

Working Together

Safe Voyage[®]

SMS BASICS

Moving Forward With Purpose

HEALTHY MARINER

Spouses and CEMS

SAFETY DECK

Baseball Bats and Rock Salt

LEGAL BITTS AND ART OF TOWING

A Master's Authority and
Responsibility

BRIDGING THE GAPS

People - Your Most Valuable
Resource

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Thank You



*“Could we change our attitude,
we should not only see life
differently, but life itself would
come to be different. Life would
undergo a change of appearance
because we ourselves had
undergone a change of attitude.”*

~ Katherine Mansfield

This 4th quarter issue marks a complete cycle of publishing Safe Voyage®. In the past three issues we focused on collaboration and teamwork; leadership roles and partnering; and, the importance of people over profit - making safety personal. This issue is about appreciation.

We want to extend a special “thank you” to all of our writers for the wonderful contributions they have made. It has been our pleasure to work with such talented individuals who have given freely of their time and energy. In addition, thank you to the individuals and organizations who have contributed wonderful pictures to our publication.

It is also with heartfelt gratitude, that we thank all of you who have subscribed to our publication. Each person who has sent in a request for subscription and has taken the time to tell us their thoughts and views is invaluable and frankly makes our day and our writer’s day when we can pass on positive feedback for a job well done.

We had hoped, but never thought this publication would reach so many people and be so diverse in its subscribers, from the first time deckhand on the boat to the CEO of a large corporation in another country. We hope to continue to provide you with thoughtful information that will help to add to your knowledge base and encourage further thought.

If you have something you would like to say, whether it is in a future article to help our readers along the way or comment on a piece you just read, please contact us; your input is always welcome.

Enjoy and Safe Voyage,

Dean & Dione

A Master's Authority and Responsibility

by Thomas G. Waller and Captain Jeff Slesinger

Captain Jeff Slesinger and Tom Waller, esq., invite you to join them on the bridge of a small coastal freighter while they transit the Inside Passage from Alaska to Seattle. The purpose of their invitation is to have you join them for a few miles and a few decisions that will illustrate how a Master's responsibility and authority translate into real decisions. Lurking behind every master's decision is the legal ramifications of their actions and directives. These consequences can be complex, confusing and career altering. While this voyage may be fictional, the journey through the realm of a master's authority and responsibility is real. They hope to shed light on that topic from two angles, one as a master and one as counsel.

Our freighter is southbound, on the last leg of a 30-day circuit of Alaska ports. We're winding through the channels of Alaska's Inside Passage with our holds full of frozen fish. We've stopped at numerous Alaska fishing ports in order to collect the frozen products of the summer salmon fisheries. Our dispatch orders from the office are to make best possible speed to Seattle in order to make a sea-bridge connection with a container ship that will transport our cargo to Far East markets.

Our vessel is twin screw, 280' long, 497 gross tons and down to its load line. Due to its deep draft, the freighter is sluggish in answering the helm. She has a tendency to sheer off to one side or the other when the bow slices through current rips or swirls. This is a constant concern to the master as the route he has chosen through the Inside Passage contains quite a bit of tidal induced currents and vessel traffic. Cruise ships, fishing vessels, tugs and tows, and yachts all utilize this marine highway to and from Alaska.

We have a 6-man crew aboard our freighter-- a master, chief mate, 2nd mate, AB, chief engineer and deckhand cook. The chief mate has had extensive experience on coastwise voyages but this is only his third trip through the Inside Passage. The 2nd mate is an academy graduate, fully licensed but has little actual experience. He stands a good watch in the open ocean but is completely unfamiliar with the Inside Passage. The skill and competence level of the two mates are reflective of the personnel shortage that plagues all modes of maritime transportation.

The three licensed watchstanders stand a 4-hour on, 8-hour off watch schedule. Watch changes normally occur on the 4's, ---0400, 0800, 1200, etc. However, due to the inexperience of the 2nd mate, the master and chief mate have been spending a couple of extra hours each day mentoring the 2nd mate. They have been coming up to the bridge during their off-watch time to take the con in sections of the Inside Passage that have high traffic density or narrow, constricted channels. On this particular morning, the master had come on watch early, 3- hours prior to the 0800 watch change for just such a circumstance. We join our crew at 1130; the master is on watch and preparing to hand the watch over to the chief mate at 1200.



