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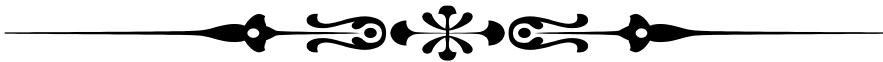


First surface effect Vessel for Crew transfers

***VOLUME NO. 24, ISSUE NO. 12
December, 2024
TRAINING SHIP RAHAMAN
NHAVA***

CONTENTS

I.	DGS Circular / Order	...	...	...	01
II.	IMO News	...	...	...	06
III.	ILO News	...	...	...	08
IV.	Shipping News	...	...	...	09
V.	Catering & Hospitality	...	...	...	12
VI.	Health Zone	...	...	...	13



I. D. G. S. CIRCULAR / ORDER



भारतसरकार/ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पत्तन, पोतपरिवहनऔरजलमार्गमंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
नौवहनमहानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

File No. 23-POL/1/2023-CREW-DGS (C. No. 26079)

Date: 20.12.2024

DGS Circular No. 30 of 2024

Subject: Changes incorporated in present E-Governance RPSL module for updating Seafarers' Engagement and Discharge Data (Article of Agreement / Form-I) - reg.

Whereas, the Directorate General of Shipping had issued Circular No. 03 of 2019 dated 20.06.2019 and Circular No. 02 of 2024 dated 27.02.2024 regarding uploading of seafarer's engagement and discharge data [Article of Agreement / Form-I]. The procedure for submitting seafarer's data pertaining to their engagement and discharge is operational since 16.03.2019. As per the afore mentioned circular, "*The Date of Sign-off Ship (Article of Agreement) / Sign-off Date (Form-I) and Date of Sign-off Shore (Article of Agreement) / Date of Completion of Contract (Form-I)*" is required to be entered / updated within **15 days** of sign-off from the vessel.

2. The Directorate has received various representations from the stakeholders highlighting that RPS companies are onboarding a substantial number of seafarers on vessels and are facing logistical challenges, including delays in receiving accurate information from vessel's Master, ship-owners, ship-managers and seafarers; hence embarkation and disembarkation compliance with the stipulated timeframe of 15 days has remained challenging and hence requested for the following changes in the existing E- Governance RPSL module:

2.1 To extend the time period for updating the "*Date of Sign-off Ship (Article of Agreement) / Sign-off Date (FORM-I) and Date of Sign-off Shore (Article of Agreement) / Date of Completion of Contract (FORM-I)*" from "**15 days to 30 days.**"

2.2 The RPS / Shipping Companies were not permitted to make onboard changes pertaining to rank, vessel, flag etc., after completion of the stipulated timeframe of 15 days. The stakeholders are requested to increase the time period from "**15 days to 30 days.**"

3. Considering the prevailing operational challenges faced by the stakeholders and recognizing the importance of seafarer's sea service records to be up to date on their Master checker records to avoid hardship in getting the missed sea service records corrected in the present E-Governance system to uphold their continued hassle-free career opportunities, the Directorate is pleased to implement the following changes to the present E-Governance RPSL

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module with immediate effect as to promote ease of governance:

3.1 The time period for updating the "Date of Sign-off Ship (Article of Agreement) / Sign-off Date (Form-I) and Date of Sign-off Shore (Article of Agreements) / Date of Completion of Contract (Form-I)" has been *extended from 15 days to 30 days with immediate effect.*

3.2 The time period for updating the onboard changes (Form-I) has been *extended from 15 days to 30 days with immediate effect.*

3.3 Additionally, the provision for updating the onboard changes has been introduced, as per which, if RPS / Shipping companies fails to make entries within 30 days (*proposed newly implemented, earlier was 15 days*) for onboard changes within the stipulated time period, are also allowed to make corrections or missed entries may be added as per the earlier laid procedures as specified in para 8 of DGS Crew Circular No. 02 of 2024 dated 27.02.2024 (*copy enclosed*).

4. This issues with the approval of Director General of Shipping.



(Capt. Daniel J. Joseph)

Dy. Director General of Shipping

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DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

File No. 23-POL/1/2023-CREW-DGS (C. No. 26079)

Date: 27.02.2024

DGS Circular No. 02 of 2024

Subject: Correction / deletion / updation of entries in the FORM-I and Article of Agreement uploaded by RPSL / Shipping Companies – reg.

