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SUPPLY CHAIN *and Sustainability* MAGAZINE

THE MARITIME MAGAZINE FOR IMPA & IMPA SAVE

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Lioretta Tzorou, Purchasing Manager at Seaven Tanker and Dry Management

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The industry leading publication for marine purchasing and supply. The Supply Chain and Sustainability Magazine is IMPA's and IMPA SAVE's official publication – circulated worldwide to purchasing staff within world-leading shipowner and management companies, as well as marine suppliers, all IMPA and IMPA SAVE members and other marine publications.

Written, designed and produced for IMPA - The International Maritime Purchasing Association
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Supply Chain and Sustainability Magazine is published by Alexony Maritime

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Welcome

Welcome to this issue of the magazine, I hope readers are enjoying some summertime relaxation or at least have that planned soon.

This is a busy time for the organisation and this year it's extra busy!

The build up to IMPA London has an extra edge to it this year with a number of projects bubbling up and ready to launch at our flagship event. The new education programme for junior level purchasing and supply chain staff and new entrants will see its official start and will include a dedicated negotiation session and other sessions specifically targeted at the junior level.

The comprehensive introductory course provides a broad starter level education that covers the structure and format of the industry along with modules on procurement, logistics, digitalisation and sustainability. Delivered entirely online, the course will be available to students wherever they are in the world and at a time convenient for them to study. The programme has been created specifically for the industry and is all new content specific to the supply chain sector, many contributors from IMPA's membership as well as specialists have been engaged to help put together this groundbreaking programme and we are immensely grateful to them, one and all. It will be of great pleasure to launch this at the London event in September and I hope many members and readers of the magazine will be there to learn more.

Alongside this, the IMEF initiative will take a major step forward with the programme featuring presentations and workshops as well as meetings to progress this essential and ground breaking new standard. The project will present the guidance and documentation to correctly integrate carbon footprint data into key decision-making. The initiative has gained mass industry support in the few months since it's conception and has a working group consisting of ship owners, managers, leading supply companies as well as trade associations and professional groups who recognise the growing importance of a standard measure and system. A huge thanks to all the working group members and the IMPA SAVE council who continue to drive this initiative forward.

This year's programme for IMPA London has more on it than ever before with a broad mix of debates and workshops as well as the usual networking and gathering opportunities, as we always say it's not to be missed. Make sure you have IMPA London in your diary and I look forward to seeing you there...www.impaevents.com for more.



SUSAN WRAAE KOEFOD
IMPA Chair & CEO

“ This year's programme for IMPA London has more on it than ever before with a broad mix of debates and workshops as well as the usual networking and gathering opportunities, as we always say it's not to be missed

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NEXT ISSUE:

The September/October issue (issue 4) of the magazine will have key themes of **Marine Coatings, Crew Health Monitoring and Health Screening, Uniforms and PPE and Catering for Diverse Crew Cultures.**

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IMPA London 2025 is poised to be a groundbreaking event in terms of its programme and agenda, and joining the excitement is title sponsor GalleyApp.

GalleyApp is the latest innovation from experts in maritime catering and has seen a significant investment in the innovative new App. Utilising expert knowledge, built over many years, as well as collaborating with leading UK-based App designers and developers, the new app offers significant benefits to procurement teams at shipping companies, as well as providing substantial crew benefits.

The App breaks new ground in offering inventory management and control over provisions with detailed 'real-time' reporting of provisions' stock and requirements. Described as 'groundbreaking' by one of the purchasing managers trialling the App this year, the new App will be on show at the IMPA flagship event, featuring a workshop and presentations available throughout the two days.

Expect networking opportunities, presentations on a variety of supply chain management and sustainability

subjects, followed by debate discussions where industry leaders come together to learn, ask questions and share insights. Join the debates, ask questions, challenge the status quo, and take part.

Speaker spotlight

We are pleased to be bring you a packed two-day agenda with top international procurement talent. Saurish Nandi, Head of Compliance and Core Solutions, ShipServ, will kickstart day one with a session on how AI-powered

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procurement orchestration is transforming how ship owners and managers operate by replacing manual, fragmented workflows with intelligent, connected, and value-driven systems. Panellists joining Saurish are, Alex Drew, Procurement Director, Fleet Management Ltd., Paolo Magonio, Group Procurement Manager, Scorpio Ship Management, Ryan Dalgado, Head of Procurement, Island View Shipping Services and Francesco Leboffe, Purchasing Manager, d'Amico Shipping Group.

In the first part of the afternoon on day one, industry leaders will dive deep into the heart of digitalisation and discuss advancements in procurement platforms. Chaired by Peter Schellenberger, Director and Founder, Novamaxis Pte Ltd., the debate will feature a panel of experts, including Mikael Weis, CEO, Source2Sea A/S, Peter Fåh, Managing Director, MESPAS, Carsten Schmidt, Vice President, ProcureShip and Noel Ethirveerasingam, Global Head of Procurement, ShipServ.

The afternoon will continue with the IMPA SAVE Council and the wider IMEF working group leading a dynamic discussion around where the IMEF is headed. Joining the panel will be IMPA SAVE Council Members Rasmus Elsborg-Jensen, ReFlow, Dorte Mejlvang, A.P. Moller - Maersk, Paolo Magonio, Scorpio Group, Mikael Karlsson, Northern Marine Group Ltd., and IMEF Working Group Member Carl Forsman, ISSA.

Day two will kickstart with Saurish Nandi,

Head of Compliance and Core Solutions, ShipServ, who will offer the audience a fresh perspective on how generative AI is being applied to create orchestrated, intelligent procurement journeys that are adaptive, predictive, and data-driven. Joining him will be panellists, Alex Drew, Procurement Director, Fleet Management Ltd., and Dragos Ionescu, ShipServ.

The morning will continue for all the prospective students of the IMPA Education Course, with a workshop, led by Jonas Erlandsen, Business Development and Sales, Bawat; Board Member, Scanlog Shipping. This workshop will look at negotiating with confidence and building strong supplier relationships in maritime procurement.

The day will end with IMPA's COO, Stephen Alexander who will be sitting down with Senior Procurement Managers for an insightful conversation on supplier relationship management, and the current challenges in marine purchasing. Joining him will be the IMPA General Council, including Susan Koefoed, IMPA Chair and CEO, Weco Group, Rob C. Scharff, Head of Procurement, Allseas Group, Jennifer Schlemeier, Procurement Manager – Fleet, Oldendorff Carriers and Simon Potter, Chief Procurement Officer, Inchcape Shipping Services. For more information about IMPA London, visit:

www.impaevents.com/event/london.



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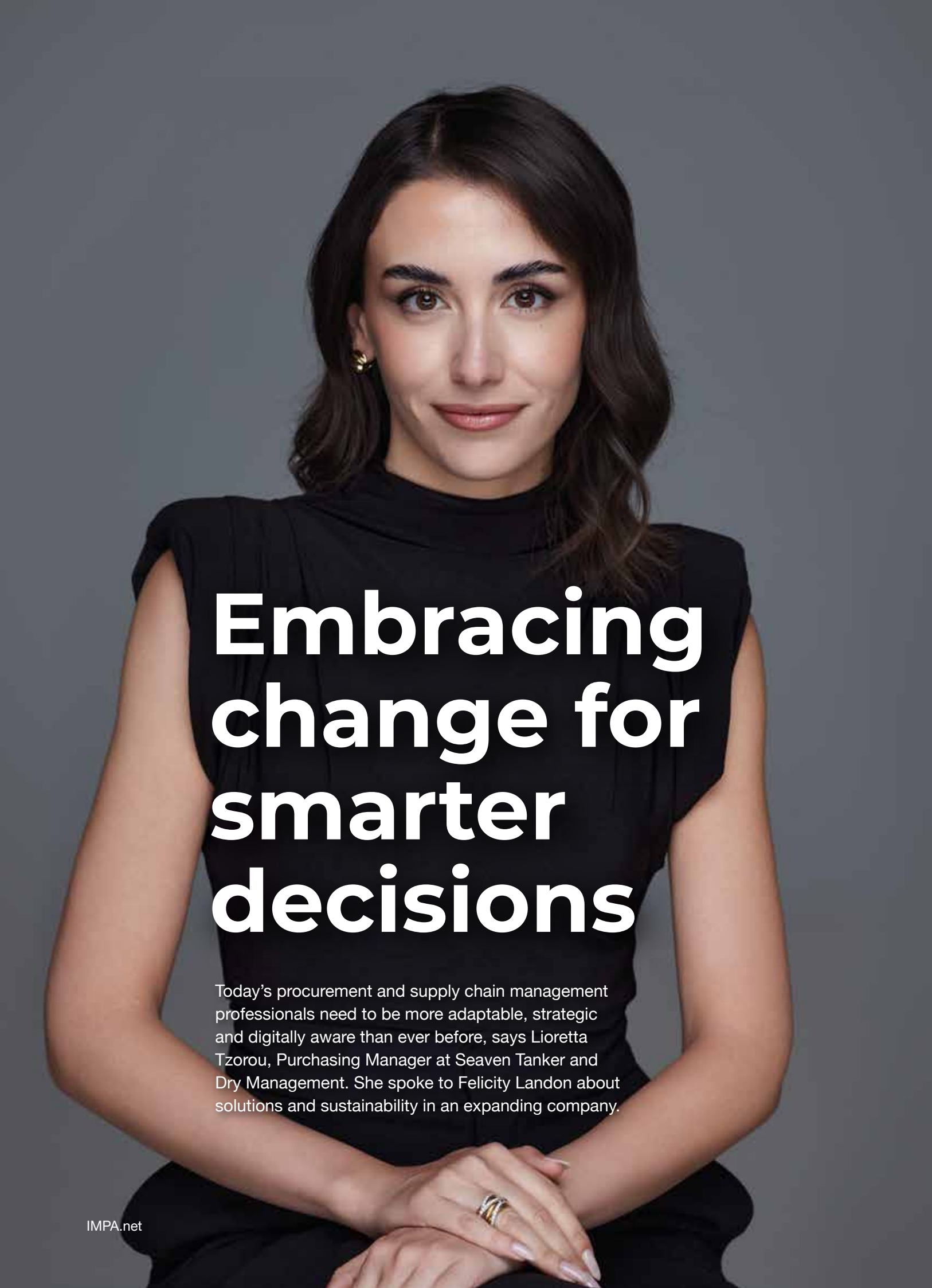
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A portrait of Liorretta Tzorou, a woman with dark, wavy hair, wearing a black sleeveless top. She is sitting with her hands clasped in front of her, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a solid grey.

Embracing change for smarter decisions

Today's procurement and supply chain management professionals need to be more adaptable, strategic and digitally aware than ever before, says Liorretta Tzorou, Purchasing Manager at Seaven Tanker and Dry Management. She spoke to Felicity Landon about solutions and sustainability in an expanding company.



When Lioretta Tzorou joined Seaven Tanker and Dry Management in 2018, the company had a fleet of nine vessels. Seven years later, the fleet has more than doubled in size, with Seaven owning 20 vessels. The company still operates from a single head office in the heart of Piraeus, in Greece – as she says: “Having all departments under one roof allows for faster decision-making, closer collaboration and efficient internal communication.”

Originally founded as Evia Petrol in 2003, the company was renamed to reflect its ability to travel across the seven seas. The Seaven fleet – made up of small and medium-sized Greek-flagged oil/chemical tankers and cement carriers – is chartered out mainly for trade in the Mediterranean, Black Sea and North Europe ports, but is not limited to these regions.

Being part of Seaven’s steady growth has been incredibly rewarding, says Lioretta. “In addition to expanding the fleet, Seaven has been heavily focused on operational improvements across all departments. We are investing in digital solutions, enhancing our internal procedures and streamlining our processes.”

After gaining a degree in Maritime Studies from the University of Piraeus, she began her career in shipping in 2011, working in sales at a trading company specialising in marine spare parts. This, she says, gave her solid exposure to the commercial side of the business. Next, she joined a navigation aids provider, handling customer service and supporting clients with digital and paper navigation products including charts, publications and software.

From there, she made the transition to ship owning when she joined Seaven as a Spares and Stores Purchaser. “Beyond the day-to-day responsibilities, I was tasked with building the department from the ground up; establishing procedures, organising workflows and implementing key processes,” she explains. “After two-and-a-half years, I was promoted to Purchasing Manager. Working on both

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the supplier and shipowner sides has given me a well-rounded and practical understanding of the supply chain and procurement challenges – which I apply daily in my current role.”

Seaven’s strategic procurement goals are achieving cost-effective solutions without compromising on quality or safety, while continuously improving internal efficiency. “We place strong emphasis on building and maintaining long-term relationships with trusted suppliers through performance evaluation and transparent communication,” says Lioretta. “A major priority is the digitalisation of our processes – moving toward a paperless, ERP-integrated workflow supported by KPI tracking and data analytics to enable more informed and strategic decision-making. Our procurement activities are closely aligned with operational needs and seafarer welfare, recognising that timely, reliable supplies contribute directly to vessel performance and crew wellbeing.

“We are also increasingly mindful of our environmental footprint, seeking ways to reduce unnecessary shipments, consolidate orders and source locally when possible.”