Jeff: *I imagine this master is pretty worn out by this point in the voyage. He has been underway for at least a couple of weeks functioning as chief navigator, docking pilot, cargo supervisor, weather man, risk assessor, crew manager. He's made numerous stops to remote Alaskan ports, probably in marginal tide or weather conditions. Although he is currently standing a 4 on 8 off watch that schedule was likely to have been broken numerous times once the ship began its transit of the Inside Passage. The master's presence has frequently been required to assist either the chief mate or 2nd mate on their respective watches. When this master goes off watch and his head hits the pillow his mind is still running through a checklist of risk assessments—one of which is the question of how to best use and not surpass the chief mate and 2nd mates' skill and experience level.*

Tom: *Coast Guard regulations and STCW Amendments put limits on watches and rest periods. This master must recall and add up the hours of rest he's had in the past day. Has he had the mandatory ten hours of rest since noon yesterday? It's close, but any more work without rest will likely put him over the work/rest divide. A regulation allowing for a single day exception to the rest requirements will not likely cure any defect; the captain knows he must have seventy hours rest in any given week. It is a standard he is sure hasn't been met. The deck logs would likely confirm his suspicions. He judges himself in near violation and considers whether to have the mate stand part of the 2000-2400 captain's watch tonight. The mate, then, would likely be in violation, as well. As captain, the responsibility is his. He thinks of his legal duty to set watch schedules. The schedule must allow for mandatory rest for everyone. How does he rest, he wonders, if an unqualified mate is manning the wheelhouse? How does he help train a new mate if the captain is required to rest?*

At 1135 an alarm light and horn sound in the wheelhouse. The alarm panel indicates the port reduction gear has low oil pressure. The master immediately slows the port engine, takes it out of gear and calls for the chief engineer. The ship sheers off to port, having suddenly lost half its thrust. Even with hard right rudder the ship continues to veer off to port. The master backs full on the starboard engine to check the swing and slowly bring the freighter to a stop. At first the starboard wheel cavitates uselessly, churning more air than water. With little water going through the prop the vessel shudders throughout, rattling the dishes and glasses in the galley and sending the master's empty coffee cup skittering across the chart table and onto the wheelhouse floor. After a few tense moments the wheel begins to bite into solid water and the freighter is slowly brought to a stop. Fortunately there are no other vessels in the vicinity and this area of the Inside Passage is wide and deep.

“In each ship there is one man who, in the hour of emergency of peril at sea, can turn to no other man. There is one who, alone, is ultimately responsible for the safe navigation, engineering performance . . . and morale of his ship. He is the Commanding Officer. He is the ship.”

Joseph Conrad, *Command at Sea*

The alarm horn in combination with the unexpected and out of the ordinary vibrations and rattling sounds has awoken the whole crew. They all assemble in the wheelhouse wanting to know what's going on. The master directs the chief engineer to grab the AB and trouble shoot the reduction gear problem.

The master decides to keep the vessel dead in the water (DIW) while the repairs are made. He is reluctant to continue ahead on one engine as the next section of the Inside Passage is a long set of narrow and twisting channels. It would be too risky to attempt to navigate through this section with limited maneuverability and power. Until effective repairs are made the vessel will remain DIW, using the starboard engine to maneuver or avoid traffic as necessary.

The master remains on watch as he is concerned that neither the chief mate nor 2nd mate has enough experience to maneuver the vessel in its temporarily crippled condition.