Whereas, the Directorate General of Shipping issued DGS Crew Circular No. 03 of 2019 dated 12.06.2019, regarding new procedure for uploading seafarers engagement and discharge data [Article of Agreement / FORM-I]. The said new procedure for submission of seafarer's data in respect of their engagement and discharge has been implemented and the same is functional from 16.03.2019 as per following formulation and timelines:-

- a. The "*Date of Sign-on Shore / Date of commencement of Contract*" shall be entered within 15 days from the date of contract signed.
 - b. The "*Date of Sign-on Ship / Sign-on Date*" shall be entered within 30 days from "*Date of Sign-on Shore / Date of commencement of Contract*"
 - c. The "*Date of Sign-off Ship / Sign-off Date*" shall be entered within 15 days from the date of seafarer signs off from the ship.
 - d. The "*Date of Sign-off Shore / Date of Completion of Contract*" shall be entered within 15 days from the date of seafarer signs off from the ship.
 - e. The system will not allow to submit any data if the details are not submitted in the stipulated time frame.
 - f. The system will not allow to submit data of seafarers more than the number of seafarers covered under bank guarantee at any given point of time.
2. Whereas, request are also being made from RPSL / Shipping Companies for change in e-governance / e-migrate records for rectification or deletion of dates already fed and populated in the system.
3. Whereas, these dates fed and populated by RPSL / Shipping Companies are critical data for counting of sea-service and issue of various certificates to seafarers in accordance with IMO conventions.
4. Whereas, Sign-on carried out by the RPSL / Shipping Companies implies that the seafarer has actually joined the vessel based on the confirmation received from the Master / Agent of the vessel.

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Hence, the date of Sign-on uploaded by the RPSL is sacrosanct and is updated after due verification. This is an onerous responsibility given to the RPSL / Shipping Companies, and ordinarily there shall not be any error as the dates are being fed in the system "post-facto", i.e., 15 to 30 days after happening of the event.

5. Whereas, the timelines given in para 1, enables the tracking of the particulars of the seafarers concerned also. Hence, the same attains significance, as a safeguard against fraudulent information and forged documentation and its submission.

6. Whereas, the Section 5(b) of Merchant Shipping (Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers) Rules 2016 states that the Recruitment and Placement Services shall ensure that its management and staff are adequately trained and have relevant knowledge of the maritime industry to the extent of the duties assigned to them in this context.

7. Whereas, after due examination of these representations duly received from the RPSL / Shipping Companies, the competent authority has decided that **henceforth no incorrect entries shall be deleted / modified** from the online profile of the seafarer without proper investigation. It is the responsibility of the RPSL to update the seafarer's profile with accurate records within the stipulated time frame. If the company fails to update the correct record, the penalty for updating the correct date, after due verification, is henceforth **enhanced to Rs. 1,000/-**.

8. Whereas, if the active RPS / Shipping Companies fail to update Sign-on date / Sign-off date within the prescribed time period, they shall submit all the requisite documents, all pages duly signed by the authorized signatory of the RPS / Shipping Companies, to the jurisdictional DSEO/SM and also on the following email address: crews-dgs@nic.in along with:

- a. Company's Request letter for updation of pending Sign-on date / Sign-off date (also mentioned vessel name with Sign-on / Sign-off date) **detailing the, extraordinary circumstances with cogent reason and action taken to ensure such event do not occur in future.**
- b. Copy of CDC with front page and Sign-on / Sign-off date endorsed by the Master of the Vessel.
- c. Copy of passport with front page and immigration stamps (India – Departure / Foreign – Arrival & Foreign – Departure / India – Arrival) or copy of manifest wherein the seafarer has Signed-on & Signed-off.
- d. Copy of Seafarer Employment Agreement / Contract signed between the seafarer and the RPS Company.
- e. Bharatkosh Payment Receipt of Rs1000/- per updation (Rs. 1000/- for Sign-on & Rs. 1000/- for Sign-off) under head "Other Receipts Payable to PAO Shipping, Mumbai" made to Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai.

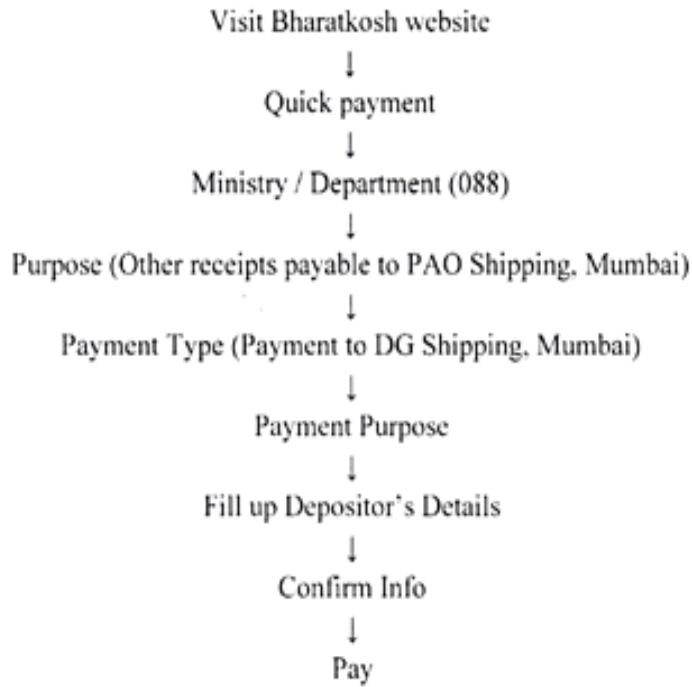
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Method of making payment through Bharatkosh for updation of pending Sign-on date & Sign-off date.