When it comes to the critical area of spare parts, quality, delivery time and cost are the most important considerations, says Lioretta. “We prioritise genuine or OEM parts when possible and always assess the urgency of the



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Freelance Journalist



request. We also factor in logistics, especially location. Poor quality and unreliable delivery timelines are the main risks. A faulty part can cause major disruptions onboard, so we only work with trusted suppliers. Sudden delays in logistics can also lead to costly downtime.”

Each request is unique, she emphasises. “New parts are preferred but refurbished or used parts may be the only option for older machinery. In those cases, certification, testing and supplier reputation are key. We verify certifications, request test reports and rely on our network of established vendors. We maintain close communication with both suppliers and freight forwarders to ensure delivery is on track and adjust plans when needed.”

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Inevitably, external factors are affecting procurement and supply chain management. “Professionals in the field need to be more adaptable, strategic and digitally aware than ever before,” says Lioretta. “Geopolitical issues, like the conflicts in the Red Sea and Ukraine, disrupt logistics and change supply routes, while sanctions and compliance rules make supplier selection more complex. As Seaven mainly trades within the Mediterranean region, Black Sea and North Sea, we are less directly affected by issues like United States tariffs or trans-Pacific disruptions, but global events still have indirect impacts on availability, lead times and pricing, making it crucial to stay informed and agile.

“Port congestion and changing freight costs also create challenges for delivery times and budgeting, while environmental regulations are pushing us to make greener choices in procurement.”

Digitalisation, she says, is both a challenge and an opportunity; yes, it requires investment, but in return it helps improve efficiency, transparency and long-term performance.

Seaven is a company that embraces change, says Lioretta. “We are working toward a paperless workflow by the end of the year, aiming to simplify processes and reduce manual work. At the same time, we are focused on getting the most out of our ERP system – not just using it for placing

We prioritise genuine or OEM parts when possible and always assess the urgency of the request. We also factor in logistics, especially location. Poor quality and unreliable delivery timelines are the main risks. A faulty part can cause major disruptions onboard, so we only work with trusted suppliers. Sudden delays in logistics can also lead to costly downtime

orders but as a smart, data-driven tool for analysis and performance improvement. By tracking KPIs and generating reports, we can gain better insight into purchasing patterns, supplier reliability and cost behaviour, allowing us to make more informed decisions and negotiate smarter. One area we also value highly is crew feedback on the quality of spare parts delivered onboard – it gives us a real-world view of how our choices affect vessel operations and helps us continuously refine our vendor list. Overall, I believe digitalisation brings greater transparency, accountability and consistency to procurement, and the future lies in fully embracing these tools to work smarter, not harder.”

Sustainability at Seaven means operating responsibly, both environmentally and socially, across all aspects of the business, she says. “While we are continuously evolving in this area, we have already taken important steps such as upgrading to more energy-efficient equipment on board, reducing unnecessary shipments by consolidating orders, moving toward a fully paperless office and exploring local sourcing options to lower our carbon footprint. In line with broader industry trends, we also support initiatives related to eco-friendly fuels and bunker alternatives, as well as cleaner technologies where applicable. Sustainability isn’t a one-time project – it is an ongoing mindset we aim

to embed in our everyday decisions, from procurement to vessel operations.

"I closely follow the work of IMPA and fully support its mission to promote ethical procurement practices and professional standards across the maritime industry. I stay up to date with IMPA's news and make it a point to attend events and forums whenever possible to stay informed about developments in shipping and procurement."

Seaven employs about 50 people across its departments. Finding the right people in such a demanding and fast-paced industry is not always easy – but essential for long-term success, says Lioretta. "I personally look for candidates who demonstrate a willingness to learn, a collaborative mindset and a proactive attitude. Experience is important but soft skills and team compatibility are equally crucial."

For anyone embarking on a procurement career, her main advice is – never stop asking questions. "Curiosity and the desire to learn are key in this fast-paced field. Procurement is often underestimated but it plays a crucial role in the efficiency and success of a shipping company. If you're someone who enjoys solving problems, working across cultures and time zones, managing negotiations and making real-time decisions, procurement can be extremely rewarding. You will learn to balance quality, cost and time in a high-impact role. Also, always keep communication with other departments open and easy. The exchange of accurate and updated information can significantly improve the efficiency of your work and help you gain a broader understanding of vessel operations and company goals."

Shipping has become more 'trendy' over the past few years, says Lioretta. "Procurement is a critical part of the industry and I would encourage universities and training institutions to offer more internships in this area – it's a fantastic entry point into the maritime industry and a sector full of learning and growth opportunities."

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A portrait of Ashish Tripathi, a man with short dark hair and a light beard, wearing a blue blazer over a light blue button-down shirt. He is standing outdoors with a blurred green background. The text "Our seafarers on board are on the frontline" is overlaid in large white font.

Our seafarers on board are on the frontline

Understanding your fleet, caring for your crew, embracing technology and treating your vendors as long-term partners: these aren't just operational strategies at TORM, they're deeply embedded values. Ashish Tripathi, Head of Purchase and Logistics at TORM, speaks to Felicity Landon about running a procurement operation that is global in scale yet personal in its approach.



TORM, one of the world's leading product tanker companies, operates a fleet of nearly 90 vessels and employs over 3,300 crew members. Its vessels called at more than 700 ports across 110 countries in the past year. The complexity is further compounded by a high number of vessels in the spot market, where schedules change frequently and agility is essential.

"In a global operation like ours, there's very little room for error," says Ashish. "We need to anticipate demand, consolidate intelligently and, most importantly, keep the crew and vessel operations uninterrupted."

Stock points: strategic but agile

TORM has created its own network of global stock points in Singapore, Rotterdam, Fujairah, Houston, Busan, Osaka and Shanghai. These stock points have traditionally allowed the team to manage inventory, plan and reduce urgent last-minute orders.

"Recently, we made a conscious decision to optimise these locations further and brought down stock levels," says Ashish. "The idea is not to cut down for the sake of it but to balance availability with speed and efficiency. Even in this process, safety and business continuity remain at the core."

He adds: "It does get difficult at times, due to fluctuating freight rates, unexpected port calls or sudden weather disruptions, but that's exactly when your own experience, collective learning and the strength of the One TORM Platform helps navigate through the chaos."

From the engine room to the shore

Ashish's journey has included time at sea and in the classroom. A graduate in naval architecture and marine engineering from MIT-ADT University, Pune, he sailed first with Mitsui OSK Lines and later with British Petroleum gas carriers, rising to the rank of Second Assistant Engineer.

My time on board taught me a lot, especially about how small decisions made ashore impact life at sea in big ways. That perspective stays with me every single day

After years at sea, he stepped ashore to pursue an MBA from SP Jain School of Global Management, with academic stints in Dubai, Sydney and Singapore. Since then, he has led procurement functions in the offshore and shipping sectors. He now heads the purchasing and logistics division at TORM and is based in Mumbai.

His experience extends beyond his day job. Ashish is an **Executive Member of the Shipping and Logistics Committee at the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry** and a **Committee Member of the Supply Chain and Logistics Committee at the Indian Chamber of Commerce** – both institutions with over a century of legacy. These roles have given him a broad, cross-industry lens to understand supply chain issues and challenges, and how different sectors innovate to overcome them.

"My time on board taught me a lot, especially about how small decisions made ashore impact life at sea in big ways," he says. "That perspective stays with me every single day."

Crew welfare at the heart of procurement

Procurement at TORM is not just about price points and vendor consolidation, says Ashish – it's deeply interlinked with the wellbeing of the crew.

"Our people on board are the face of TORM. They represent us every day and they deserve the best we can offer," he says. "Take food, for instance. It's not just about nutrition; food has emotional value at sea. It can lift morale, build camaraderie and offer comfort after a long shift."



FELICITY LANDON
Freelance Journalist

To ensure consistency and quality, TORM's catering operations are centrally overseen by a dedicated catering superintendent. Only recognised brands are approved for supplies and the entire food planning system, including menus, is now digital.

"We no longer rely on guesswork. Our cooks follow a digital cookbook, which factors in crew nationality, cuisine preferences and nutritional requirements. We go down to the level of macros and micros with protein, fat and carbohydrates all tracked carefully."

Ashish believes TORM's multicultural inclusivity goes a long way in making the crew feel at home, no matter where the vessel sails.

In-house innovation with local accountability

He shares another example of balancing global processes with local efficiencies – crew workwear. "Our workwear is designed in-house, tailored to shipboard conditions and sourced directly from local manufacturers. While we procure regionally to reduce lead times and availability, we don't compromise on consistency. Be it the thread count, fabric finish or even the colour shade, it's the same quality across the fleet. These small things show respect for the people who wear them."

Digital procurement, human priorities

At the heart of TORM's procurement philosophy lies a robust and evolving digital backbone. From order tracking and contract mapping to supplier analytics and budget controls, the system is engineered to bring transparency and speed.

"We've moved away from heavy paperwork and long invoice cycles. Our approval process is seamless. The focus is to ensure payments are made on time. Internally, we have built checks and alerts to track this – because at the end of the day, our vendors are our partners, and their trust matters."

Ashish says he strongly believes that procurement must be proactive, not reactive. TORM's in-house tech teams have custom-built dashboards, inventory visibility tools and vendor performance metrics to match the company's specific operating realities.



Know your ship. Understand the cargo, equipment and daily routines on board. The more you know, the better decisions you'll make. And never stop being curious. Just because something has always been done a certain way doesn't mean it can't be improved

"Our goal is to empower teams with data. Whether it's knowing which item is lying unused for too long or which port offers the most reliable supply chain, it's all there, live and actionable."

A future fueled by technology and ethics

While AI and automation are steadily being introduced into the system, Ashish is clear that people come first. "Technology should empower teams to make better decisions, not replace them. AI helps reduce manual errors and gives us predictive insights but it's our people who apply that judgment, especially in emergencies."

As part of its larger commitment, TORM also aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly quality education and climate action. "Sustainability is non-negotiable for us. Whether it's reducing air freight use, monitoring carbon emissions or ensuring our suppliers follow fair labour practices, it's part of how we operate every day."

Final thoughts: know the ship, respect the vendor

Ashish concludes with advice for those considering procurement as a career path. "Know your ship. Understand the cargo, equipment and daily routines on board. The more you know, the better decisions you'll make. And never stop being curious. Just because something has always been done a certain way doesn't mean it can't be improved."

And finally, treat your vendors with respect. "They may not wear your company uniform but they are the ones supporting your vessel 5,000 miles away. Build partnerships, not just transactions. That's the only way forward."

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Managing Lifespan

Understanding and optimising mooring rope shelf life

In maritime operations, where safety and efficiency are crucial, every component functions importantly. Mooring ropes, connecting vessels to docks and buoys, are key elements. While their performance during active use is carefully monitored, a significant aspect is their "shelf life", in other words the maximum period a product can be stored under specified conditions while maintaining its defined quality. Understanding this concept is essential for effective asset management, supporting crew safety and optimising operational expenses.

Modern mooring systems primarily use synthetic fibre ropes, engineered from various polymers: Polypropylene, Polyester, Polyamide (Nylon) and High Modulus Polyethylene (HMPE). Each material has distinct characteristics and vulnerabilities. Though durable in use, these materials can be affected by environmental factors during storage. Their molecular structures, designed for strength, can be gradually altered by ordinary conditions, reducing their properties. This may not be evident until the rope is used, potentially leading to operational challenges or risks.

Environmental factors influencing mooring rope shelf life

Several environmental factors can gradually affect the condition of synthetic mooring ropes during storage. Understanding these factors is a key step towards effective rope management.

Heat Sources

Exposure to heat compromises mechanical properties of all synthetic rope materials. This occurs through thermal degradation; elevated temperatures cause polymer chains to break down, reducing molecular weight. This internal change results in loss of tensile strength, elasticity and increased stiffness.





The extent of property reduction relates directly to both temperature and duration of exposure. Storing ropes near engine room bulkheads, exhaust pipes or uninsulated deck areas can accelerate this. Thermal degradation is permanent; once the molecular structure is affected, its original state cannot be restored. Even if visually unaffected, a rope's load-bearing capacity might be significantly reduced, making it less suitable for critical mooring operations. Maintaining a stable, ambient temperature is fundamental for preserving rope integrity.

Ambient moisture

While many synthetic ropes resist water absorption, Polyamide (Nylon) ropes are particular. Polyamide is hygroscopic, readily absorbing water from the air. This absorption can cause swelling and reduce tensile strength, as water interferes with bonding within the polyamide structure.

This process is irreversible. Even at low moisture levels, strength reduction can begin, and lost strength is not fully recovered if subsequently dried. This makes moisture control especially important for Polyamide ropes. Storage in damp areas, unventilated lockers or places prone to condensation can significantly affect shelf life. On the other hand, Polypropylene and HMPE are generally unaffected by ambient moisture.

Sunlight exposure

Sunlight, particularly its ultraviolet (UV) radiation, degrades synthetic polymers. This photodegradation happens when UV photons break chemical bonds within polymer chains, weakening the material and reducing mechanical properties.

Damage extent depends on exposure intensity, total time, and effectiveness of UV stabilisation additives. While manufacturers include UV stabilisers, these are consumed over time. Visual indications of UV degradation include discolouration, chalky appearance, and noticeable stiffening or brittleness. These cues indicate compromised internal strength. Storing ropes in direct sunlight, even for limited periods, reduces shelf life, making shaded or indoor storage important.