Jeff: *The simplicity of this master's decision—go dead in the water and repair the reduction gear—is deceptive. His decision is much more complex and takes into account the results of several, quick risk assessment.*

- *Weather assessment— are the sea-state and wind conditions low enough to allow the vessel to safely drift while repairs are made.*
- *Navigation risks—Is it safer to drift in the open area or proceed slowly towards the next narrow section of channels that lie a few miles ahead*
- *Vessel traffic risks— is there room for other vessels to safely maneuver and pass the DIW freighter.*
- *Crew management— Who of his crew has the most experience and best skills in making the reduction gear repair.*
- *Work hour management— Can the repair be made without causing his crewmembers to go over-hours in their allotted number of work-hours per day.*

A master is constantly balancing and prioritizing his many responsibilities. In this case the master has good weather, plenty of room and depth of water but is in an area that will require constant monitoring of vessel traffic. He elects to stay in the wheelhouse for two reasons. One is to be immediately available at the controls should the vessel have to maneuver to avoid traffic or navigational hazards. The other is to monitor the state of repairs and to decide when and who should receive notification of the freighters status. Although his deployment of personnel may be the best to address the cargo problem, it does put the master at risk for going over his work-hour restriction if the repair becomes lengthy.

Tom: *The captain does not belabor his decision. One engine leaves no margin of safety in the waters ahead. The safety of the crew, the seaworthiness of the vessel and the security of the cargo are at risk. It is a judgment call, but at sea, safety comes before sleep. Watchstanding regulations confirm as much, offering a concession for “overriding operational conditions”. The captain's decision to stay in the wheelhouse is within the bounds of the governing federal law.*

The captain focuses on matters at hand. Alone in the wheelhouse, his lookout duty is absolute. There is no more important duty now owed to his crew. He plots his position, checks his radar and makes a security call on Channel 16.

“A master is constantly balancing and prioritizing his many responsibilities.”

Initial reports from the engine room are that there is reduction gear oil sprayed all over the overhead and around the port reduction gear. After about 45 minutes of cleaning up, the chief discovers the source of the oil—a split in a pipe on the discharge side of the reduction gear lube oil pump. There is no spare pipe on board so the chief will have to fashion a temporary repair by using materials on board—hoses, quick connect and threaded hydraulic fittings. The chief sets to work.

At 1430, the chief has made a solid repair. The port engine is started, the clutch engaged and our vessel begins to slowly steam ahead. Once again we are underway

for Seattle.

But the master's duties and circumstances requiring difficult decisions are not over. In about an hour and half our vessel will come to the section of Inside Passage that consists of a long and narrow, constricted channel with several sharp turns. Technically it is the chief mate's watch. However, the chief mate has only been through this particular area once. The 2nd mate has never been through. The master's original voyage plan would have had this section of the Inside Passage fall under his normal watch rotation. Now, that timing has been upset due to the time required to address the reduction gear problem.

The master decides to proceed ahead, have both the chief mate and 2nd mate assume the watch but with explicit orders to call the master if they need assistance. In addition the master assigns an AB who has witnessed numerous transits of this area to stand watch in the wheelhouse with the two mates.

Jeff: *These circumstances have forced the master to make another set of quick risk assessments.*

- *Alertness level- Who is the most alert now and will be in 1 ½ hours- the master or the two mates.*
- *Skill level assessment- Does the chief mate have the piloting skills to successfully navigate the upcoming narrow channel with the heavily laden vessel.*
- *Experience assessment- Does the chief mate have enough experience in this or similar narrow channels to make a successful transit.*
- *Crew management- who else on the crew has experience in the narrow channel and can provide assistance to the mates.*
- *Customer service-what would be the consequences if the freighter missed the sea-bridge connection with the ship in Seattle.*
- *Work hours- how can the master set a watch schedule that will accommodate both work-hour limits for licensed personnel and the timing of narrow channel or high traffic area transits that require the master's presence on the bridge.*

This master has chosen a course that is not without risk, but one that he feels presents the least risk. There is no, one correct answer to this master's dilemma. The small freighter will be transiting a narrow channel of which the chief mate is only cursorily familiar. The vessel is not steering well and the pressure to arrive in Seattle in a timely fashion has only intensified with the delay. The master has most likely used 9 of his allotted 10- hours on this particular day and he still has some part of his evening watch remaining.

In the master's current state of alertness he is probably felt it was a wash between a fatigued, experienced master and an alert marginally qualified mate's ability to successfully navigate the narrow channel. Only in hindsight will he know whether his risk assessment was accurate.