9. This issues with the approval of Director General of Shipping.



(Capt. Manish Kumar)
Nautical Surveyor-cum-
Deputy Director General of Shipping (Tech/Crew)

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II. IMO NEWS

IMO Secretary-General new year message

International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez has highlighted key items on the IMO agenda for 2025.

In a video message, Secretary-General Dominguez said:

“We start 2025 focusing on three main topics, as we were last year.

“The first one, seafarers, the second one, security around the globe, and the third one, decarbonization. When it comes to seafarers, we need to enhance the safety and security of the key personnel on board ships. We also need to focus on increasing the support that we provide to them, not just on decarbonization, but also when it comes to reducing the criminalization of seafarers; then diversity.

“We have made progress, particularly when it comes to gender in the maritime sector, but the reality is that there is more to come. I will continue to be firm on my commitment and my policy of not participating and engaging in panels where there is no female representation.

“This is a big year for IMO, and I remain positive that Member States and stakeholders will find common ground and adopt the technical and economic measures that will allow the sector to meet the objectives set up in the 2023 GHG strategy, and decarbonizing the sector by or around 2050 this year. We are also focusing on the sustainability of the oceans. For IMO, the theme [for World Maritime Day 2025] is: Our ocean, Our obligation, Our opportunity.

Take the IMO-WISTA women in maritime survey – deadline extended to 31 January 2025

The International Maritime Organization and the/ Women’s International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA) have issued a call to shipping companies and organisations/ to take part in the 2024 IMO-WISTA Women in Maritime Survey. The deadline/ has been extended to 31 January 2025./

The survey will provide a global snapshot of gender diversity in the maritime sector, highlighting the progress made by Member States and maritime companies since the previous survey of 2021./

All maritime companies and organizations – regardless of size, location and specialisation – are encouraged to participate, from shipowners and port operators to law firms, insurers and marketers, including small to medium businesses as well as sole traders./

A broad range of contributions is key to achieving accurate and representative results, so sharing the survey link with networks is strongly encouraged to ensure regional and sub-sector representation. Participants will submit data on workforce demographics (gender, age, leadership roles) and workplace policies impacting gender equality, focusing on 2023 data./

The results, to be published on/ 18 May 2025/ for the International Day for Women in Maritime, will offer invaluable insights for policymakers, industry leaders, and advocacy groups working to promote equal opportunities for women in maritime careers.

Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden States push coordinated action on maritime security

States around the western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden have reiterated their commitment to working together to address common maritime security threats in the region.

The Signatory States to the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) and its Jeddah Amendment concerning the security of the western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden were meeting at the Seventh High-level Meeting on the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct/Jeddah Amendment, in Dar Es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania (28-30 November). The meeting brought together high-level stakeholders to discuss how to continue to work together to protect the region from piracy, armed robbery against ships and other illicit maritime activities.

The meeting decided to establish a working group on operational cooperation and coordination at sea. The resolution establishing the Working Group recognized that the successful implementation of the DCoC and its Jeddah Amendment needs a whole-of-government approach, making full use of all of the competences, skills and capabilities of national authorities, both civilian and military. Agencies working together and sharing capabilities act as a “force multiplier”, increasing effective results while reducing costs to signatory States’ taxpayers.

The Participants also recognized the potential of national, regional and international naval forces to assist maritime law enforcement agencies and regulatory bodies to carry out their duties. This will require close cooperation, coordination and communication between navies, law enforcement and civilian

authorities and the Regional Coordination Operations Centre; and between navies themselves at the national, regional and international levels. It will also require consistency and compliance with national legislation and international law.

Vessels of interest (VOI) database

The participants agreed to establish a regionally owned, shared vessels of interest (VOI) database, primarily to assist in countering illicit activities in the maritime domain.

The meeting was opened by IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, who drew attention to the need for all parties to work in cooperation, to develop meaningful action plans, to implement those action plans and to be able to demonstrate concrete success in order to secure further support in the future.

The High-Level Meeting was convened jointly by IMO with the United Republic of Tanzania and supported by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The meeting was chaired by Dr. Lufunyo S. Hussein (United Republic of Tanzania) and co-chaired by Mr. Metse Ralephenya (Republic of South Africa and Chair of DCoC/JA).