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Chemical exposure

The shipboard environment often contains various chemicals. Mooring ropes, if not stored properly, can contact substances like paints, solvents, fuels, lubricants, acids, cleaning products and corrosive fumes. Many can damage the molecular structure of synthetic fibres, for instance, by chemical oxidation or by causing the polymer matrix to swell.

Resistance of different synthetics to chemicals varies. Chemical damage can be subtle, sometimes occurring internally without immediate visible signs. This is a concern, as a rope might appear intact but have reduced strength internally. Such unseen degradation affects performance. Dedicated, separate storage areas, away from potential chemical spills or fumes, are important for maintaining rope quality and supporting safety.

Recommended practices for mooring rope storage

Following proper storage protocols is fundamental to extending shelf life and maintaining performance. These guidelines address environmental factors:

- **Stable Temperatures:** Maintain ambient temperatures between 10°C and 30°C (50°F and 86°F). Avoid extreme heat sources.
- **Dry Conditions:** Essential, especially for Polyamide ropes. Storage areas should be well-ventilated; ropes stored off the deck or floor, ideally on gratings or pallets, allow air circulation.
- **No Sunlight Exposure:** Store ropes in enclosed, dark spaces or under opaque covers blocking all UV radiation.
- **No Chemical Exposure:** Store ropes completely separate from any chemicals or their fumes. Dedicated, clearly marked rope lockers are recommended.

Shelf life duration: a defined period

When stored carefully under specified conditions and in original manufacturer packaging, a synthetic mooring



Shelf life ends when the rope is unpacked and put into service or designated for disposal. Its "service life" then begins, governed by operational wear and environmental exposure. The distinction between shelf life and service life is important. Shelf life management preserves original properties during storage. Once deployed, a rope's service life is influenced by operational stresses

rope can retain 100% of its initial break strength for a maximum of seven years. This period represents the manufacturer's expectation of full performance retention under ideal storage conditions.

Shelf life ends when the rope is unpacked and put into service or designated for disposal. Its "service life" then begins, governed by operational wear and environmental exposure.

Even beyond seven years of proper storage, minimal strength reductions (up to 5%) are expected at ten years. This typically does not compromise safety for mooring operations, assuming proper sizing and design margins. The rope can remain safe and fit for use.

Beyond the ten-year mark, strength reductions become less predictable. In such cases, a thorough check for residual strength is recommended before deployment. This could involve visual inspection, non-destructive testing, or destructive testing of a sample length.

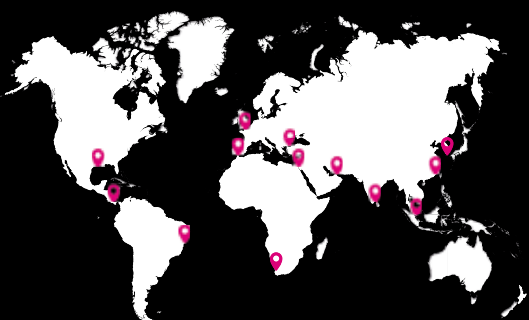
The distinction between shelf life and service life is important. Shelf life management preserves original properties during storage. Once deployed, a rope's service life is influenced by operational stresses.

In conclusion, understanding and carefully following guidelines for mooring rope shelf life is a key part of responsible vessel management. It directly affects safety of crew, vessel, and port infrastructure. Actively managing storage conditions helps ensure mooring ropes maintain designed strength and reliability, supporting consistent performance. Investing in proper storage practices is an investment in future operational safety and efficiency.



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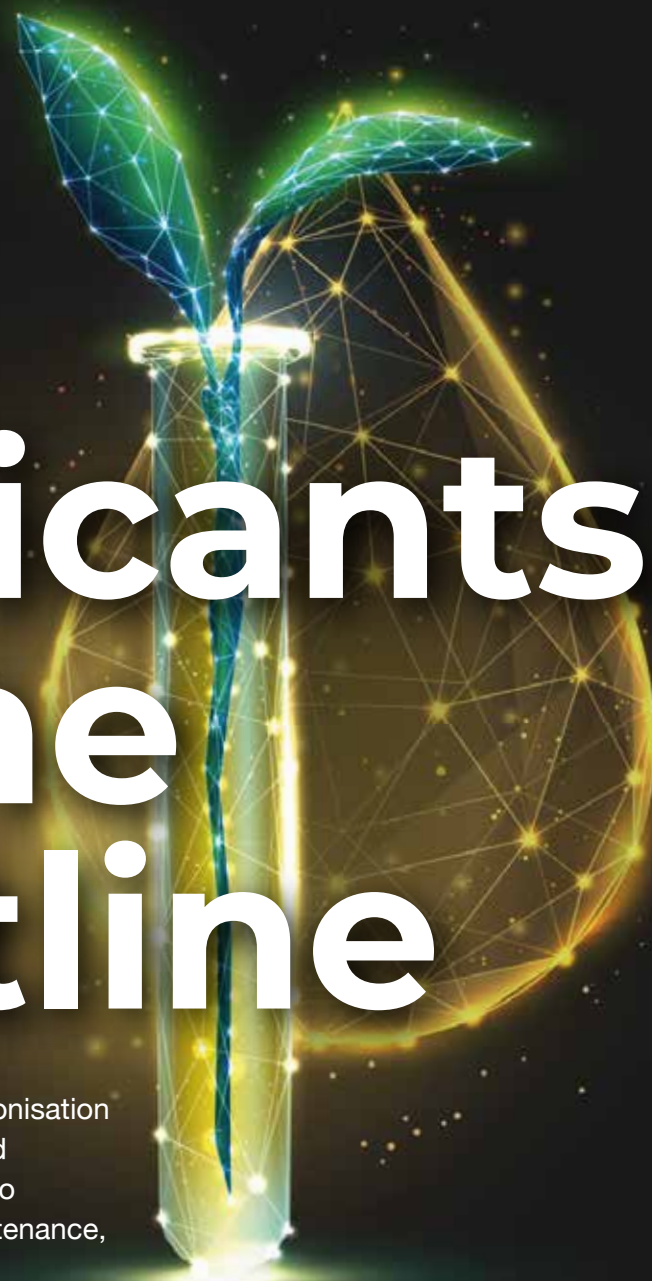
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Lubricants on the frontline

As shipping accelerates toward decarbonisation and embraces alternative fuels, onboard lubricant testing is becoming essential to safeguard engine health, optimise maintenance, and ensure compliance.

The industry is at an inflection point where environmental obligation and operational complexity are equally pressing. As it makes strides toward decarbonisation, the sector is embracing a multi-fuel future – one where methanol, ammonia and hydrogen operate alongside more traditional fuels. The transformation is forcing a rethink in how ships' systems are managed, maintained, and monitored.

Within that context, marine lubricants are becoming ever more crucial because of their direct role in protecting engines under varying fuel conditions.

And at the heart of that development is the evolution of onboard lubricant testing – an increasingly vital tool in ensuring performance, reliability, and environmental compliance.

How multi-fuel engines are shaping decarbonisation

The push toward alternative fuels is reshaping marine engineering. Vessels are being designed or retrofitted to run on dual-fuel systems, enabling transitions between traditional carbon-heavy fuels and zero-carbon alternatives.



While this flexibility is a necessary step toward compliance with global emissions targets, it introduces new engineering challenges, particularly in combustion behaviour, engine stress, and chemical interactions.

“The role of lubricants has been recognised as critical, considering its principal task of protecting the engine parts and cylinder components against mechanical and corrosive wear,” says Martechnic’s Frank Herholdt.

“The significant advancement of the past months has been the understanding of the necessity of long-term close cooperation between OEMs and suppliers of advanced lubricant formulations as well as implementation of regular on-board testing and monitoring practices.”

The complexity introduced by dual-fuel engines has created a need for much tighter collaboration between original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and lubricant formulators. Off-the-shelf lubricants used to cut it - but now OEMs and oil suppliers are working closely to develop formulations specifically matched to engine designs, combustion conditions, and fuel profiles.

Indeed, this collaboration extends beyond formulation. It includes validating lubricant performance through real-world testing and aligning on best practices for onboard monitoring, while regular, cooperative engagement ensures that insights from field data. Elements like scrape down oil analysis or iron content tracking are then fed back into lubricant design and operational strategies.

“Lubricant analysis on board a vessel is an essential method to maintain engine and equipment health, to minimise maintenance costs and to avoid possible costly engine failures, major damages and uncontrolled downtimes,” says Herholdt.

“In our opinion, procurement professionals responsible for supply of marine testing equipment must work in close collaboration with marine engineers and technical superintendents of a vessel to define the spectrum of the required on-board lubricant monitoring kits.

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Lubricant analysis on board a vessel is an essential method to maintain engine and equipment health, to minimise maintenance costs and to avoid possible costly engine failures, major damages and uncontrolled downtimes. In our opinion, procurement professionals responsible for supply of marine testing equipment must work in close collaboration with marine engineers and technical superintendents of a vessel to define the spectrum of the required on-board lubricant monitoring kits



FRANK HERHOLDT
Managing Director
Martechnic GmbH

“Consultation and feedback are truly valuable and always help to better understand the needs of a vessel from the technical perspective before deciding on purchase. Doing research on available lubricant monitoring test kits on the market, procurement specialists can also receive a professional support from a supplier of marine testing equipment. Their technical expertise will be very helpful in determining the scope of the testing equipment required to cover the needs designated by the technical superintendents.”

Empowering crew with portable solutions

One of the key drivers behind the growing adoption of onboard testing is usability. Modern testing kits are no longer the complex, technician-only instruments of the past. Today’s portable devices are compact, intuitive, and require minimal crew training.

This democratisation of oil testing has made it a practical part of daily onboard operations. Advances in real-time monitoring systems are also making testing more accurate and fluid and allowing crew and shipping companies to improve onboard testing.

“The real-time monitoring tools and traditional manual test kits have to be regarded as a good combination for a solid predictive and proactive maintenance strategy,” says Herholdt. “Both methods have their own advantages in terms of scalability, cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and time, but they enhance each other at the same time. The focus lies on the area of practical application.”

ExxonMobil’s Filippos Athanassiadis agrees, adding that recent advancements in onboard lubricant testing have significantly enhanced the accuracy, efficiency, and scope of analysis, re-shaping the way ship operations are managed.

“Onboard testing has now reached laboratory-quality accuracy, providing operators with reliable insights that help reduce unexpected downtime and optimise cylinder oil consumption. The integration of automation into testing processes has minimised human intervention, enabling near-instant analysis and reporting, complete with charts and recommendations that on-board crew can action immediately.”

Athanassiadis adds that real-time monitoring tools represent a significant evolution in lubricant testing, offering accuracy, speed, and insights that traditional manual tank dipping cannot match – though he doesn’t think that spells the end for traditional methods.

“Real-time systems bring the operational and engineering office closer to onboard processes, offering crews the ability to collect and analyse data without delays or potential errors found in manual approaches,” he says.

“They also enable predictive maintenance strategies, which help avert costly failures and optimise lubricant usage proactively. Traditional manual kits may still have a role in basic testing or as a backup solution for vessels without access to advanced digital systems.

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FILIPPOS ATHANASSIADIS

Engineering Manager - Europe Africa and Middle East
ExxonMobil

“However, as the maritime industry embraces data-driven operations, real-time tools are becoming the preferred choice for fleets aiming to streamline their maintenance processes and achieve greater operational efficiency.”

It is clear then that the effectiveness of any testing program hinges on choosing the right tools, meaning that procurement teams must go beyond catalogue comparisons. Successful selection requires consultation with marine engineers, technical superintendents, and OEMs to understand the specific demands of the vessel’s fuel mix, engine type, and operating profile.

“Selecting the right lubricant monitoring service requires a balance between user-friendliness, safety, performance accuracy, and cost-efficiency,” says Athanassiadis.

“Procurement professionals should prioritise services that provide easy operation for onboard crews, requiring minimal training or specialised equipment. A solution that eliminates the need for chemical reagents or complex protocols can reduce operational risks and human error while speeding up the testing process.”

As shipping navigates a multi-fuel future, onboard lubricant testing is a strategic enabler of safe, efficient operations. By combining real-time monitoring with user-friendly tools and cross-industry collaboration, shipowners can protect engines, reduce costs, and stay ahead in the race toward decarbonised, data-driven maritime operations.



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ONBOARD LUBE OIL TEST KITS FOR EFFECTIVE CONDITION MONITORING

Lubricant testing and monitoring (onboard lubricant test and monitoring kits, how to select the correct kit to ensure the efficient operations of your vessels)

Smooth and efficient running of critical onboard machinery, engine and equipment requires proper lubrication strategy. Not only the choice of the suitable lubricant is pivotal, but also the regular verification of its quality and condition.

Importance of onboard lube oil analysis

In light of the latest changes in the variety of fuel oil types used by ships and introduction of alternative transition fuels such as marine gas oil/ marine diesel oil, liquid natural gas (LNG), biofuels (FAME, HVO etc.) and future zero-carbon fuels (ammonia, hydrogen, methanol etc.), the role of the lubricating oil becomes more and more critical. New types of lubricant formulations are created to meet the needs of different fuel options in shipping's decarbonisation and to adjust the lubricant use.

Regular in-field testing with on-board monitoring test kits can help to understand the relationships between fuels and the supplied lubricants. So, for example, the regular use of portable oil testing devices enables the technical maintenance personnel to early detect contamination of the used engine lubricant by methanol.