Tom: *As the captain gives up the watch, he gives up to no one his legal duties and responsibilities. By tradition as well as legal edict, the captain's obligation is to see the ship safely through any threat or peril. If errors occur in the wheelhouse while he is below, the captain can be held accountable. If work hour violations occur, the captain is answerable. His responsibilities reach beyond the crew, vessel and cargo, as well. Damage to other boats, injuries to their crews and harms to the environment are his responsibility, too, if attributable to his vessel.*

"As the captain gives up the watch, he gives up to no one his legal duties and responsibilities."

As the ship's clock turns to 1600, the master dozes down in his stateroom. He is in a semi-conscious state monitoring the motion of his vessel. He feels the ship heel slightly as the mate executes turns to follow the channel; he senses the slight change in engine rpm's through the vibrations they transmit through the freighters hull. All indications are that the vessel is following the same pattern of the many successful transits he has made through this area. Suddenly there is a quick and unexpected drop in engine rpm's and 5 blasts on the ship's whistle. Like a shot, the master is up and on the bridge.

As he arrives on the bridge he takes a quick scan out the wheelhouse windows. He immediately recognizes familiar landmarks and confirms the vessel's position. A fishing vessel, traveling in the opposite direction is passing close down the ship's starboard side barely squeezing between the ship's side and the rocky shore. Although having successfully avoided the fishing vessel, our ship is sheering sharply off to port. The master

throws the helm over to starboard and comes full ahead. The ship reluctantly answers the helm and begins to check her swing and come back to starboard. Once back in the center of the channel the master brings his vessel to a stop.

The fishing vessel was not so fortunate. After passing by the freighter the wheel wash of the freighters full ahead, hard to starboard maneuver cast the fish boat into the rocky shore where she ran aground. The mate explains that the passing fishing vessel had become confused by our ship's veering from side to side in the current. After several frantic but unanswered radio calls from the mate, he decided to pull back the throttles, sound the danger signal and stop to avoid a collision. When the mate reduced the ship's power it immediately began to sheer off to port. Upon seeing the swing of the ship, the fish boat helmsman decided on a starboard to starboard passage.



We leave our freighter now and rejoin the master in court. The damage from the collision caused the fishing vessel owner to miss the fall salmon season and the subsequent loss of income. A crewmember aboard the fishing vessel had sustained injuries and also missed the fall season. The master now finds himself part of the legal proceedings that have been brought against the owners of the vessel as well as him.

Tom: *The captain's decisions will now be adjudged by a jury or judge – neither having experience at sea. They will not fully grasp the skill of a sea captain in the face of so many challenges. They will not readily concede the captain met his primary responsibilities: his crew; his vessel; and, his cargo returned to port on time and without injury, loss or damage. The actions of the captain will instead be scrutinized for arm-chair alternatives, often conflicting. Why did the captain and crew not have more rest? Why did the captain sail from Seattle with inexperienced officers? Why did the captain leave the wheelhouse? Why did the captain not spend more time training his inexperienced officers? Statutes and regulations will be cited. Supposed experts will be called; they will open their briefcases, loosen their ties and gravely espouse their opinions. The captain will sit quietly. He has made twelve trips to Alaska since the fishing boat incident. His next voyage begins next week. All of the same challenges will resurface. His responsibilities as master will be unchanged. Total responsibility will be his.*

*Tom Waller is an attorney with Bauer Moynihan & Johnson LLP in Seattle.
Captain Jeff Slesinger is Director of Safety & Training for Western Towboat Company.*

Moving Forward with Purpose

by Dione Lee
President - QSE Solutions



One of the first requirements of any management system, whether it is quality, safety or environmental, is to define and clearly articulate your goal(s). This is accomplished through the policy statement. A policy statement needs to be well thought out and easily understood by all. It isn't a positive wipe over negative action; it is the rudder that you steer in the direction you have set for your organization. It is the mission statement in a business plan.

It is easy to lose sight of your policy statement in times of turmoil, change and uncertainty. We tend to get lost in the chaos, going this way and that. The requisite policy statement provides an opportunity to ensure focus when creating measurable objectives and targets. If you don't have a "connected rudder" then you are more likely to "blow with the wind" or adopt the "program du jour" with fancy side dishes complete with new labels for existing processes in place, which is often times confusing for your employees. This lack of focus and conviction places you in a weaker "reactive position" to situations and events versus a stronger "proactive position" moving forward with purpose.