It was attended by participants from 17 DCoC countries, as well as implementing partners from 20 States; and organizations, including CRIMARIO II, European Union, European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) OP ATALANTA, European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia (EUCAP – Somalia), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), INTERPOL, INTERPORTPOLICE, Institute for Security Studies (ISS), Regional Coordination of Operations Centre (RCOC), Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC), United Kingdom Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and SKYLIGHT.

DCoC/JA National Focal Points meeting

Signatory States of the Djibouti Code of Conduct convened a meeting of the DCoC/JA National Focal Points (29 November). The Participants raised concerns about the growing threats in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and western Indian Ocean, and agreed to highlight and keep these areas of concern in focus while making efforts to find regional solutions to mitigate them. They highlighted the need to expedite the operationalization of the Regional Information Sharing Network (ISN) to enhance awareness of threats and boost response capabilities.

Friends of the DCoC Meeting

In its parallel meeting, the Friends of the DCOC – which includes organizations and States that have shown demonstrable capabilities in support of the work of the DCoC(JA) – proposed improvement to the DCOC Capacity Building Matrix, to make it a more effective tool for matching regional States' needs with development partners' assistance programmes.

The Friends of the DCOC also considered how to enhance information sharing, capability development, capacity building, and operational coordination.

III. ILO NEWS

DG Shipping constitutes committee to review collective bargaining agreement for seafarers

The Directorate General of Shipping has constituted an expert committee to review various aspects of the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) – the process of negotiation between employees and employers regarding the terms of their contracts and other provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention applicable to Indian seafarers.

The committee will examine the current CBAs for Indian seafarers, assessing their benefits, limitations, and adequacy of provisions concerning wages, working hours, safety, welfare, and dispute resolution, according to a recent order by the DGS.

The committee was set up to address issues and challenges faced by Indian seafarers regarding contractual matters. There are over 3.5 lakh Indian seafarers.

India supplies 10-12 percent of the seafarers for the global commercial fleet. Indian seafarers are highly regarded for their technical proficiency, fluency in English, and adaptability to international standards, which has led to increased employment opportunities for them on international vessels.

Advancements in maritime technology have created a growing demand for highly skilled personnel capable of operating automated and eco-friendly vessels. Indian training institutes are adapting to these changes to prepare seafarers for future demands.

Despite the positive growth trend, challenges remain, such as addressing the high stress nature of seafaring, ensuring consistent support, and adapting CBAs and other aspects of the MLC to prioritise the wellbeing and sustained growth of seafarers.

The committee will include members from the maritime industry, including representatives of reputable shipping companies, allied offices, and other relevant stakeholders, to address seafarer's issues and promote their well-being at sea and ashore.

The committee will also review the alignment of existing CBAs with national and international standards, including conventions like the MLC; the applicability of various current CBAs in India; the applicability of CBAs for Indian seafarers on Indian, coastal and foreign going ships, and the determination and applicability of seafarers minimum wages.

The committee will also ascertain the role of the DGS in the recognition or determination of seafarers wages and suggest measures, including references to other ministries or bodies involved in determining minimum wages, and recommend any necessary amendments to the MS Rules or DGS guidelines to reflect the correct legal position regarding seafarer's wages.

Daniel J. Joseph, Deputy Director General of shipping, DG Shipping, told that as per the allocation of business rules 1961, the ministry of labour and employment is the nodal authority for notifying minimum wages for labourers in India. However, for seafarers, the DGS is the nodal authority as per the MS Act. The committee will decide what can be done to accurately determine the minimum wages for seafarers or how to collaborate with MoLE on the matter.

It will also review death and disability compensation for seafarers and their applicability, the DGS order said. Death and disability compensation for seafarers on Indian and foreign ships, differ, and whether it should be standardised across all ships or remain different for various types of ships will be decided.

Sanjay Prashar of the Mumbai based VR Maritime shipping said in a social media post that, for the first time, the Indian government (DG Shipping) is discussing the seafarers Employment Agreement (SEA) with industry experts. This means the Government of India may declare a minimum salary for Indian seafarers on all types of ships.

The DGS is focused on addressing several issues for seafarers, with a clear agenda. Human rights at sea are as important as securing employment for Indians at sea, said Prashar, who attended a recent meeting on the issue.

The standard International Transport Federation CBA has a one lakh dollar cover on foreign going vessels. This is not compulsory; as desperate seafarers often work for much less. If the government prescribes a minimum wage, they may not get jobs. So, its balance, said an industry source. Let's see what comes out of the expert committee. Good foreign companies are already paying more than what seafarers earn on Indian flag vessels.

IV. SHIPPING NEWS

India went through its warmest year on record in 2024

India went through its warmest year in 2024 with the temperature being +0.65°C higher than the long-term average, India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director-General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said on Wednesday.

