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WMU in the News

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Sea-Land management visiting faculty at new maritime school

Three Sea-Land representatives were among the first lecturers this summer at the newly created World Maritime University (WMU) in Malmo, Sweden.

Capt. Richard T. Soper, SLS Sea Operations EVP, and Michael T. Bohlman, SLS director, Development and Engineering, lectured and conducted weeklong seminars for 62 students from developing nations registered in WMU's two-year program. They were joined by Robert Ingram, SLS manager of Marketing Services for the Atlantic Group, Rotterdam.

Lived in Dorms

"Living in WMU dormitories at the Malmo campus afforded us a unique opportunity," says Soper, who was involved in curriculum planning before the school opened.

"Not only did we lecture for three hours each morning and conduct dialogues during the afternoons, but we often dined with our students and colleagues and rode the buses to and from class with them." Because of this, Soper adds "the dialogue never truly ended with the end of instruction."

Soper's instruction traced the history of maritime development from the early 19th century to the present — power sources, vessel construction, technology and major issues affecting the industry.

Bohlman dealt with containerization and hazardous materials — the impact of container design and contents on water pollution, port safety, and security and emergency response measures regarding hazardous materials. He also discussed container-handling equipment and container design.

Lack Infrastructure

"Although the students are mature," says Bohlman, "at this time, many of their countries don't have the infrastructure to support containerization. They are looking at this mode as the necessary road to participation in the world trade picture."

Bohlman's dialogues covered ways of adapting containerization to work within developing countries' needs.

"We even discussed modular container sizes, whereby larger containers could be separated into modules or

cohesive parts, to be carried over-the-road by available means — even animal-drawn carts," he notes.

Intermodalism

Ingram's one-day presentation covered intermodalism — the historical development and current operations. He also gave an overview of decision making related to pricing and marketing.

"Students attuned only to break-bulk modes were hungry for information on container operations," Ingram says. "They saw how quickly the world maritime picture changed since containerization emerged and are viewing this in relation to their own maritime procedures."

"Our week was a big success," adds Soper, who indicates that the Sea-Land representatives have been asked to return. "We are bonded to developing nations by common commercial problems and by the need for constant upgrading of equipment and operations. The World Maritime University deserves world citizen support."