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Identifying and incorporating a policy statement that is internalized company-wide and executed with conviction, "doing what you say", provides an excellent foundation for clear communication, managing change, merging existing companies and systems together, or adding new management systems.

Dione has over 20 years experience working with the maritime industry, partnering with individuals and organizations to implement quality, safety, environmental and competency management systems. She has developed and fine tuned a unique approach for bringing positive and sustainable change within organizational operating environments. To learn more visit us at www.qsesolutions.com.

Declaration of Inspection: Friend or Foe

By Jason T. Matherne

SQE Marine Advisor– K-Sea Transportation Pacific Division

For those of us who work in the petroleum transportation industry, the Declaration of Inspection (DOI) has become indoctrinated as part of routine shipboard life. The “Declaration of Inspection” is just that – as a licensed individual you have “declared by inspection” that certain items have been inspected, specific details of the transfer discussed, and everything is OK to proceed. This document is designed to be used as a tool to verify everything is in place for a safe and efficient transfer. It should not just become “that form” that’s filled out before the transfer.

The Devil is in the Details

DOI’s can take on many formats. They can go from extremely simple one-page documents to multiple page booklets, but they must include specific items outlined in 33 CFR and 46 CFR. DOI’s must always include spaces for both the delivering and receiving Person In Charges (PICs) initials, verifying that specific items have been inspected and are in good order to proceed safely. Each line item contains reference to the CFR-mandated requirement and often includes a brief description of the regulation. **It is the responsibility of the PIC to be familiar with the CFR requirement.**

Pre-Transfer Conference

A proper pre-transfer conference is part of the DOI. Although it may only be a small check box on the document, it holds much significance legally. Many investigations following incidents have cited an improper pre-transfer conference to be a factor in the incident. All items must be discussed and agreed upon by both parties. That single check box indicates that you and the other PIC have held a conference that includes:

1. Identity of the Products to Be Transferred
2. Sequence of Transfer Operations
3. Transfer Rate
4. Names or Titles and Location of Each Person-in-Charge
5. Particulars of the Transferring and Receiving Systems
6. Critical Stages of the Transfer Operation
7. Federal, State and Local Rules
8. Emergency Procedures
9. Accidental Discharge Containment Procedures
10. Discharge-Reporting Procedures
11. Watch and Shift Arrangements
12. Transfer Shutdown Procedures

Inspect and Initial Each Item, Every Time

PICs must ensure that the DOI is filled out completely and accurately. If the DOI does not contain a completion time, it is technically still active according to the US Coast Guard. Anything that is on the DOI that does not apply to your particular operation must not be left blank. It should be marked N/A along with your initials. Anything initialed is defaulted as agreed upon and inspected in the eyes of the Coast Guard.

“It’s critical that at each watch or shift change, the new PIC re-check all the equipment and procedures and sign and date the DOI before assuming control of the transfer.”

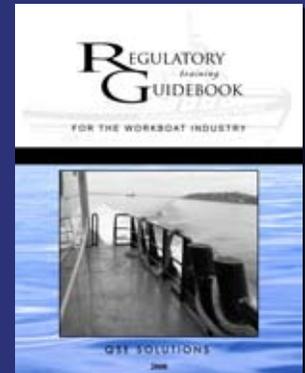
The PIC must also initial that each particular requirement is fulfilled once the PIC has verified conformity by inspection.

By completing a proper pre-transfer inspection using the items detailed on the DOI and discussing in detail the

particulars required in the pre-transfer conference, the DOI can be a friend ensuring a safe transfer. Failure to do so will, without doubt, become a foe indeed. Complacency has no place in this very critical operation. We should never take for granted the importance of the items outlined in the DOI.

Jason is a 3rd generation mariner with a Master 200 ton Near Coastal waters; Master of Uninspected Towing Vessels Near Coastal; MMD Tankerman “PIC” Barge DL/LG; and, Able Bodied Seaman Unlimited w/ Lifeboatman. In addition to his responsibilities with K-Sea, Mr. Matherne is a part-time Marine Operations Instructor for Louisiana Technical College - Young Memorial Campus.