The IMD has been maintaining the weather record since 1901 and this is so far the highest. It was +0.9°C higher than the previous warmest witnessed in 2016. IMD's long-term average in this case is from 1991 to 2020.

The country has been going through a climate change since 2001 and over the last few years, the minimum temperature has been rising, said the IMD Director-General addressing the media on the weather outlook for January-March. The minimum temperature was the record highest in January, February and from July to October. The mean temperature was the highest in October, said Mohapatra.

The minimum temperature was the highest in the southern peninsula during December and as a result, it received the highest rainfall, he said.

The development on the weather front is in line with the global trend. Globally too, 2024 is expected to have ended as the warmest, according to the EU-funded Copernicus Climate Change Service.

Mohapatra said rainfall in December was the highest since 2001 in the country and the ninth highest since 1901. The southern peninsula received its second-highest rainfall of 126 mm in 2024. In 1946, it received 153 mm of rainfall.

Rainfall during the post-monsoon period of October-December varied from month to month. The IMD Director-General said rainfall in October was near normal but it was 55 per cent deficient in November. "In December, rainfall was extremely excess - 73 per above the long-period average (LPA). Overall, during October-December the rainfall was near normal - 3.1 per cent deficient at 117.4 mm against the LPA of 121 mm," he said.

The temperature in November was above normal in most parts of the country resulting in deficient rainfall. Cold wave in December was subdued, while the intensity of fog was low.

During post-monsoon, the north-west region received 16.5 per cent deficient rainfall, while it was 75.9 per cent deficient in the East and North-East. The Southern Peninsula and the Central regions received 185.8 per cent and 151 per cent excess rainfall, respectively.

2024 was a landmark year for India's maritime ambitions, says Sarbananda Sonowal

Union Minister of Ports Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal highlighted some of the major milestones achieved in the maritime sector in 2024, saying it was a landmark year for the sector. Interacting with children at Prerana Shishu Griha in Dibrugarh in Assam on January 1, the minister said the year 2024 was a landmark for India's maritime ambitions.

Listing the achievements made in the year, the minister said, "From laying the foundation of the country's 13th and largest major port to opening new global trade routes, we took significant strides to establish India among the top 10 maritime nations in the world." He noted that that India's seas are surging with potential, and added that "the maritime sector—a cornerstone of India's economic future—is connecting us to the world and unlocking new gateways to prosperity."

The minister claimed that India's progress in 2024 is a testament to the nation's rising stature on the global stage.

Arkas Line extends routes to India

Following its recent growth across the Red Sea, the company is now adding India to its network. The firm hopes that by making this change, it will be able to gain access to new markets while also providing a better service structure to customers.

The new service called India Med Service (IMS) will commence on 10 February 2025, with four vessels, each having a capacity of 2,500 – 2,800 TEU.

As of June 2025, the number of vessels in this service will reportedly increase to five, continuing to operate weekly.

The route of the IMS will cover the following ports: Ambarli – Evyap – Aliaga – Mersin – Aqaba – Jeddah – NhavaSheva – Mundra – Jeddah – Aqaba – Alexandria – Ambarli.

By utilising rail connections from the ports of Mundra and Nhava Sheva, the company will also facilitate the transportation of customers' cargo to key trade centres in the inland regions of India.

With the launch of the new IMS line, there will be a restructuring of the service network in the Mediterranean. Arkas Line has decided to merge its existing Great Pendulum Service (GPS), East Med Morocco Service (EMS), and Spain-East Med (SEM) services. The company's new Blue Med Service (BMS) intends to improve its Mediterranean network by providing a more efficient and comprehensive service structure.

The new Mediterranean route is as follows: Alexandria – Beirut – Lattakia – Mersin – Aliaga – Genoa – La Spezia – Tangier – Casablanca – Valencia – Barcelona – Fos Sur Mer – Genoa – La Spezia – Salerno – Alexandria.

With the introduction of the India Service, Arkas Line will now operate in 27 countries, providing 33 services across 72 ports.

Arkas Line CEO, Can Atalay said: "In line with our growth plans, we are restructuring our services for greater efficiency, entering new markets, and continuing our investments in fleet renewal to provide solutions that meet our customers' needs.

"Since June 2024, we have been operating our Red Sea service with two vessels, each with a capacity of 1,600 TEU. Now, by extending this service to India, we are opening up to new geographies. Additionally, we are increasing the service capacity by deploying five vessels, each with a 2,800 TEU capacity, and launching the new direct service IMS; from India to the Mediterranean."

In November 2024, Arkas Bunker gave its biofuel, 'Bio24F', to the vessel YM Inventive managed by Yang Ming Marine Transport Corporation.

