it on the board or criticise someone in the office. The effective way is to point it out on the Master's SMS review, follow up with an email to the HSEQ department, and ensure it is rectified. This will be more appreciated, and you would command a lot more respect.



As seafarers, safety should be our utmost priority, and we must avoid taking shortcuts. End of the day, the moment our ships are getting chartered, the money is flowing in, the owners are happy, the managers are happy, and we all have our jobs. Hence, vetting inspections and other commercial inspections are very important too, and as prudent seafarers, we must ensure that our vessel is charter-ready at all times. We recommend downloading the Guide2inspection app,

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to empower yourself and fellow seafarers to inspect vessels like professionals. All the best.







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