Proactive oil (trend) analysis and assessment of the lubricant performance is the key method to establish effective predictive maintenance practices on board a vessel and to support the overall engine health.

The primarily task of each lubricant is to protect the engine parts and cylinder components against mechanical and corrosive wear. While in operation, the properties of the lube oil in use may deteriorate with time or sudden changes in its condition may occur due to different reasons, e.g. contamination.

Through adoption of lube oil condition monitoring practices or in-service oil testing, engine operators can routinely measure, monitor and analyse crucial lube oil properties directly on board a vessel. Thereby, prompt detection of any off-specification issues and changes in the lube oil condition enable immediate initiation of countermeasures to fix relatively minor problems and to avoid possible costly engine failures, major damages and uncontrolled downtimes.



Lube oil testing equipment of Martechnic

With a profound technical expertise and a long-standing experience in oil quality management for over 25 years, Martechnic GmbH provides engineers and ship operators with testing equipment for on-board lube oil condition monitoring. Regular assessment of engine lube oil condition can be accurately performed with portable test kits to promptly determine lubricant properties, contamination and wear debris:

- water in oil;
- base number (BN);
- viscosity comparison;
- viscosity value based on the falling ball principle;
- soot contamination;
- salt water contamination;
- iron content.

Various lube oil test kits are available depending on the parameters required for the analysis.

Martechnic's combined test kits are designed

to test multiple parameters of lube oil. So, for example, the test kit "ALWAVIS CHECK" offers 3 different tests.

The test kit "LUBE OIL CHECK" can be supplied for 4, 5 or 6 different tests.



Lube oil test kit for 5 different tests
"LUBE OIL CHECK 5"
(IMPA Code: 652822)

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Regular in-field testing with onboard monitoring test kits can help to understand the relationships between fuels and the supplied lubricants. So, for example, the regular use of portable oil testing devices enables the technical maintenance personnel to early detect contamination of the used engine lubricant by methanol

The oil testing equipment is easy to use even for untrained operators, provide instantaneous and high-accuracy test results as well as the possibility of their direct assessment by the shipboard crew.

Apart from immediate identification of any ongoing problem with the oil quality/ oil condition, a significant advantage here is the possibility to schedule periodic oil analysis at regular intervals of choice (weekly, fortnightly or monthly) depending on particular application environment and to collect the data for a trend analysis. Tracking the changes in the used oil quality/ condition in comparison to initial reference data can help to make a prognosis and accordingly to plan efficiently on necessary maintenance

time, e.g., to extend the maintenance intervals or oil changes.

The use of digital solutions for lube oil analysis in line with Industry 4.0–concept facilitates massively the testing process on board a vessel, delivering quick and precise test results.

Preventive routine monitoring can also help to early detect any abnormal wear processes

before serious engine wear occurs. Utilising on-board testing equipment “TOTAL IRON CHECK” for cylinder drain oil (CDO) analysis (Scrape Down Analysis), it is possible to receive accurate information about impending damages in the engine and to minimise wear (abrasive and/ or corrosive).



Digital water-in-oil and BN test kit
TWIN CHECK"
(IMPA Code: 652821)

Along with the additional measurement of the remaining base number (BN), cylinder oil consumption can be reduced, while adjusting and optimising the lubricant feed rate and achieving proper lubrication of cylinder components (cylinder liner, pistons etc.) and enabling cost-effective engine operation.

Overall, application of on-board lubricant test and monitoring kits can help to effectively manage engine and machinery performance, complying with strict environmental regulations and standards of International Maritime Organization (IMO) and contributing to decarbonisation's strategy of a vessel in its carbon footprint reduction. In a multi-fuel future of the shipping industry, regular marine lubricant condition assessment for compliance with OEM (original equipment manufacturer) requirements will remain an important task that can be supported by onboard lubricant test and monitoring kits in addition to shore-based laboratory analysis.



Test device "TOTAL IRON CHECK" for onboard Cylinder Drain Oil (CDO) analysis,
Patent Number: 2982974



The intensity of the blue colour refers to different total iron concentration measured in Cylinder Drain Oil (CDO) samples

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Overall, application of onboard lubricant test and monitoring kits can help to effectively manage engine and machinery performance, complying with strict environmental regulations and standards of International Maritime Organization (IMO) and contributing to decarbonisation's strategy of a vessel in its carbon footprint reduction

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Ultrasonic Cleaning Equipment

Oil analysis equipment is easy to handle and precise in measurement of crucial oil parameters: **water-in-oil, base number (BN), viscosity, density, total iron content, cat fines, compatibility, stability, flash point, insolubles etc.** Regular or continuous in-service oil testing allows trend monitoring of oil condition and direct assessment of test results.

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Life of a Lubricant

The logistics and supply of new lubricants and aftercare for customers

Steven Windels, Global Marine Lubricants Supply Chain Manager at Chevron, explains how the company provides a worldwide, one-stop purchase to delivery solution for the company's extensive range of lubricants for the shipping industry, as well as the aftercare capabilities which are vital to efficient and reliable operations.

Ensuring that the correct lubricants are readily available for owners as their vessels traverse the globe and dock in various ports presents a logistical challenge.

A seamless and simple process which eliminates extra duties for crews, and which cuts down on paperwork when they need to order new lubricants is vital.

Ensuring that the correct lubricant needed by a busy vessel is available at a port around the world is vital for a ship operator, especially as delays with sourcing can create complex and costly problems.

Sourcing lubricants has previously demanded time-consuming checks and substantial paperwork for crew members eager to guarantee smooth future sailings as vessels often criss-cross.

Docking at a port without guarantees that the correct lubricant is quickly available, or in sufficient quantities, presents risks for vessels which may be locked into demanding, time critical schedules.

To combat the risks and enhance the delivery process, Chevron Marine Lubricants offers its OnePort™ customer portal – available from any device – which provides



Of course, effectively supplying new lubricants to customers is only one part of the overall service for Chevron customers. The company focusses very heavily on aftercare to support customers through a range of services such as regular monitoring and simple testing and analysis

operators, who log on, with a simplified procedure when they are ordering lubricants from the company's wide-ranging lubricants portfolio.

OnePort™ is a key element within Chevron Marine Lubricants' ongoing multi-year investment program in digitalisation to help customers improve the efficiency of their operations wherever they are in the world.

By simplifying the ordering process, OnePort™ enables crews to concentrate on other duties.

OnePort™ is a one stop solution for lubrication requirements allowing 24-hour access for users. Chevron supplies lubricants at more than 500 ports globally.

The portal also allows users to stay within budgets as it allows them to carry out on-line price comparisons and to quickly select the right lubricant for their vessels.

The user can also check availability of lubricants at ports and place orders if required. The need for paperwork is eliminated as the portal stores and displays all documentation including orders, invoices and immediate confirmation of orders which have been placed.

The use of OnePort™ has the backing of Chevron customers:

Shipping company, Eletson Corporation SA said it made time savings using OnePort™ to place orders for their fleet of 36 vessels, with support engineer, Konstantinos Tzagkournis, confirming that he can access the platform from different devices and can easily view important transactional information quickly.

"In my opinion, OnePort™ is the greatest and most complete platform in the marine lubes sector," according to Marios Argyros, Lubricants Consultant at Aeoliki Marine, which reported improved lubricant management as soon as it began using OnePort™.

Apart from placing orders through the OnePort™ portal, Chevron offers other ways to help its lubricant customers. Customers can also contact the company's technical services for assistance or the company's worldwide sales teams, who can take orders via e-mail. This way the customer can specify which product they need at which port and by a certain date. However, Chevron Marine Lubricants has dedicated teams to create new orders in the system, which is worked upwards through the supply chain. Hence, it highly encourages customers to utilise the OnePort™ system.

OnePort™ also has a chat functionality where the customer can talk with a supply partner or the customer service team directly.

Chevron Marine Lubricants' appointed delivery agents are an important extension of the supply network and physically supply the products to customers, from where the lubricant is made available to the vessel at the port.

Of course, effectively supplying new lubricants to customers is only one part of the overall service for Chevron customers. The company focusses very heavily on aftercare to support customers through a range of services such as regular monitoring and simple testing and analysis.

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OnePort™ is a key element within Chevron Marine Lubricants' ongoing multi-year investment program in digitalisation to help customers improve the efficiency of their operations wherever they are in the world

36

The key after care service is the FAST™ family of solutions, which are backed with monitoring tools and technical clarity that will help future proof vessel operations and keep engines running smoothly. Providing vital data reviewed by marine technical specialists, FAST™ helps customers to better understand what is going on inside a vessel engine and critical onboard equipment.

FAST is a comprehensive lubrication program, helping customers to achieve maximum performance and predict problems before they arise. Customers receive user-friendly reports of routine lubricant samples within 48 working hours and recommendations from technical experts.

With the FAST™ Onboard app, maintaining and protecting customer vessels' crucial equipment has never been easier. They can perform comprehensive testing, analysis, and condition monitoring at the touch of a button, onboard or onshore.

The operational life of critical assets can be optimised through the FAST oil condition monitoring service for vessels

which not only saves money but also enables ship operators to benefit from enhanced vessel reliability.

The FAST™ Onboard test kit offers ship engineers a compact and portable set of tests conducted onboard to quickly assess the performance of oils used on vessels.

Greater optimization can be achieved when used alongside the DOT.FAST service which offers operators comprehensive onboard and onshore analysis of drip oil samples.

In addition to tailoring lubricants' programs to suit each customer, Chevron has ISO Certified oil analysis laboratories in key locations Antwerp and Shanghai, which enables the company to deal with significant numbers of routine samples simultaneously and quickly - often completed within 48 working hours.

Chevron also provides expert support for customers when they change the lubricant supplier.

FAST on-board sample kits can be ordered with any lubricant delivery through the vessel operator's account manager and/or customer service teams.

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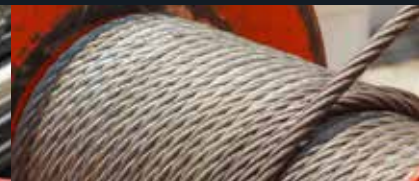
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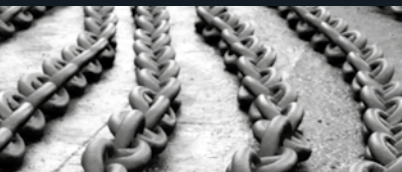
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Respect, vision and a global mindset

Efficiency, quality and reliability are the watchwords for Abdülvahit Şimşek, Chairman of AVS Global Ship Supply. He spoke to Felicity Landon about 40 years of growth in the ship supply and services sector.

Success stories generally have small beginnings – and there's surely no better example than Turkey's AVS Group, which has its roots in a modest family grocery shop in the small town of Aliaga and has grown to encompass global ship supply, catering, management, logistics and procurement services.

Now based in Istanbul, AVS has a vast network spanning more than 1,500 ports in 126 countries. It has offices strategically located in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Greece, China, Morocco and the Netherlands and plans to open offices in the United States, the Middle East and either Japan or Korea. As Vahit says: "From the commercial point of view, there are still good business opportunities. One way or the other, politicians change, politics change, but vessels will always be there. Goods have to be transported no matter

who is running a country – without maritime transport, we cannot talk about the sustainability of the world."

This year, he can reflect on four decades since he was first involved in the family grocery shop and took a life-changing decision to move to the UK to learn English.

"I had started to work with my brothers; our grocery shop was serving hotels and restaurants and then we started supplying vessels which were visiting the port. When we realised the level of business going on – tankers, dry bulk carriers and others coming in – we realised this was an interesting business with people buying a lot of products," he says. "I realised it was time to go and learn English. While in the UK, I also did some computer and business courses. After I came back, we reorganised the business, recognising that we needed a different view and ambitions. I said – OK,



we will do this ship supply business more professionally, and we can be regional ship suppliers, not just local.”

Vahit returned from the UK in 1991 and in 1992 the business moved to Izmir, setting up its first warehouse to serve vessels in the freezone. By 2000, the company had expanded from regional to national supplier and moved to Istanbul. A year later, with Turkey facing difficult times, the AVS response was to go international – and expansion was rapid from that point.

“As we served more and more vessels in international waters, I realised we needed to create new products,” he says. “Catering was one of them, and we soon expanded that to include the offshore industry as well as commercial vessels.”

AVS Offshore Catering was established to provide housekeeping and laundry services to offshore platforms, and AVS Ship Catering was set up to provide onboard cooks and stewards to vessels.

“We then realised we needed extra tools to ensure the quality of our services, so we bought a training centre in Turkey to educate our cooks and stewards on board as well as other seafarers.”

Today, AVS employs nearly 600 cooks and stewards to serve on commercial/offshore vessels; the training centre is approved by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Turkish transport and education ministries, and training courses include catering, cooking, hygiene, housekeeping, waste handling and other subjects. The centre is particularly important bearing in mind the multinational crews on board ships today, says Vahit. “Our cooks must be able to serve all seafarers, so they need to have a wide knowledge of food and menu preferences.”

AVS concentrates on efficiency, quality and reliability, he says. “My clients are not going to change because my business is 1% more than a competitor, because the whole food cost is only about 3% in terms of vessel costs. Clients are outsourcing to us so that we can manage it well. That doesn’t mean always the cheapest option but it does mean being on time and delivering quality and reliability.”

