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Plaque in honor of LSC unveiled at WMU

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EXXON VALDEZ

In the wake of nearly every major casualty there is a spate of new regulations. To name just a few: TORREY CANYON, ARGO MERCHANT, AMOCO CADIZ and HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE. We are, therefore, likely to have to respond on your behalf to draft IMO legislation from the USA following the Exxon Valdez grounding. The Liberian Government and the International shipping community will be seeking LSC views. On exactly what we don't yet know, but the following is a likely short list:

- double bottoms:
- oil containment equipment to be carried on all tanks:
- tougher qualifications for navigating officers:
- enhanced port state inspections:

The law-making authorities are unlikely to heed industry's view that this was a unique casualty and in true bureaucratic style will impose yet more rules on an already over-regulated industry.

LSC WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU. What are your views on the above short list and how would you counter the expected regulatory attack on tankers. PLEASE LET US KNOW.

BUREAU OF MARITIME AFFAIRS

On June 20, 1989 the Liberian Legislature signed into effect an Act to make the Bureau of Maritime Affairs an autonomous agency of Government within the Executive Branch of Government. The Head of this new Agency will be Joseph P. Keller, the current Commissioner.

Previously the Bureau had been administratively within the Ministry of Transport and financially responsible to the Ministry of Finance. Commissioner Keller now reports directly to the President. It is thus planned to make the Bureau: "less bureaucratic, more responsible and responsive to the commercial environment in which it must operate."

It is not anticipated that this change will affect the operation of the Program to any significant degree.

PLAQUE IN HONOR OF LSC
UNVEILED AT WMU

On June 14, 1989 Liberia's Permanent Representative to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Hon. George B. Cooper, officiated at the unveiling of a plaque by the World Maritime University (WMU) in Malmo, Sweden, in honor of the Liberian Shipowners' Council (LSC) for its generous contribution to the University.

Mr. Cooper, who is a current member of the Executive Council of the Board of Governors of the WMU, expressed appreciation on behalf of the LSC and the Republic of Liberia for the recognition given in this manner to the LSC. Further in his remarks he observed that the plaque represents the genuine interest of shipowners who are partners with Liberia in its maritime program.

Mr. Cooper went on to praise LSC for its contribution in helping to train Liberians in the maritime discipline and for its generosity to the WMU, whose continuous existence is of paramount concern to all seafaring nations. Mr. Cooper emphasized that the support given by the LSC to the WMU is in direct recognition of the vital role of the University in promoting and maintaining global technical standards in world shipping activities through the process of education.

He expressed the hope that the LSC and Liberia would continue to support the University. He also expressed his personal appreciation and that of Liberia for the training of many fellow Liberians at the University.

Among those present were the Secretary-General of the IMO and Chancellor of WMU - Hon. C. P. Srivastava. Mr. Srivastava expressed the University's appreciation of the assistance provided by the LSC and for the important roles and commitment of Liberia towards the University and IMO.

LIBERIAN CREWS

Members are advised that 36 graduates of the Liberian Marine Training Institute will be available for placement in mid-July. All have been trained as General Purpose ratings and are in the age range 22-31. One LSC member who employs Liberians has reported to LSC that he considers them to be of a high quality. Another unsolicited recommendation came from a port engineer who visited a vessel with Liberian ratings; he commented that not only were the crew competent, but they "exhibited a willingness to help and assist at all times".

Wages are for negotiation but will be in the region of the ILO Minimum Wage. Further information may be obtained from:

Commissioner Joseph P. Keller
Bureau of Maritime Affairs
Ministry of Transport
Monrovia
Liberia

Tel.: (231) 224834
Telex: 93744513
Fax: (231) 222509

LSC has also been advised, via an IMO circular, of the availability of cadets from the Regional Maritime Academy, Accra, Ghana. Eighty-five graduates are available to receive sea-training to enable them to undertake their respective Upgrading Courses and Examinations for Certificates of Competency as follows:

10 navigation cadets requiring 12 months sea service
39 navigation cadets requiring 18 months sea service
36 engineering cadets requiring 12 months sea service

Further information can be obtained from:

Regional Maritime Academy
P.O. Box 1115
Accra, Ghana

Tel: 2798 TEMA

or contact them by telex through the UNDP Programme in Accra:

Telex: DPAC 2195

Attention: Capt. A.R.N. MacAuley
Chief Technical Advisor
Project RAF/88/031
Regional Maritime Academy
Accra

LIBFLAG ADMINISTRATION

Items (A) and (B) are requests for comments from LSC members. Item (C) announces a relaxation when applying for an officer license.

(A) Liferaft Servicing

SOLAS Regulation III/19.8.1 requires all inflatable liferafts to be serviced annually at an "APPROVED" servicing station which is competent to service them. IMO Resolution A.333(IX) sets down conditions for the approval of service stations by Administrations. The term "competent" is generally understood to mean "approved by the particular liferaft manufacturer."

Liberia, as a Flag State, has difficulty in approving service stations and believes generally this should be the responsibility of the Administration in which the station is sited. Enquiries of Administrations and liferaft manufacturers appear to leave a lot to be desired in ensuring service stations are both competent, adequate, and capable of servicing inflatable rafts. On a number of occasions each year Liberia receives reports after a service that the rafts have either deteriorated rapidly in the past twelve months or were badly serviced at the previous annual inspection.

Liberia needs information from owners on servicing and service status. The information in general should indicate their general satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the present arrangements.

Liberia is considering tightening up its requirements by having its authorized Classification Societies either witness servicing procedures or inspect servicing facilities on a regular basis. If lifeboats are serviced at stations in ports, other than those in which the Safety Equipment survey is conducted, and where the adequacy and competence of the facilities are not known to the surveyor, Conditional Certificates only would be issued for a maximum of three months to allow the station to be checked. Should the station be found unsatisfactory when checked, the rafts would have to be serviced again.

We read Members' comments on this and urge you to contact LSC.

(B) Harmonized System of SOLAS etc. Certification

The 1988 Protocol to SOLAS enters into force in February 1992, subject to not less than fifteen states whose combined merchant fleets comprise at least 50 percent of the world's total fleet satisfying the Protocol.

The amendments permit Safety Equipment and Safety Radio Certificates to be issued with a maximum duration of five years or a combined Safety Radio, Equipment and Construction Certificate to be issued also valid for five years. Annual surveys would have to be carried out and satisfactorily completed during a period covering three months before to three months after the anniversary date of the Certificate.

Liberia is considering making these available prior to 1992. In preparation for this it will contact major Administrations to ascertain they would be accepted and will also advise IMO when the details have been finalized.

Liberia would appreciate an indication by owners whether the new certificates are considered desirable and if so, are the individual five year or the combined certificates preferred?

Please let the LSC know your views.

(C) Radar Observer and Marine Firefighting Training

Effective April 28, 1989, the Liberian Administration required evidence of completion of radar observer and marine firefighting training as a prerequisite for the issuance of Liberian Licenses. Although the administration had originally intended to implement these training requirements earlier, this was not possible because other maritime nations were still progressively implementing these training requirements under the transitional provisions of STCW Convention which allowed each maritime nation up to April 28, 1989 to implement these requirements.