Smaller ships take over as global trade routes shift

The shipping sector is changing as a result of the trend of international trade shifting from China to ports in other Asian nations. Owners are choosing to purchase smaller ships rather than ever-larger ones. Shipowners are abandoning the practice of purchasing ever-larger boats and switching to smaller craft as a result of the rerouting of global trade from China to ports elsewhere in Asia. According to shipbroker Braemar, just six container ships that can transport more than 17,000 20-foot containers, or TEUs as they are known in the industry, are scheduled to be delivered in 2025, compared to 17 in 2020.

In addition, 83 mid-sized ships with a capacity of 12,000 to 16,999 TEUs are scheduled to be finished in 2025—nearly five times as many as were built five years prior.

According to container market analysts, "the 16,000-TEU ship will become the popular workhorse for liner companies." They also said that "tepid" global trade and a glut of "massive ships" have also decreased demand for large ships. Industry sources claim that the market for the largest carriers has also been impacted by the possibility of environmental laws and trade interruptions, such as the attacks on ships in the Red Sea last year. When Donald Trump returns to the White House this month, it is anticipated that this disruption will continue. The president-elect has promised to increase import duties from China.

Nassau Cruise Port breaks all time Passenger record with 5.6 million Cruise Passengers in 2024

Nassau Port, Bahamas set an all-time record for the number of passengers handled on the cruise port, just 20 months after it opened a new cruise terminal so it could benefit from an increase in the short-duration cruise market.

The Port of Nassau dates back to the historic days and the beginning of the modern cruise era in the 1960s. Since then, it has become quite popular as massive ships are being sent on the short cruise market from Florida.

In 2024, it received 1445 cruise ships, more than 5.6 million cruise ship passengers and additional crew members from each of the vessels. Port Miami handled 8.2 million cruise passengers and Port Canaveral saw 7.6 million visitors in 2024.

Nassau Port has witnessed a rise in passenger arrivals since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. It had set a record of around 3.86 million passengers in 2019 and 3.22 million in 2022. In 2023 it surpassed 3.9 million passengers by November end with a target of 4.2 million before the end of the year.

The new Nassau Cruise Port developed in partnership with Global Port Holdings, has 6 berths to accommodate the biggest cruise ships in the world, including both the Icon of the Seas and Royal Caribbean's Oasis class ships.

The new cruise terminal has helped the port to achieve this new record. It opened in May 2023 and has enough space to accommodate 70 vendors, including tour operators, food and local crafts.

Strategic Marine delivers its first surface effect Vessel for Crew transfers

Headquartered in Singapore, Shipbuilding Company Strategic Marine hailed the delivery of its first crew transfer vessel to All Energy Services, an operator of offshore supply ships in the Middle East and Africa. The 35 m long vessel has been designed for crew transfers in the oil and gas sector. It is laden with advanced technological features and systems like the surface fleet technology which enhances performance and speed.

It skims above waves using the surface effect and reaches 50 knots, reducing transit times, and boosting offshore operations. It can also maintain transits in difficult sea conditions of up to 2.5 m.

Strategic Marine believes the vessel to be a 'game changer' for the offshore sector. It has a reinforced hull and SES active motion dampening technology which enables safe and efficient transfers while decreasing noise levels and vibrations with reduced motions when underway, thanks to the ship's active air cushion.

Chan Eng Yew, CEO of Strategic Marine said, "This vessel represents a significant leap forward in comfort, efficiency, and environmental responsibility, and we look forward to further expanding our capabilities of building SES vessels in the years to come."

The company said that the ship is the result of a collaboration with AIRCAT vessels, ESNA – Espeland, Skomedal Naval Architects, and AES. Strategic Marine said that the partnership set new standards for offshore crew transfer vessels.

Cargo movement through waterways grow six-fold in 10 yrs

With the construction of new national waterways, the amount of cargo transported by waterways has increased six fold in the last ten years. According to Crisil, the amount of cargo transported increased from 18.1 million tonnes in FY14 to 132.9 million tonnes in FY24. 200 million tons by FY30 and 500 million tonnes by FY2047 are the goals the government has set. Road transportation currently accounts for 65 percent of freight, followed by rail transportation at 26 percent. The remaining 9 percent is made up of air, pipeline, coastal shipping, and inland waterways.

Over the past ten years, the volume of goods moved by waterways has expanded six fold due to the construction of new national waterways. From 18.1 million tonnes in FY14 to 132.9 million tonnes in FY24, more cargo was moved, according to Crisil.

Launched in 2018 with an investment of Rs 5,369.18 crore, the Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) intends to expand the capacity of National Waterway 1 (NW), which runs 1,390 km from Haldia to Varanasi along the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system.