AVAILABLE NOW



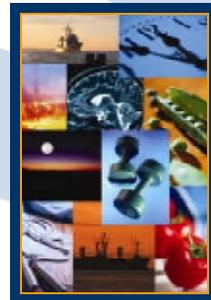
“The number of applicable rules, standards and regulations which govern the workboat industry today is staggering. Vessel managers and working mariners rarely have the luxury of the time required to so comprehensively conduct the research which is included in this volume. QSE Solutions’ *Regulatory Training Guidebook* is a ‘must-have’ for anyone who is responsible for training, safety, or compliance in the workboat industry. This book will save you time and money.”

Capt. Jonathan E. Kjaerulff
President
Fremont Maritime Services / India
Tango Marine Fire Training Program

To order your copy, go online to www.qsepublishing.com. You can pay by major credit card through Paypal.

Spouses and CEMS

By Jo Ann Salyers
USCG Certified CEMS Expert
Salyers Solutions, LLC



Recently, I had the opportunity to hold CEMS Awareness training sessions with some of the spouses of mariners and asked them: “How long does it take for your husbands to be social again with family and friends after they arrive home from being on the vessel?” Most answered 2-3 days.

This behavior is most likely the result from not getting enough sleep. Other factors contributing to fatigue include: poor nutrition; dehydration; caffeine and nicotine abuse; poor sleep quality; not enough uninterrupted sleep; noise and vibration; medications; stress; and, lack of exercise and temperature.

Let’s consider the mariner who comes home fatigued, needing some time to decompress, but is unable to fully rest due to obligations at home. [eg. catching up” with the family and friends; helping with the kids and household responsibilities; and, getting some of those “honey-dos” off the list.] Without an opportunity to properly rest their fatigued body and mind these mariners start off their hitch not fully rested. For this reason, a mariner’s spouse can be their best resource to incorporate the CEMS process at home.

The following are some suggestions on what spouses can do to help their husbands on the first 2-3 days. Please keep in mind that each household, family and circumstances are unique so these ideas may not be practical for everyone but they give a good foundation of ways to assist with a healthier mariner lifestyle.

While on the vessel:

- “Try not to worry him with unimportant things he can’t change while on the boat.”
- “I am capable of taking care of things at home while he’s gone and if I need help my family helps me.”

When coming home:

- “I make sure I have everything in order before my husband gets home. That way when he gets home he isn’t worried about all that needs to get done, he can just relax and rest – physically and mentally.”
- “Do not have plans for a few days.”
- “Don’t confront partner with problems as soon as they come home.”

While at home:

- “I have begun cooking meals that are healthier.”
- “Give my husband more down time, healthier snacks and less caffeine.”
- “If possible take a few days away from everyone and phones.”

Before leaving for work:

- “Allow him to have free time before going back.”
- “Make ending days more relaxing and try not to do all things in the last day or two.”

The importance of the mariner starting off work well rested and healthy is critical because of the responsibilities they have for their own safety, the safety of fellow crewmembers, the public, the environment and their equipment. Every employee should go home in as good as, if not better, shape than when they came to work.

Click [HERE](#) to download a free copy of the CEMS Awareness Workbook

Jo Ann has been involved in the fields of safety, training and risk management in the maritime industry for 30 years. Ms. Salyers holds CEMS Awareness Classes, Coaches training, and assists the Coast Guard with Expert's training. Please contact Jo Ann at salyers_solutions@hughes.net for more information on CEMS.

Slim Jim Curry Chicken Soup

Courtesy of Captain Jim Caspers, Harley Marine Services, Inc.

Serves: 3-4

1	can chicken stock (preferably organic)
1	can great northern beans
½	cup diced onion
½	cup sliced carrot
½	cup diced potatoes
1	cooked and chopped chicken breast
½	cup diced ham
	season with garlic, curry powder, and pepper to taste

Place all ingredients into a soup pot and simmer on the stove until flavors have blended and the potatoes have cooked, about 30 minutes.

If you have a healthy and hearty dish you would like to share, please submit your recipe to office@qsepublishing.com. Thank you.