An interesting new area is that the training centre now delivers mental healthcare training and support for seafarers. “I am proud of this. Anyone can supply vessels, but cooking on board, serving food the way they expect, doing housekeeping on board and also giving seafarers mental health support sets us aside from our competitors. We must

Cooking on board, serving food the way they expect, doing housekeeping on board and also giving seafarers mental health support sets us aside from our competitors. We must value the people who work on board and also those who support them – their families

value the people who work on board and also those who support them – their families.”

Sustainability is already important, and the focus can only increase. “We are trying to reduce plastics on board, offering filtered water systems to clients and providing water containers for seafarers.”

Vahit is focusing on the future of the company and the next generation. “We are a very young, motivated company; the average age of our staff is 26-27. We have a team called Young AVS which is going to lead the company forward with a new vision in the coming years. We will ensure that the digitalisation of the company is settled and then we need to give space to young people who are strong in digitalisation, technology and AI. That is my sustainability project.”

He never put pressure on his own children to join the business. “I told my son and daughter they must do what they would like to do but if they chose to work for the company, they would always be welcome. I love what I am doing and am proud of what we have achieved, but I didn’t have that choice – I had to do what I had available at that time.”

As it turns out, both are working at AVS right now. His son, Doğukan, is now gradually taking over some of his responsibilities, to institutionalise and restructure AVS with a renewed corporate identity and vision—while following the path that has already been laid.

As for his daughter, Elif, having studied molecular biology and genetics, she has joined the company to gain commercial experience before pursuing her passion—establishing her own brand, a goal she has long been committed to.

Ship supply and services offer a great career opportunity, says Vahit. “I would tell young people coming into the industry that they must have a global mindset and, no matter what colour, religion or culture, must approach everyone equally with respect. The more you travel, the more you meet others, the wider vision you have. We educate our people that this is not only about making money or doing business but about recognising the value of mankind.”



FELICITY LANDON
Freelance Journalist



Hand-deliveries of urgent maritime spares still remain vital in an ever more automated industry

In marine logistics, precision and speed are non-negotiable. Each delay, miscommunication or deviation can cascade into significant disrupted supply chains, safety hazards or financial losses, making real-time accuracy and rapid decision-making indispensable. This was proven once again when Edda Wind contacted Wrist Marine Logistics (WML) in Aalborg, Denmark.



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With the entire maritime industry embracing automation, predictive maintenance and digital technologies, the number of urgent parts failures may eventually decline

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When WML was contacted about an urgent request for spare parts delivered to the vessel Vestri Enabler, docked in Edinburgh, the situation called for an immediate solution.

From experience, WML knows that any delay can cascade into missed port windows, cargo delays and contractual penalties. They also realised very quickly that routine logistics fell short because speed was critical. That is where urgent, hand-delivered spare parts makes a difference.

The team took immediate action. Within two hours, a personal courier departed with the package in hand. The route was planned via Paris and Amsterdam, ensuring an efficient total travel time of just 6.5 hours to Edinburgh.

The large spare parts could not be transported as standard baggage, so to accommodate the oversized

package and ensure safe transport, additional seats were purchased.

The personal courier boarded Vestri Enabler and hand-delivered the package directly at the Edinburgh port – with no delays or complications, ensuring the vessel's continued voyage.

This ensured uninterrupted operations for Edda Brint.

With the entire maritime industry embracing automation, predictive maintenance and digital technologies, the number of urgent parts failures may eventually decline. However, in an industry where mechanical reliability is paramount and the cost of downtime is quickly measured, the need for fast, reliable and human-driven delivery solutions remains vital.

Fun fact: This is why the WML team members always bring their passports to work, enabling them to immediately respond to urgent requests.



MARINE LOGISTICS

Maximising efficiency and reducing emissions:

the critical role of regular boiler cleaning in maritime operations

In the global shipping industry, operational efficiency, cost management, and environmental compliance are more interconnected than ever before. Amid tightening emissions regulations, increasing fuel prices, and growing sustainability goals, shipping companies are under pressure to optimize every aspect of vessel performance. One often-overlooked area with enormous potential for improvement is the regular cleaning of exhaust gas and boiler tubes.

This article explores how the build-up of combustion residues inside marine boiler systems significantly hampers thermal efficiency, increases fuel consumption, and accelerates wear. It further outlines the operational and financial advantages of implementing a structured, efficient cleaning program using proven mechanical systems that have become an industry benchmark. An example of such a cleaning device would be the global market leader PUTZMAUS (www.putzmaus-marine.com).

Heat transfer and fouling: a hidden efficiency killer

Boilers play a vital role aboard ocean-going vessels, producing the steam needed for heating, auxiliary systems, or propulsion in some configurations. These systems rely on effective heat exchange between combustion gases and the boiler surfaces. However, even minor accumulations of soot and ash from residual

or heavy fuel oil combustion can drastically reduce heat transfer efficiency.

As little as 1 mm of soot can reduce thermal transfer by up to 10%. This inefficiency forces the system to burn more fuel to achieve the same output, directly increasing operational costs and CO₂ emissions. Furthermore, higher internal temperatures due to fouling can stress boiler materials and shorten service life.

Routine inspection and cleaning are therefore not just preventative maintenance—they are critical actions for maintaining vessel efficiency and profitability.

Financial impacts: fuel savings and cost avoidance

Fuel accounts for a substantial portion of a vessel's operating budget—often 50% or more. Any measure that improves combustion efficiency or reduces unnecessary fuel burn yields immediate and measurable benefits. Regular boiler tube cleaning, particularly when conducted



HARALD JÄGER
Managing Director
PUTZMAUS®

using mechanical solutions optimized for marine conditions, can lead to fuel savings in the range of 3–8%, depending on vessel type and fuel quality.

Beyond direct savings, efficient cleaning reduces the risk of emergency shutdowns or repairs caused by overheating or corrosion under deposits. The avoidance of such unscheduled maintenance not only lowers repair costs but also helps maintain on-time operations—critical for maintaining trust with clients and charterers.

Shipping companies that have implemented structured boiler maintenance programs with compact, operator-friendly cleaning tools report smoother operations, improved safety, and reduced lifecycle costs of their heating systems.

Environmental regulations and compliance benefits

With the IMO 2020 sulphur cap and growing pressure from both regulators and cargo owners, ships are under increasing scrutiny regarding their emissions. Cleaning soot deposits from boiler tubes enhances the combustion process by restoring

“

Regular boiler tube cleaning, particularly when conducted using mechanical solutions optimised for marine conditions, can lead to fuel savings in the range of 3–8%, depending on vessel type and fuel quality

optimal heat flow, thereby lowering overall fuel consumption and reducing greenhouse gas output per voyage.

In particular, vessels operating in Emission Control Areas (ECAs) benefit from maintaining peak thermal efficiency, as even small inefficiencies can push emissions levels above permissible thresholds. A consistently clean boiler system supports compliance strategies without requiring excessive investment or operational compromise.

Forward-thinking shipping companies are beginning to view boiler maintenance not merely as a technical necessity, but as a contribution to corporate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals.



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Cleaning methods: why the right tool matters

There are several approaches to boiler cleaning in the maritime industry, ranging from chemical flushing to manual brushing or air-blasting. However, the most effective and reliable results are achieved through specialised mechanical systems designed to navigate and clean narrow, curved boiler tubes in confined spaces.

Such systems are typically lightweight, portable, and require minimal setup time—essential features aboard ships where time and space are at a premium. In particular, tools engineered for both vertical and horizontal tube configurations, with adjustable settings and self-centring brushes, ensure consistent results across different boiler designs.

Field data shows that mechanical cleaning systems with flexible drives and precision brush mechanisms offer superior removal of hard carbon deposits, especially compared to improvised methods. A widely adopted system of this kind—now standard in many industrial boiler applications—is being increasingly used in maritime settings for its effectiveness, reliability, and ease of use.

Operational efficiency and crew safety

Manual boiler cleaning can be labour-intensive and hazardous. Hot surfaces, restricted access, and the presence of soot or acidic residues all pose risks to crew members. Purpose-built mechanical cleaning systems minimize these risks by allowing fast, efficient cleaning from outside the tube bundle, reducing the need for full system disassembly or prolonged exposure to confined areas.

In addition, tools with modular brush heads and intuitive operation can be used by ship personnel without the need for extensive training, making it easier to integrate boiler maintenance into regular vessel routines. Systems that provide consistent cleaning performance across varying soot



A widely adopted system of this kind—now standard in many industrial boiler applications—is being increasingly used in maritime settings for its effectiveness, reliability, and ease of use

types and boiler geometries significantly reduce dependency on third-party contractors or port-side cleaning services.

A strategic maintenance mindset

The cost of neglecting boiler cleaning is often invisible—manifesting gradually through higher bunker fuel bills, minor delays, and undetected strain on thermal systems. But with the right tools and routines, shipping companies can transform boiler maintenance from a necessary burden into a strategic advantage.

Fleet managers and technical officers who have adopted high-performance mechanical cleaning tools as part of their standard maintenance cycles report significant efficiency gains and peace of mind. Over time, these improvements translate into lower operational costs, better environmental compliance, and extended equipment lifespan.

Conclusion

In the competitive and regulated world of global shipping, every percent of fuel efficiency counts. Regular boiler cleaning—especially with systems designed for industrial-grade reliability in marine environments—can yield outsized returns in performance, safety, and sustainability. As maritime stakeholders strive for smarter, greener operations, structured maintenance practices and proven, precision-engineered tools will continue to play a vital role. The shipping companies that recognise this early and invest in reliable cleaning technologies are already seeing the benefits—voyage by voyage, boiler by boiler.

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Innovation first

PTR HOLLAND® GROUP's commitment to innovation, quality, and sustainability is redefining pilot ladder safety. By leading in technology, supporting industry education, and tackling counterfeit equipment, the company continues to set new benchmarks for maritime safety worldwide.



Innovation is a key factor in the success of any business, setting apart those that lead industries and those that follow. It sets and raises industry standards, underpins competitiveness, and is pivotal to long-term economic viability. In short, it is the lifeblood of commerce.

For PTR HOLLAND® GROUP, it is endemic, woven into the fabric of how the organisation operates – and as Vice President Global Joris J. Stuip says, it's kept them ahead to the pack. "We were the first large scale manufacturer that adopted the mechanical seizing method (1982) for rope ladders, a system that has been copied by our competitors but never matched," he says.

"We were also the first manufacturer to introduce the QR code blockchain database for our pilot ladders that allows pilots and inspectors to quickly ensure the authenticity of our pilot ladders.

"At the moment we are looking into how we can improve the way pilot ladders are secured to make it easier for the crew and safer for the pilot. This means that in the short term we have developed a new standard in pilot ladder securing ropes that are both super easy to work with but provide amazing levels of grip and in the long term we are developing a mechanical fool proof system for securing ladders that will hopefully set new standards in pilot ladder safety."

It is clear that PTR sees itself as more than just a manufacturer, which goes a long way to explaining its success. With a long history in maritime safety, its influence is both far reaching and influential. It has sought to improve standards through pilot association seminars, safety events and forums.

It has received awards and forged partnerships and continued to shape the way the industry uses and thinks about pilot ladders. But as Joris explains, they wouldn't have had it any other way.

"With us it's personal. We take a significant amount of pride in ensuring everything we produce is of the highest standard. Most recently we've created a close link with Fathom Safety, a pilot run training and asset management service.

At the moment we are looking into how we can improve the way pilot ladders are secured to make it easier for the crew and safer for the pilot. This means that in the short term we have developed a new standard in pilot ladder securing ropes that are both super easy to work with but provide amazing levels of grip

"They're aiming to create greater safety through education and better management of pilot ladder equipment. For us that is at the core of our company mission. We're constantly working with pilot organisations, vessel technical departments, vetting and authorities for the improvement and evolutions of safety at sea equipment, procedure, and regulations.

"We try not only to set standards, but to raise them too."

In that respect, PTR HOLLAND® GROUP has faced arguably its biggest challenges. Joris says that, at the moment, there's a huge amount of counterfeit and low-quality ladders flooding the market. It is a familiar story – every week a new manufacturer enters the market, selling dangerous and poor-quality ladders, hoping to entice procurement departments by offering 'lethal' equipment at knock down prices.

"It's an incredibly difficult issue to combat as the problem only comes to light when pilot's (hopefully) spot these dangerous ladders," he says. "That's why we are working hard with pilots, regulators, and our partner companies to increase awareness and education on the issue."

There is, however, some light at the end of the tunnel. A major overhaul of SOLAS due in the near future will look to combine the multiple regulatory documents for regulation into a single comprehensive regulation. "This is a giant leap forward in ensuring greater pilot safety and a change PTR HOLLAND® GROUP fully endorses."



TOM HOLMES
Freelance Supply Chain Writer



Despite the challenges, Joris adds that PTR HOLLAND® GROUP continues to push forward on all fronts. Sustainability, for example, is axiomatic to its work and is at the heart of everything it does. Joris says that the company's supply chain is carefully monitored to ensure that components have a minimal environmental impact – using FSC approved timber for its ladders, for example.

“That FSC stamp of approval means the timber has been harvested from well managed forests that protect both the animals that rely upon them and the people who live around them. Additionally, we were recently requested to join the zero-harm innovation program from RIGHTSHIP that we are very proud of being part of to say the least. As with everything, we're always trying to innovate, to do more.”