V. CATERING & HOSPITALITY

Food safety in India remains an urgent priority

Explore how stringent safety measures and innovative practices are shaping the future of dry foods in India

Indian dry foods are essential for millions, providing convenience in hectic lifestyles. From quick snacks, ready-to-eat meals, and healthy breakfast options like dried fruits and oats, dry food products serve a diverse consumer base, making their way into almost every household. Various snacks are available, including favourites like namkeen and chaklis and healthy choices like [dried fruits](#) and oats.

This variety satisfies both cravings and health-focused preferences. With rising demand, producers need to maintain strict quality and safety measures throughout the production process to stay competitive and meet consumer expectations.

Quality control measures are key to meeting consumer safety expectations and satisfying discriminating buyers. Food safety in India remains an urgent priority, with dry foods often tainted by harmful bacteria, pesticides, and additives that compromise brand integrity. Manufacturers must implement quality control measures that protect their consumers and maintain brand integrity.

India's rich culinary culture presents advantages and challenges regarding food safety. Each region processes dry foods differently, so manufacturers must standardise their safety protocols across all regions for consistency.

This is especially crucial given India's global role as an exporter; manufacturing must adhere to HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) or ISO certifications to meet international food safety standards and maintain trust among local consumers who demand premium-quality products.

Indian food producers must abide by both national and international regulations as their industry expands into global markets. The FSSAI has issued strict guidelines and an eleven-step process for food safety at each production stage, from raw material sourcing to packaging.

These laws ensure that every product complies with the highest food safety standards. Furthermore, transparent food labelling laws enable consumers to make more informed decisions by quickly accessing information on ingredients, nutritional value, and potential allergens. This builds consumer trust, which is necessary in a competitive market like India.

Quality control in India is of utmost importance due to the wide variety of dry food products that cater to diverse tastes and preferences. Packaged snack sales are projected to hit one trillion Indian rupees by 2025 due to expanded consumer demand for both health-oriented as well as indulgent treats.

Manufacturers must ensure that every product, whether granola or spicy snack mix, satisfies consumer demands regarding taste, texture, and freshness. Inconsistent quality can cause customer dissatisfaction, which could prove especially damaging in a market like India, where customer loyalty can be difficult to sustain.

Contamination is another major obstacle facing India's dry food industry, with stones, metal shards, and plastic debris sometimes finding their way into products. According to FSSAI analysis of over 1,77,511 samples examined during 2022-23 alone, 44,626 have been deemed non-compliant.

Compounding this issue further is the fact that some dry food products are processed in smaller, less-regulated facilities that need advanced technologies for detecting contaminants. Manufacturers are addressing this issue by using technologies like X-ray inspection, metal detectors, and automated monitoring systems to check their products carefully. This reduces contamination risks and ensures that consumers receive high-quality food.

Quality control is important for consumer safety and the long-term success of businesses. By using quality control measures, companies can cut down on wasteful production and improve operations. This helps minimise costly product recalls and increase efficiency.

Eco-friendly materials and energy-saving machinery can significantly lower costs while drawing eco-conscious consumers in India. Furthermore, as food safety standards evolve to accommodate emerging risks like antibiotic resistance or allergens, manufacturers must stay current. With every emerging threat comes new technologies and safety solutions.

The dry food industry must keep innovating to guarantee that its customers' safety and the quality of products are never compromised. By incorporating cutting-edge innovations into their production processes, manufacturers can meet consumer expectations while staying relevant.

Indian consumers consider food safety and quality control non-negotiable standards of living. Rising awareness about healthy diets, increased information on different products, and brands that prioritise this aspect not only protect customers but also nurture long-term loyalty. This commitment to high standards in such an expansive market as India is crucial for building consumer trust and long-term success.

In conclusion, the dry food industry in India is facing a severe challenge due to a lack of solid quality control and food safety standards. As consumer preferences change and the market evolves, manufacturers need to quickly improve their quality control and follow food safety rules while also ensuring clear labelling.

This is vital not only for meeting regulations but for protecting consumers and competing effectively in the market. In India, food represents more than just nutrition; it embodies culture and tradition. Companies that focus on safety and provide high-quality dry food will not only survive but also succeed in this changing landscape. Quality control builds consumer trust, and every product reflects that dedication.

VI. HEALTH ZONE

Inmarsat maritime and maritime London establish SEA-CARE working group to drive data sharing that can improve safety at sea

Inmarsat Maritime, a Viasat company, supported by Maritime London, has established SEA-CARE as a new working group of stakeholders from industry, regulators, and the UK government whose goal is to scrutinise maritime safety and how pooling information can improve it.

The new working group establishes Maritime London as an impartial broker to ensure that the right organisations are represented in SEA-CARE discussions between Inmarsat and industry stakeholders. Jos Standerwick, Chief Executive, Maritime London is chairing the group alongside Inmarsat Maritime's Vice President of Safety & Regulatory, Peter Broadhurst.