Baseball Bats and Rock Salt

by Captain Russ Johnson

Port Captain, Safety and Training - Dunlap Towing Company

The other day I was wading through a stack of boxes in the hallway leading to my office that sometimes serves as the staging area for supplies to our offshore tugs. While unlocking my office door I noticed a couple of Louisville Slugger baseball bats propped up against the wall. A couple of feet away I noticed a few bags of rock salt. These two items were a stark reminder that winter is near and the Pacific storms are lining up like freight trains from Siberia to Seattle. One should be arriving once or twice a week for the next 5 months.

Towboaters working in Alaska have long known the value of using baseball bats to beat the ice off the superstructure. The added weight of the ice to the tug can cause a very unstable condition and almost every year the tales of crab boats rolling over in the Bering Sea are rampant. Fortunately tugs are inherently more stable than crab boats with their decks stacked high with crab pots, however the danger is still there and the ice must be removed as soon as it's safe to get crew on deck. Ice on the superstructure is just one of the many issues mariners face with the winter time weather and it is time to take a fresh look at winter time operating procedures.



What to Keep in Mind in Preparation for Winter Weather:

- Before departure check the tow gear. Check the mileage on the tow wire, the end for end date, and the mileage on the socket. Winter is not the time to be operating with a marginal tow wire. Check the shackles, hold downs, stoppers, and mooring lines.
- Before departure check all water tight hatches and doors. Check that seals are intact and that dogs close properly. Check that all your tank check valves are operating correctly. The last thing you want is to take a shot of water into your fuel tanks or contaminate your fresh water.

-
- Before departure, inventory all safety gear including survival suits. Drill the crew on donning suits, make sure they fit, and inspect for damage.
 - Before departure make sure your winter personal gear is up to par. It's time to swap the summer sea bag for the winter sea bag. Gear should include: Heavy work gloves, Polypro long underwear, Polypro or wool intermediate layers, work boots, and waterproof boots, wool socks, watch cap, ski mask, foul weather gear, heavy jacket, and work pants. Stearns and Mustang (to name two) make terrific float suits that keep you warm in place of pants and jacket and have the added bonus of keeping you from sinking. They are a bit pricey and if your employer doesn't pay for them they are a great investment in your future.

What to Keep in Mind if You Cannot Avoid Bad Weather:

- Keep your crew informed about the expected upcoming weather.
- In preparation for bad weather close all watertight doors on the tug. Secure all loose gear. Make sure the cook secures the galley.
- Reduce speed when necessary. Monitor the tow and how it is riding. Keep in mind the size and construction as well as the age of the barge. Barges in a light condition have a far greater chance of slamming damage than loaded barges.
- Keep a regular watch on the tow gear. Check the tow wire. Observe the surge of the wire. (again, slow down, be conservative) Parting your tow wire will make for a very bad day. Check the chaffing gear. Slip the tow wire on a regular basis.
- Increase the frequency of your engine room checks. Rough weather is usually the time when things that have been in place for months and months start coming apart. Look for fittings, bolts, or fuel lines that may have loosened due to hull motion or vibration in a heavy seaway. Sediment can be stirred up clogging filters or worse yet the injectors. Check the through hull valves and bilge levels.
- Be 100% aware and expect the worst.

Captain Russ Johnson holds an 8th issue Masters License with over 40 years experience in the Maritime Industry.

Safe Voyage® Safety Meetings



The Safe Voyage® Safety Meetings were developed to meet regulatory training requirements by mariners for mariners. Each topic includes guidelines to facilitate discussion onboard the vessel and includes a place to add your company logo.

Over 24 Topics to Choose From Including:

Situational Awareness

Survival Suits

Security Rounds

Bridge Transits

Back Safety

Line Handling

Vessel Access

Fall Overboard Prevention

PPE

Hazard Communication

Oil Transfer

Confined Space Awareness

To order your customized version of Safe Voyage® Safety Meeting, contact us at office@qsesolutions.com

A Little Known Fact:

Up until recently the State of Alaska sold more Louisville Slugger baseball bats than any other state in the Union. However, apparently technology has worked its way into the ice breaking business. The new hot item for breaking ice is what is known as an ice mallet. The head is wedged like a splitting maul and made of hard rubber. The handle is fiberglass. And apparently we will not be using rock salt anymore. It's been upstaged by some sort of crystalline chemical substance called simply; de-icer. Whatever you use be safe out there. It's winter!