In that respect, the future is very much about capitalising on growth and continuing to set the standard within the industry. In the last few years, the company has expanded and now has several new manufacturing facilities – including sites in the Netherlands, USA, Singapore and UK.

“We have recently expanded our US operations significantly as well as increasing our ‘stock point’ network throughout the world to ensure our customers can always access our top-quality products,” Joris adds.

“We will look to increase these over the coming years to ensure we can reduce the amount of shipping miles our

We have recently expanded our US operations significantly as well as increasing our ‘stock point’ network throughout the world to ensure our customers can always access our top-quality products

equipment needs before arriving to the end user and reduce our carbon footprint even further.

“Beyond that we will of course continue with our philanthropic activities to support pilot safety, education and reduce the prevalence of dangerous ladders to ensure everyone goes home safe at the end of the day.”

PTR HOLLAND® GROUP's dedication to innovation, quality, and safety has kept it at the forefront of the maritime industry. By combining technical leadership with responsible sourcing and global expansion, the company continues to set and raise standards.

Through partnerships, education, and active engagement with regulators, PTR HOLLAND® GROUP reinforces its mission to protect pilots and crews worldwide, ensuring safer operations at sea and upholding its reputation as a trusted leader in maritime safety.





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Pilot Ladders:

why procurement must prioritise safety over price

Improperly constructed or uncertified pilot ladders pose life-threatening risks and costly consequences for shipping companies. In this roundtable, industry experts reveal how procurement teams can avoid common pitfalls, ensure SOLAS and ISO compliance, and invest in ladders that guarantee safety, durability, and long-term value.

Non-compliant pilot ladders remain a leading cause of accidents during pilot transfers, putting lives and reputations at risk. In this roundtable leading experts warn that poor procurement decisions and counterfeit certifications can fuel the problem, and offer advice on how buyers can ensure ladders meet regulations, maximise durability, and prioritise safety over short-term cost savings.

What are the most common compliance issues you see with pilot ladders, and how can procurement teams avoid them?

Nick Borella, *Director of Sales, Coast Marine and Industrial Supply, Inc.*: We understand that the main compliance issues may stem from a proliferation of what we would consider low-quality pilot ladders aboard vessels of all sizes. As a Company, we genuinely believe that pilot safety is paramount and we spare no expense during our manufacturing process: Our COMAR ladders are built using only the highest quality materials in production – synthetic moulded steps, galvanized steel frames, patented COMAR wedge assembly, chemically-bonded tread surface, custom Samson rope (14,000 lb. WLL), and more.



TOM HOLMES
Freelance Supply Chain Writer



Coast Marine
& INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY, INC.

Manufacturer of Maritime Security & Safety Products

With over 75 years of industry experience, COMAR has established itself as a leader in high-quality maritime products that comply with United States Coast Guard (USCG) and Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations. Our product line includes pilot and debarkation ladders, rat guards, quick-release brackets, and essential safety devices.

By choosing COMAR, customers can rely on superior quality and innovative solutions tailored to their maritime safety needs.

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Rope



Electronics



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As a Company, we genuinely believe that pilot safety is paramount and we spare no expense during our manufacturing process: Our COMAR ladders are built using only the highest quality materials in production



NICK BORELLA
Director of Sales
Coast Marine and Industrial Supply, Inc.

Another challenge pertains to vessels that may not adhere to the 30-month ISO retest guidance for visual inspections and weight testing. Ensuring compliance with this regulation will enable manufacturers to mitigate the risk of damaged steps and spreaders. Currently, vessels may be using ladders with compromised steps or frayed ropes. By implementing routine inspections, we can help identify and facilitate the replacement of damaged ladders before a pilot boards the vessel.

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Tasos Manaloglou, *R&D Manager, LALIZAS*: One of the foremost concerns when procuring pilot ladders is ensuring that the manufacturers adhere to the requirements set forth by SOLAS/MED and ISO 799-1:2019 standards. Compliance with these regulations is crucial, and it is typically the first aspect that Port State Control Officers or experienced Pilots will assess.

How do you ensure your pilot ladders meet SOLAS and ISO standards, and what kind of certification or documentation should buyers expect?

Augusto Rodriguez, *Sales and Marketing Manager WCI Maritime Services*: Our company is a SOLAS and ISO compliant pilot and embarkation ladder manufacturer with certified production facilities in Panama and stock points across key ports worldwide. Under our WCI brand, we provide to procurement and technical teams, quality consistency and strategic logistical advantages. Safety is our priority, so every ladder is manufactured under strict adherence to ISO 9001:2015 quality management systems, ensuring dimensional accuracy, strength tolerances, and material compliance in every unit, critical for safe maritime operations.

Tasos Manaloglou: Our ladders are type-approved by Bureau Veritas Marine and Offshore (BV). In addition to operating a manufacturing facility that fully complies with ISO 9001 quality management standards, our company ensures that its pilot and embarkation ladders fully comply with SOLAS standards and the requirements of the Marine Equipment Directive (MED) 2014/90/EU.

The Module D Production Assurance Certificate, issued by DNV in accordance with the Marine Equipment Directive, attests to the implementation of an annual audit regime to ensure that ongoing production remains in conformity with the approved type and maintains consistent quality standards. The most important document provided to customers is the Declaration of Conformity (DoC), which formally certifies that the equipment meets the mandatory EU regulations for use on EU-flagged vessels.

Each ladder is assigned a unique serial number and is custom-manufactured to meet the specific needs of the end user, ensuring: maximum product quality, extended service life and full compatibility with vessel requirements.

Also, at the end of the manufacturing process and before each ladder is released for sale, we strictly apply all the production tests and inspections required by ISO 799-1:2019 on a ladder-by-ladder basis. We keep record of these test results for every single ladder.

Additionally, upon request, we issue a Declaration of Load Test. So in terms of documentation, we provide the buyers with the Type Approval Certificate, the Quality Assurance Certificate of production (MED D), and the Declaration of Conformity (DoC).

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Safety is our priority, so every ladder is manufactured under strict adherence to ISO 9001:2015 quality management systems, ensuring dimensional accuracy, strength tolerances, and material compliance in every unit, critical for safe maritime operations



AUGUSTO RODRIGUEZ
Sales and Marketing Manager
WCI Maritime Services



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Nick Borella: We maintain up-to-date records to always ensure compliance. We actively engage with industry leaders to gather feedback and guidance, which helps us continually improve the safety and quality of our ladders. We schedule routine inspections with the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), an independent laboratory approved by the US Coast Guard, which also adheres to SOLAS/ISO regulations. Additionally, we provide a US Coast Guard-approved certification, sanctioned by ABS, along with a Manufacturer's Certificate.

What factors most influence the durability and service life of a pilot ladder, and how can procurement decisions impact long-term performance?

Augusto Rodriguez: Our ladders are engineered to provide measurable longevity benefits, backed by both empirical data and field performance. We only use high-density, untreated hardwoods, selected for durability, natural rot resistance, and compliance with ISO 22935 hardness thresholds.

Manila ropes are marine-grade, oiled for mildew resistance, and maintain a minimum 24 kN tensile strength. In terms of construction, the steps are resin sealed to prevent water ingress, use pressure tested thimbles and marine grade fasteners, and are load tested to 8x working load as per ISO 799-1 standards.

Nick Borella: Proper handling and storage of ladders is essential for extending their service life. We provide a COMAR Ladder Maintenance Best Practices guide on the back of our certificates. By following these guidelines and conducting routine inspections, you can significantly extend the service life of your ladders. We have even seen well-maintained ladders in excellent condition that are over 20 years old!

Tasos Manaloglou: The quality of raw materials and the production process play a critical role in the overall durability of the equipment. Additionally, the marine environment presents inherent challenges, particularly due to its harsh conditions.

It is important to note that the pilot ladder has a validity period of 30 months from the manufacturing date. After this period, retesting by an authorised service station is required to ensure compliance with safety standards. Such testing, however, requires both time and financial investment.

As a result, many clients opt to replace the pilot ladder rather than incur the costs associated with retesting.

What should buyers look for or know when assessing pilot ladder suppliers, especially in a crowded or price-driven market?

Nick Borella: It is critical to focus on the quality of the ladder; prioritising safety means selecting only the highest quality ladders available for purchase. We look at it this way: The cost of a high-quality, dependable, and certified pilot ladder is ultimately a small expense compared to the total cost of operating a vessel. And the risks (injury to a pilot, refusal to board, etc.) far outweigh the perceived benefits of purchasing a cheaper non-compliant ladder.



Buyers should prioritise safety standards and certification above all. The right balance of price, quality, and service will ensure the ladder's long-term performance and safety



TASOS MANALOGLOU
R&D Manager
LALIZAS

Tasos Manaloglou: Buyers should prioritise safety standards and certification above all, ensuring compliance with IMO, SOLAS, and ISO regulations to avoid legal, financial, and reputational risks. It is important to evaluate a supplier's reputation, ensuring they deliver reliable, high-quality products backed by solid after-sales support. Additionally, lead times and delivery reliability are key to minimizing operational disruptions. The right balance of price, quality, and service will ensure the ladder's long-term performance and safety.

Investing in certified, high-quality pilot ladders isn't just a regulatory obligation; it's a commitment to safety and operational excellence. By choosing reputable suppliers and planning ahead, procurement teams can protect crews, avoid costly incidents, and ensure every pilot transfer is conducted with the highest standards of reliability and compliance.



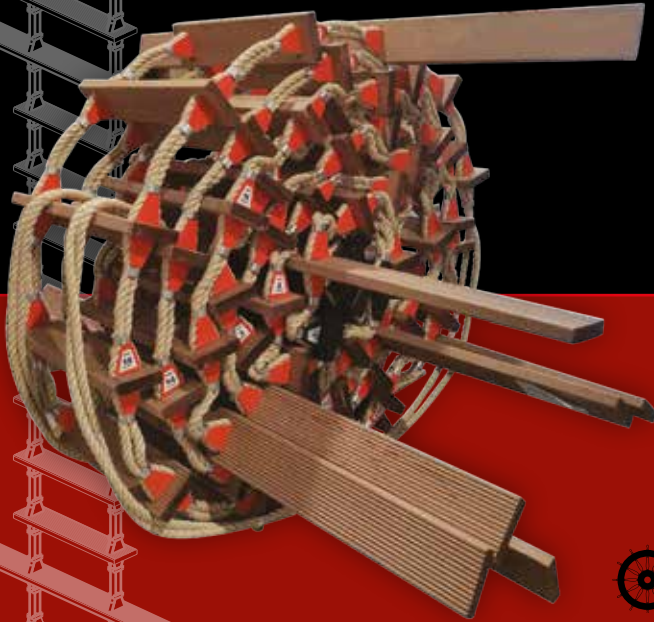
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Beyond the checklist:

addressing crew needs in the procurement lifecycle

In my role at BLU Maritime Consultancy, I've come to realise that maritime procurement is often viewed through the lens of efficiency, cost control, and compliance. But from what we see every day across the 450+ vessels we support, procurement at sea is far more than a logistical function - it's about the people.

It's about the crew who rely on these supplies to live and work well, often in challenging conditions. That's why I wanted to share a few reflections on some important issues that don't always get the attention they deserve in procurement conversations.

Beyond Procurement:

BLU Maritime's Vision for Crew Wellness



Born in Singapore and now making waves across the globe, BLU Maritime has emerged as an innovator in maritime procurement and crew wellness through its in-house tech platform. Spearheaded by the visionary Capt. Harminder Singh, the company has grown from a bold idea into a trusted industry leader, built on innovation, integrity, and a deep understanding of life at sea. Supported by a team of maritime professionals, ex-master mariners, and industry experts. BLU now operates in Singapore, India, Philippines, London, and Greece, proudly serving over 450+ vessels worldwide. What sets BLU apart is not just its rapid growth, but the values behind it. As a family-owned business, BLU places quality and service above scalability. Every decision is guided by a hands-on, high-touch approach that ensures personalized support and consistent excellence across all operations. Clients know they're not just another number, they're partners.

"Growth for BLU is organic, driven by trust and the consistent delivery of quality. We take pride in being the fastest-growing catering company in our segment, yet we measure success not merely by speed but by the depth of the relationships we build and the meaningful solutions we provide. Every step we take reaffirms our belief in elevating crew wellbeing and creating safer, healthier vessel environments, turning our promise of care into action." **Capt. Harminder Singh, CEO**



At the heart of this transformation is BLU TEC, the company's proprietary in-house digital platform. Unlike standard systems, BLU TEC is fully bespoke and customizable, designed to meet the unique needs of each ship owner and manager. Clients gain access to tailored dashboards, smart analytics, and real-time data tracking that provide clear insights into procurement trends, consumption patterns, and cost efficiencies. Whether managing a small fleet or a global operation, BLU TEC empowers maritime decision-makers to optimize operations while maintaining a strong focus on crew welfare. BLU's innovation doesn't stop at procurement. With the introduction of "Click and Pick," the company offers a comprehensive one-stop solution that bridges operational needs for owners, managers and the crew onboard. This digital marketplace includes E-learning modules, Individual crew logins for private feedback and communication and Nutrition management tools to support healthier menus and dietary planning. These added features reflect BLU's core belief: that well-cared-for crew perform better, stay healthier, and contribute to a safer, more efficient vessel environment.