The collaborative initiative sees data sharing as key to developing a better understanding of maritime safety challenges and how to overcome them. One inspiration has been Inmarsat Maritime's annual The Future of Maritime Safety report, which analyses Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) call records, and is now in its sixth year of accumulating data. SEA-CARE stakeholders see this vital record of real incidents involving perceived danger as a powerful example of a dataset which, combined with other relevant data, could contribute to significant new insights into best safety practice.

"While distress call data provides valuable information, the reasons the calls are made are not always clear from the data," said Peter Broadhurst. "The volume of calls year on year is persistently high, and a high proportion also turn out to have been unnecessary. If we enriched GMDSS data with this information, for example, our industry could implement preventive measures to reduce the call volume."

A first meeting of the group brought together experts representing the London & International Insurance Brokers' Association, the International Maritime Rescue Federation, the IMO, and the International Transport Workers' Federation. Together, the attendees evaluated how other datasets could be integrated to provide a more holistic view of maritime safety, including information from flag states, the IMO, insurance brokers, and shipping companies.

In acknowledging that organisations may have concerns over sharing sensitive data, the group agreed that anonymised information could be used retrospectively to achieve the goals of the SEA-CARE initiative. According to the attendees, anonymised historical data would lose its potential for reputational damage while retaining its value as a source for analysis.

Jos Standerwick commented: "This conversation has been important because it has shown the scale of the challenge when it comes to sharing the appropriate data to create a better and more objective overview of maritime safety. However, importantly, we have also established that stakeholders are willing to engage fully with that challenge."

SEA-CARE committee members made plans for the next session in early 2025, in which they intend to nominate a top five list of safety issues facing the industry and decide which organisations to approach about sharing data with the stated goal of gaining insight into safety risks.

‘Sea is our home’: Meet UAE residents who live and work on yachts

Because of the convenience and the nature of the job, a lot of crew members aboard charter yachts live in the same vessel they work on. *Khaleej Times* spoke with two crew members about their living situations on a yacht.

For Captain Chito, the seas have been his home for almost a decade. He has been working and living on the same yacht since 2016 and said that he likes it because “anytime there is a booking on the yacht or any expected trip, we get to go for that trip”.

One downside for Chito, however, is when people sometimes come in the middle of the night to check out the boat for a few minutes and leave, which disrupts his sleep. “Once my sleep is interrupted, I cannot sleep immediately,” he said. He also added that this has happened many times as the harbour has no closing times.

Like other crew members, Chito gets one day off each week, but sometimes his schedule becomes so busy that he only has downtime twice a month, which he uses to run errands like going to the barber shop or meeting up with friends.

There have been times when Chito has been awake all night working, only to continue working in the morning to accommodate other guests. But for Chito, there are no excuses. “As long as there is a trip, we have to go for that.”

Jenessa Marcos, a stewardess who lives and works aboard one of the yachts docked in Dubai Harbour, loves the fact that her work and home are the one and the same. She said it’s because everything is convenient and in one place. “Living on the yacht is amazing, seriously. It’s so nice because the crew and the captain are like a family.”

Dubai food delivery

She arrived in the UAE a little over a year ago and started her first job as a yacht stewardess. Her working hours are atypical, since guests can come in for a boat ride at any given hour. Sometimes, the yacht trips end well into the wee hours, at 2am or 3am.

For Jenessa, this is convenient, as she doesn’t have to travel back to her house after a long day of working, since her room is just below the deck from where she usually works. Marcos added that she doesn’t “have to wake up too early to cook food for breakfast or bring lunch. Everything is in one place”. However, because she spends most of her waking hours on a sea vessel, Jenessa struggles to socialise. She said that since she’s constantly working and helping the guests with their needs during trips and preparing the yacht for forthcoming guests, there is no social life.

The crew member also misses cooking the most. The crew usually orders from a restaurant. Captain Chito said the crew members usually order home cooked meals from a ‘Kabayan’.

Chito said “We almost never have time to cook food here so it’s much better to buy already cooked meals.”

During the summer months, Jenessa said that yachts don’t receive many guests because of the extremely hot conditions. So for the most part, the crew would stay inside the air-conditioned rooms to battle the intense summer heat of the country.

QUOTES

“Culture does not make people. People make culture. If it is true that the full humanity of women is not our culture, then we can and must make it our culture.”

“Life is a series of natural and spontaneous changes. don’t resist them, that only creates sorrow. let reality be reality. Let things flow naturally forward in whatever way they like”

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Any suggestions for improvement in quality of this Bulletin will be highly appreciated.

Editor

Mr. Ram Chandra Pollai, Librarian