



Press Release **One Asia, Unity in Diversity**

The Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) held its 27th Annual General Meeting on 15th May 2018 in Hong Kong, China, hosted by the Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA). Mr Jack Hsu, the 27th ASA President, welcomed delegates of member associations and called members to proactively work together to strengthen existing relationships with key regional and international stakeholders, to promote sustainable international shipping, and to take a leading role in international maritime matters affecting Asian shipowners.

Protect seafarers in abandonment

The 2014 amendments to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), which entered into force on 18 January 2017, require that an expeditious and effective financial security system be put in place to ensure that shipowners provide compensation to seafarers and their families in the event of, inter alia, abandonment. In addition, under the 2014 amendments, it is mandatory for ships to carry aboard certificates and other evidence to demonstrate that the financial security system is in place.

A study by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) shows that a joint ILO/IMO database recorded 55 cases of seafarer abandonment from 18 January 2017 to 17 January 2018.

Condemning these abandonment cases, the ASA SC urges further ratification of the Convention and acceptance and enforcement of the 2014 Amendments as they will assure the protection of seafarers.

Comply with 2020 sulphur cap

Over the past few years, shipowners have had to contend with an increasingly complex regulatory regime, but one of the most significant regulations will only come into force on 1 January 2020.

The IMO's decision to implement a 0.50% sulphur cap on marine fuel with effect from 1 January 2020 is arguably one of the industry's most defining moments. A great deal of work has to be done at IMO to determine how the sulphur cap will be regulated and enforced so as to ensure a level playing field.

In view of the global sulphur cap, refiners and bunker suppliers must ensure that compliant and suitable fuels are made widely available well in advance of the implementation date, so that ships can bunker the new low sulphur fuel. Adequate fuel standards will be instrumental to

achieve this. In addition to owners, charterers and fuel purchasers will need to be made aware of the technical and operational issues.

The ASA SNEC will monitor developments at the IMO very closely and urged ASA members to work closely with their respective maritime administrations to ensure that the views of the shipping industry are considered at the IMO, including the upcoming intersessional meeting of the IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention & Response (PPR) this July.

The ASA SILC is concerned with insufficient planning and lack of understanding of safety and health implications which may hamper a smooth operational transition plan that cover crew training, tank cleaning and, on some ships, equipment and/or tank modifications.

Respect and maintain International conventions

The ASA SILC believes in respecting the International Conventions which are essential for global shipping's survival and sustainability. It is deeply concerned by decisions made by Spain and France to pass judgements or laws which contravene the statutes of the CLC and Fund Conventions, to which Spain and France are parties.

Such actions are clearly in contravention of international law and the Conventions, and will greatly affect trade and there would be costs to trade with these countries, due to uncertainties caused by their recent decisions.

Uphold free trade

The ASA SPC cautions ASA members of the growing threat of protectionism in the world including the new Indonesian cargo reservation regulation and the US Bill to restrict the transportation of certain energy exports. Mr Yuji Isoda, Chairman of the SPC, said, "The ASA has grave concerns regarding recent protectionist developments in the world." He emphasised the importance for the shipping industry to keep long-standing international practices and maritime free trade principles.

Enact the Hong Kong Convention

The ASA SRC reaffirmed the necessity to increase the number of yards compliant with the Hong Kong International Convention for Safe and Environmentally-Sound Recycling of Ships (HKC) to meet the steady demand for ship recycling globally. ASA SRC welcomes improvements at the Alang yards in India, where 70% are HKC-compliant, and others to be improved by Japanese Government ODA. Ratification of the HKC by both India and Japan is expected within the year and with the hope that China will similarly ratify in the near future. ASA SRC will proceed with joint action with global shipowner associations in ensuring early enactment of the HKC.

Mr Bhumindr Harinsuit, Vice-President of ASA (Asian Shipowners' Association) and Chairman of FASA (Federation of Asean Shipowners' Associations), was elected as the 28th ASA President. Mr John Lines, Chairman of MIAL (Maritime Industry Australia) was elected as the Vice-President of ASA.

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Editor's Note:

The Asian Shipowners' Association (ASA) is a voluntary organization of the shipowner associations of Australia, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea and the Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Associations comprising shipping associations of ASEAN countries. The aims of the ASA are to promote the interests of Asian shipowners. Between annual ASA meetings, the ongoing work is carried out by five Standing Committees: The Seafarers Committee (SC), the Ship Insurance and Liability Committee (SILC), the Safe Navigation and Environment Committee (SNEC), the Shipping Policy Committee (SPC), and the Ship Recycling Committee (SRC). It has been estimated that ASA shipowners and managers control and operate around 50% of the world's cargo carrying fleet.