"Procurement is more than just delivering goods—it's about delivering care. Every decision we make directly impacts the wellbeing of the crew onboard. From nutrition to quality standards, our role goes beyond logistics; it's about supporting life at sea in the most meaningful way possible." **Harmita Singh, General Manager**

With growing emphasis on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices, particularly among European clients, BLU is seeing a rising demand for emissions data from suppliers, including Scope 3 reporting. While some chandlers are already equipped to meet these expectations, others are still catching up. BLU believes that procurement sustainability is not a solo effort, it requires collaboration across the entire supply chain. To that end, vendors play a critical role in delivering the best possible support to ship owners and managers. BLU has implemented a Vendor Portal, designed to simplify communication and centralize all relevant documentation in one platform. This portal ensures that vendors are not only kept up to date, but also empowered to work more efficiently with our team.

All prospective suppliers go through a formal BLU Approved Vendor onboarding process, which includes a mandatory ESG questionnaire. This isn't just a compliance checklist, it's an opportunity to educate vendors on ESG expectations that are continuously evolving. The goal is to foster mutual understanding and alignment from the outset. At BLU, we view chandlers not just as vendors, but as collaborators. Open, two-way communication is essential to building a more transparent, responsive, and sustainable procurement cycle, one that benefits the owners and the crew members onboard.



Meals should support the crew's varying physical demands, offering balanced options that go beyond simply fueling the day. Healthier choices such as reducing sugar, salt, and red meat are not about cutting costs, but about preventing long-term health issues

**Insights from the inside:
crew input matters as a procurement asset**

If there's one thing we all agree on, it's this: food matters. It's the key to morale, energy, and performance especially at sea. Yet, I often see decisions being made without direct insight from those most affected. Procurement feedback traditionally travels through the Master, but in reality, every crew member has different needs. A second engineer from the Philippines and a cadet from India may have very different preferences, and both deserve to be acknowledged.

At BLU, I have learned that structured, system-driven feedback tools, like post-voyage surveys and digital forms can help us collect valuable, individual perspectives. When we tune in to these voices, we're able to align procurement more closely with crew wellbeing and satisfaction.

**Procurement crisis management:
planning for the 'new normal'**

The real measure of supply chain resilience isn't in plans, but in how well teams respond under pressure. As geopolitical instability, port closures, and transport disruptions become more frequent, perhaps even the new normal, procurement teams must plan and prepare for any foreseeable disruption.

One of our strengths lies in the experience of our leadership team, including three ex-Master Mariners who bring decades of firsthand sailing knowledge which have been instrumental in guiding our response strategy. They don't just rely on data but actively engage with crew through phone and video calls to understand real-time challenges to provide support faster and make informed decisions.

This hands-on approach helps anticipate needs, respond quickly, and protect crew welfare even in uncertain times.

Most importantly, procurement partners must prioritise transparency so that owners can act quickly, ensuring needs and crew welfare are not compromised.

**Nutrition, not just calories:
the new MLC mandate**

The conversation around food at sea is gradually shifting from focusing solely on availability to considering overall nutritional value. The emphasis is not just on quantity, but on the quality and relevance of meals provided onboard. This naturally reshapes the role of catering and procurement teams, whether managed in-house or outsourced.

Meals should support the crew's varying physical demands, offering balanced options that go beyond simply fueling the day. Healthier choices such as reducing sugar, salt, and red meat are not about cutting costs, but about preventing long-term health issues.

Since the recent MLC amendment at the end of last year, we've seen resistance from some crew members who perceive these changes as budget cuts. I understand that concern, but from where I stand, these decisions are rooted in a growing awareness of long-term health risks, especially as we continue to learn more about the link between nutrition and chronic health conditions, something that is now widely recognised ashore.

Conversations around food can be sensitive. What must be acknowledged ashore is that these changes may feel unfamiliar or uncomfortable to crew members at first. Encouraging this shift in mindset takes time, empathy, and consistent support. With leadership and support from owners, we can help position nutrition as a vital part of crew wellbeing — not a compromise, but a commitment.



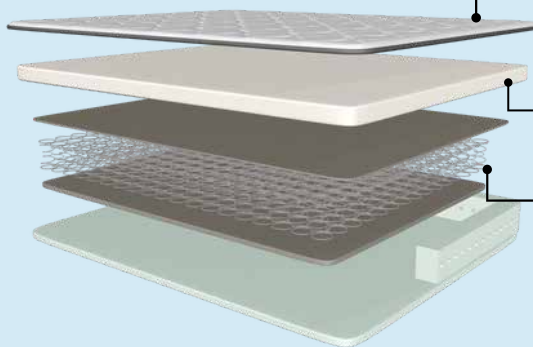
FIT AT SEA

PATENTED
WATERPROOF
COVER

TICKING

FOAM

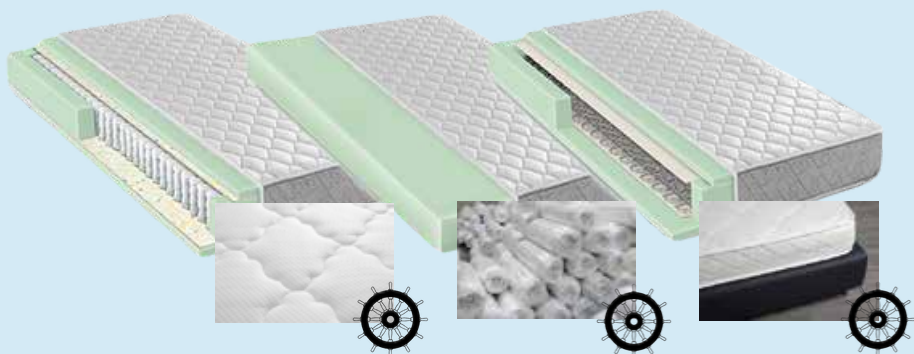
SPRINGS



POCKET SPRING

FOAM

BONELL SPRING



3-1

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Connectivity and the commercial seafarer:

ensuring wellbeing and mental health

60

Life at sea offers unique challenges as seafarers spend months away from home, working in confined and often isolated environments, all while separated from their families and friends.

As a result, ensuring that commercial seafarers enjoy reliable access to the Internet and related communication tools is vital to the success of efforts to ensure the mental health and wellbeing of crews around the globe. Now, more than ever, connectivity is not a luxury but a necessity.

The human cost of isolation

Isolation is a defining characteristic of the commercial seafaring environment. The lack of social spaces and interaction leaves many crew members spending their limited free time alone in their cabins. This isolation is exacerbated when the lack of Internet connectivity also prevents seafarers from engaging with friends and family at home. *The Q1 2025 Seafarer Happiness Index* highlights that many seafarers still

report feeling isolated due to prolonged separation from loved ones, despite slight improvements in crew interaction scores.

The transformative power of connectivity

Reliable Internet access transforms the experience of being at sea, enabling crew members to:

- **Maintain relationships:** High-speed, affordable, and accessible connectivity makes using video calls, social media, and instant messaging practical for seafarers seeking to remain connected with family and friends, thereby reducing the feelings of homesickness, isolation, and disconnection. The simple act of telling a bedtime story to a child on video, paying bills, or reading the news from home reinforces that a seafarer is not alone.





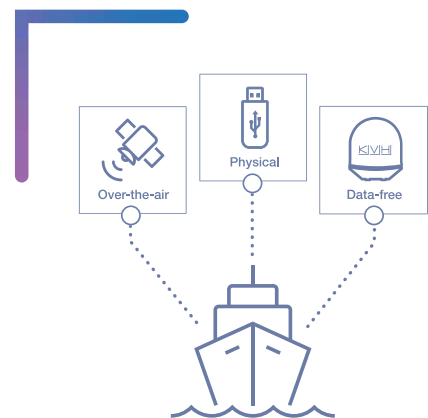
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- **Access mental health support:** Sometimes, you just need to talk to someone privately to discuss your worries, fears, or other challenges. Advances in telemedicine and mental health apps, combined with real-time communications, deliver confidential counselling and support services, even in the middle of the ocean.
- **Engage in recreational activities:** Sometimes you just need to have fun, whether on your own in your cabin with your favourite TV show or in a communal space where you can share the experience with your crew members. Access to movies, music, karaoke, sports, and games entertains crewmates and helps establish and reinforce the ship's social bonds, bringing the crew closer together.

The Sailors' Society's *State of the Industry Snapshot* highlights that improved Internet connectivity reduces loneliness, builds stronger social ties, and improves the emotional wellbeing of seafarers. With these benefits in mind, the report calls for the maritime industry to treat Internet access not as an operational burden but as an essential contributor to crew welfare.

Business imperatives and operational benefits

Strong crew morale and mental health generate benefits not simply for the crew members but for the vessel and business as well. Happy and healthy crew members are more productive, make better decisions, and are less likely to leave their jobs. As a result, fleets can reduce costly turnover for shipping companies and increase efficiency. At the same time, enhanced morale and reduced stress contribute to safer operations and reduced risk of accidents at sea.

Challenges and considerations

Despite these advances, challenges remain. Cost is a significant barrier, even as Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite networks like Starlink and OneWeb have improved speeds, data remains more expensive at sea than on land. Technical and legal complexities exist around content licensing and cybersecurity, especially when crew members use personal devices and media.

Plus, connectivity alone is not the solution. Additional activities and resources, such as onboard social activities, peer support programs, and a positive shipboard culture, are vital to crew health.



Happy and healthy crew members are more productive, make better decisions, and are less likely to leave their jobs

Creating an affordable, efficient, and accessible crew wellbeing solution

Yet even with those challenges and concerns, connectivity and content remain among the most essential means of sustaining a happy, healthy environment for seafarers. That's why crew communications and content are core elements of KVH's product and service portfolio. We aim to enhance lives, enable business, and connect the world by offering straightforward, affordable, and integrated solutions seamlessly supported by connectivity options such as Starlink, OneWeb, VSAT, and 5G.

One such solution is KVH Link, which delivers an expansive library of daily news in 20+ languages, movies and TV programs with closed captions in multiple languages, music, social media content, and wellness content such as meditation and more, all accessible via TVs in shared spaces and on personal devices when crew need to relax in solitude. Our CommBox Edge Communication Gateway includes a captive portal that enables vessel operators and captains to provide crew with daily, weekly, and monthly data allowances for Internet access, social sharing with friends at home, the ability to deal with the requirements of life such as personal banking, and chat, talk, or video call with family to see smiles, help with homework, and know that no matter how far offshore they are, they remain connected to home.

Toward a connected, caring maritime industry

We firmly believe that prioritising seafarers' wellbeing through better Internet connectivity is both a moral obligation and a strategic necessity. The maritime industry must invest in robust, affordable connectivity solutions and integrate the available digital tools with broader welfare initiatives, including mental health services, recreational opportunities, and a culture of open communication and peer support.

Doing so, shipping companies will not only fulfill their duty to respect and care for their crews but also encourage and support a more resilient, productive, and loyal workforce—one that can thrive, not just survive, at sea. As technology advances, the industry's challenge is clear: make high-quality connectivity a standard for all seafarers, everywhere.



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Being away from family and implications

The seafaring profession inherently involves prolonged periods of physical separation from family. This article explores the psychological and relational implications of these separations on both seafarers and their families. Drawing from both empirical research and clinical insights, the article also outlines practical interventions for the maritime industry to reduce psychosocial risks and enhance well-being.



Seafarers face a unique occupational environment marked by long-term isolation, unpredictable schedules, and limited access to consistent communication with family members. These conditions lead to a host of mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety, and emotional detachment, which in turn affect performance, safety, and overall life satisfaction. The impact of absence is not unilateral; family members left ashore often experience heightened stress, emotional instability, and difficulties in maintaining family cohesion. The paper advocates for integrated, industry-wide support systems that not only address individual mental health but also promote stable familial relationships through technological, psychological, and organisational innovations.

Seafarers represent a vital yet under-supported labour force in global trade. With approximately 1.89 million seafarers globally (UNCTAD, 2023), the majority endure prolonged absences from their families due to long contracts and voyage extensions. These absences have significant psychological and relational effects, particularly when paired with poor communication access, isolation, and high workloads.

The maritime industry often operates under high-pressure environments where emotional well-being is secondary to operational efficiency. Yet, the mental health of seafarers is not a peripheral issue; it is central to safety, retention, and overall job performance. Increasing evidence highlights the need to address the psychosocial risks associated with seafaring, especially the toll that long-term separation takes on both the seafarers and their families. This article aims to shed light on the multifaceted challenges of being away from family while also offering evidence-based strategies and recommendations for maritime organisations to better support their workforce. By integrating clinical psychology practices into maritime protocols, the sector can move toward a more humane, resilient, and effective operational model.

Triggers and Contributing Factors

1. Voyage Duration and Uncertainty: Long or extended voyages increase stress and undermine family planning,

contributing to chronic emotional strain (Sampson & Ellis, 2019). When seafarers are unsure of their return dates, it becomes difficult for families to maintain routines, plan events, or provide children with a sense of stability. Repeated extensions of contracts also lead to feelings of powerlessness and betrayal, especially when extensions are made without proper consultation or compensation.

2. Poor Connectivity: Inconsistent or expensive internet access hinders communication. According to a report by Mission to Seafarers (2022), 59% of seafarers identified better internet access as the single most important improvement for well-being. When communication is infrequent or unreliable, emotional distance grows. Missed birthdays, emergencies, or the inability to simply check in daily can strain trust and foster feelings of abandonment in partners and children. This communication gap may also lead to misinterpretations or conflicts that remain unresolved due to logistical constraints.