People - Your Most Valuable Resource

By Deborah Franco

Vice President HR, Quality Systems and Administration – Harley Marine Services, Inc.

Morale, motivation, and reward are key components to keeping people happy in their job. There is also another component that is often overlooked: Appreciation.

Last month, Harley Marine Services celebrated its second annual Co-Worker Appreciation Week. A grass roots committee was formed to organize festivities to honor each working component of the organization. The idea was not only for management to show its appreciation for employees, but to acknowledge all parts of the company, and reinforce that every job and person is important. Ultimately, mutual appreciation bridges the gap between fellow employees, departments, and management.

“Taking time to thank a fellow employee for his or her efforts to create an injury-free workplace reinforces their appreciation that someone is looking out for them.”

Appreciation also helps cultivate a Safety Culture. Showing appreciation to fellow employees who demonstrate a high regard for safety, is one of the best ways to build a culture that is focused on the goal of “No One Gets Hurt”. People want to be involved when they feel appreciated and are acknowledged for their efforts. Taking time to thank a fellow employee for his or her efforts to create an injury-free workplace reinforces their appreciation that someone is looking out for them. Creating opportunities for all employees to express their appreciation has proven to be an enlightening endeavor. The results have surprised many in a positive manner.

This grass roots approach has produced out of the box thinking, a sense of ownership, and participation at all levels. We recently applied this methodology to implementing a Company-wide ISO 14001 Environmental

Management System. Initially, we called a meeting asking for volunteers and had a contest for contributing ideas. An amazing occurrence happened; employees from every area of the company felt compelled to participate and they did so with passion. With leadership established throughout the Company, there was immediate buy-in for the program and people felt pride in what they were doing and for Harley Marine. This in turn, helped to smoothly facilitate the implementation of a new system.



People are our most valuable resource. When they feel appreciated and truly a part of the Company, wonderful

outcomes will occur, including employee retention, loyalty, and a safer workplace for all. Along with conscientious planning, workable systems, and dedication, it is a proven way to build a lasting and rewarding company culture.

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NPDES Exemption Set to “Vacate” December 19, 2008

A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit authorizes the discharge of a specified amount of a pollutant or pollutants into a receiving water under certain conditions. Typically dischargers seeking coverage under a general permit are required to submit a notice of intent (NOI) to be covered by the permit.

After a long history of exemption for discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels from the NPDES program under the Clean Water Act, the regulatory exemption for vessel discharges is scheduled to expire (be vacated) December 19, 2008.

The NPDES permit for discharges from the operation of vessels would cover all **commercial vessels 79 feet in length or greater** with discharges of pollutants incidental to their normal operation into 3 mile territorial sea or inland waters. The EPA's final Vessel General Permit (VGP) requirements will regulate a wide variety of discharges from vessels, such as: ballast water, bilge water and gray water. Sanitary wastewater discharges, which are covered by U.S. Coast Guard regulations, are exempt from the Clean Water Act.

The 2 year moratorium for **vessels of less than 79 feet and commercial fishing vessels** to which this law applies is schedule to end in 2010.

The EPA VGP requirements are expected to be finalized in early December, which means a limited time for implementation and compliance. For more information on NPDES permits click [here](#).

Resources:

- 1) *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Vessel Discharges*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website.
- 2) *Proposed Vessel General Permit*, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
- 3) *US Clean Water Act*, Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Marine Guidance Note: MGN 383 (M+F)
- 4) *NPDES Permit Requirements for Vessel Discharges*, The American Waterways Operators (AWO) 2008 Fall Convention

FYI: The Pacific Maritime Institute (PMI) is offering a comprehensive two day course on the application of the “Vessel General Permit for Discharges Incidental to the Normal Operation of Vessels”. For more information on environmental training for the maritime industry, please contact the Pacific Maritime Institute at (206) 239-9965.