3. Cultural and Organisational Norms: A culture of emotional stoicism and stigma around mental health often prevents seafarers from seeking help (Oldenburg et al., 2020). Within many maritime settings, there exists a prevailing belief that psychological distress is a sign of weakness. This discourages open expression of feelings and isolates those who are suffering. Furthermore, some management structures still prioritise operational performance over crew welfare, reinforcing the idea that mental health concerns are secondary or irrelevant.

4. Inadequate Support Systems: Lack of shore-based psychological services and limited family engagement programs exacerbate feelings of abandonment and isolation. Most maritime organisations do not have dedicated mental health professionals or structured emotional support systems. Families of seafarers are also often left without access to counselling or guidance on how to cope during prolonged absences. The absence of such resources can result in unresolved tensions, emotional withdrawal, and in some cases, family breakdowns.



Mental health of seafarers is not a peripheral issue; it is central to safety, retention, and overall job performance



The maritime industry must address these issues not only through mental health support onboard but also by fostering stronger familial ties and organisational accountability

The interaction of these triggers creates a cumulative burden, reducing the emotional resilience of seafarers and destabilising the support network they rely on. Without targeted interventions, these factors can undermine crew morale, increase turnover rates, and negatively impact operational safety and efficiency.

Psychological Stabilisation and Interventions

Clinical experience and research suggest several pathways to mitigate these effects:

- **Psychoeducation:** Prior to deployment, providing training for seafarers and families on emotional regulation, communication strategies, and role expectations improves resilience.
- **Telepsychology:** Remote access to mental health professionals via telehealth platforms has proven beneficial. This includes both one-on-one counselling and group sessions, particularly in high-stress periods.
- **Routine Mental Health Screening:** Introducing tools like the IMEQ's Mental Health Predictive Index can help identify seafarers at risk and initiate timely intervention.
- **Family-Centred Programs:** Establishing family liaison officers, offering counselling for family members, and organizing reintegration support onshore can significantly reduce emotional disconnect.

Organisational Recommendations

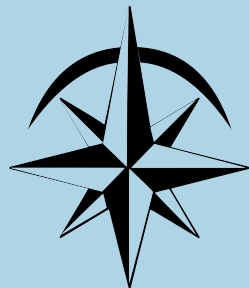
- **Enhanced Communication Access:** Offer free, unlimited Wi-Fi to ensure consistent family contact. In a 2022 ISWAN survey, 73% of seafarers reported improved morale with reliable connectivity. Frequent and high-quality communication helps reduce emotional distance and reassures families. By ensuring uninterrupted contact, seafarers can better support their families remotely, engage in parenting, and maintain romantic relationships—factors which significantly reduce feelings of guilt and emotional disconnection.
- **Contract Standardisation:** Implement fair and consistent contract lengths (e.g., 8–12 weeks on/off) to improve predictability and reduce burnout. Consistent rotation

schedules enable families to plan around deployments and create a rhythm that helps children, spouses, and extended families adjust. More importantly, it enhances the psychological preparedness of seafarers, who can anticipate rest periods and manage expectations.

- **Onboard Welfare Programs:** Recreational activities, onboard peer support groups, and mental health literacy campaigns can alleviate isolation. Social and cultural events, fitness facilities, creative workshops, and access to reading or entertainment resources promote emotional balance and reduce the monotony of long voyages. Structured peer support initiatives also foster a sense of belonging, encourage openness, and reduce stigma.
- **Managerial Mental Health Training:** Senior officers should receive training in emotional intelligence and conflict resolution to support crewmates. Command figures are often the first line of contact in detecting mental health concerns. Training helps them identify early warning signs, respond empathetically, and foster an environment of psychological safety. Leadership that understands human dynamics is more likely to inspire trust and cooperation.
- **Shore-Based Family Events:** When in port, family reunification days or psychological debriefing sessions can aid in reestablishing emotional connections. These events allow for structured reintegration, where emotional tension can be addressed, children can reconnect, and partners can realign expectations. Additionally, workshops and counselling for families provide strategies for dealing with separation, helping to build long-term resilience on both ends.

Conclusion

Seafarers' prolonged absence from home creates a dual burden on both the workers and their families, with significant psychological implications. The maritime industry must address these issues not only through mental health support onboard but also by fostering stronger familial ties and organisational accountability. A psychologically informed approach that includes consistent screening, emotional support, and systemic change can foster a healthier, more stable workforce at sea and at home.



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We are thrilled to announce that the new **Beginner-Level IMPA Education Course**, launching on **15 September**, is now in its final stages of preparation, and it would not have been possible without the remarkable contributions of a wide-ranging group of professionals from across our industry.

This course was built with a clear aim: to offer newcomers to the profession a solid, practical foundation in maritime purchasing and supply. Behind the scenes, a **fantastic network of experts, volunteers**, and reviewers made time in their busy schedules to ensure the course delivers value at every turn. Their insights, experience, and passion have been woven into each module, and we are proud to introduce the majority of them here, with many others included in the course credits.

We hope that the students who join us from September onwards will find the course to be a high-value stepping stone into the world of maritime procurement and supply — and that the insights of so many dedicated professionals will support them as they begin their journey.

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From those who offered valuable commentary and peer review, to others who provided additional readings, expert papers, and recommended resources, IMPA thanks you all.

MODULE 1

Introduction to the Maritime Industry



STEPHEN ALEXANDER
Secretary General and
Chief Operating Officer, IMPA



DR ANNA - MARI ANTONIOU
Senior Lecturer in Maritime and Commercial Law
University of Brighton



SIMON POTTER
IMPA General Council Member and VP of Sustainability
Chief Procurement Officer, Inchcape Shipping Services

MODULE 2

Key Roles in the Marine Supply Chain



SUSAN KOEFOED
IMPA Chair and CEO
Purchase Manager, Weco Shipping



HENNING WEGNER
Head of Procurement,
Oldendorff Carriers



MALCOLM CLARK
Highly-Experienced
Procurement Professional

MODULE 3

Marine Purchasing & Procurement



JENNIFER SCHLEMEIER
IMPA General Council Member and VP of Networking
Procurement Manager – Fleet, Oldendorff Carriers



JONAS ERLANDSEN
Business Development and Sales, Bawat;
Board Member, Scanlog Shipping



SHANU SHAJAHAN
Marine Purchaser – Fleet,
Oldendorff Carriers

MODULE 4

Marine Logistics



SUSAN KOEFOED
IMPA Chair and CEO
Purchase Manager, Weco Shipping



STEFAN SÖNKSEN
Global Manager
Marine Logistics, Kühne + Nagel (AG & Co.) KG

MODULE 5

Marine Supply Chain and Technology



JESPER LARSEN
IMPA General Council Member and VP of Insights
Managing Director, Axia Maritime Procurement – OSM Thorne



TROELS MØLLER
Naval Architect, eMBA MMT
RINA Digital Solutions



YUZO KOIKE
IMPA General Council Member and VP of Marine Stores Guide
Managing Director, Fuji Trading Co., Ltd.



YOSHIFUMI TOMITA
Fuji Trading Co., Ltd. Supply Network Division



DOMINIC SCOTT
Head of Digital Media and Communications
IMPA

MODULE 6

Sustainability and Procurement



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Vice President, Procurement
Wilhelmsen Ship Management



ESTHER GAN
Vice President, Sustainability and Communications
Wilhelmsen Ship Management



SUNE SKADEGAARD THORSEN
CEO and Founder
GLOBAL CSR



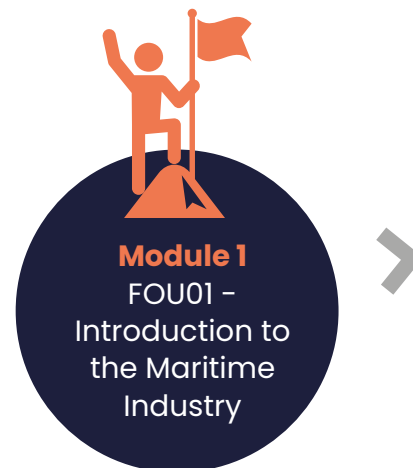
JASMINE SCHESTAK
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Module 1 FOU01 - Introduction to the Maritime Industry

The ability of shipping to offer both economic and efficient long-distance transport inevitably places it at the centre of the world economy. In this module, the student will gain an overview of why the maritime industry is essential for global trade, develop an understanding about the industry's key features and actors, including company types, vessel types and sizes, and port locations, as well as gain an initiation into the world of marine procurement and logistics.



Module 2 FOU02 - Key Roles in the Marine Supply Chain

People are a crucial component in the maritime supply chain. In this module, the student will gain a clear understanding of the various relevant categories of offshore, onshore and port personnel, as well as what each role is designed to do.



Module 3 FOU03 - Marine Purchasing and Procurement

Procurement sits at the heart of the value creation process for a company. In this module, the student will learn the basics of identifying need, specifying requirements for different categories of goods and services needed, successful supplier relationship management and more.



Offering students an introduction to the world of maritime procurement and is suitable to those students considering or finding themselves at the very beginning of a maritime career. **An excellent foundation for a career in maritime procurement and supply**

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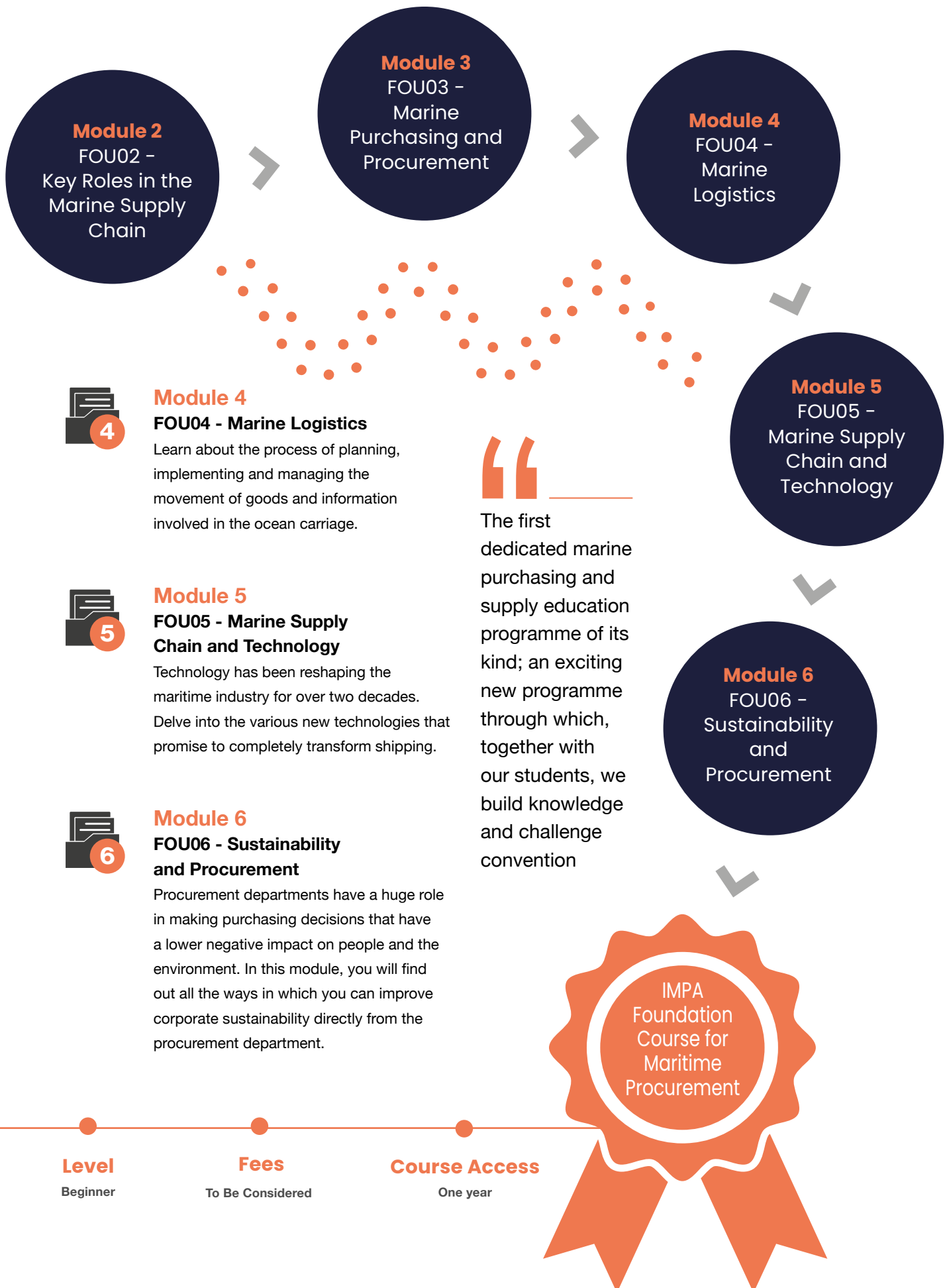
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Minimum 12 weeks
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Study Mode

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Every time the Marine Stores Guide is updated, we include suggested content from our customer community to ensure the catalogue stays up to date and relevant for our users

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WWW.ALLIGATOR.NL / WWW.ALLIGATOR.ASIA