

IMAREST

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Marine News

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THIRD TECHNICAL MEETING

On Wednesday 1 April 2009 a combined technical meeting with RINA will be held at Engineers Australia's auditorium on the ground floor, 8 Thomas Street, Chatswood. A paper entitled "**Rules & Classification of Naval Submarines**" will be presented by Dr Lars Gruenitz & George Spiliotis, Germanischer Lloyd. Refreshments will be served at 6 pm, then the lecture will commence at 6.30 pm.

The Classification of Naval Submarines is a relatively new concept, however it is slowly gaining momentum as navies and industry recognize its benefits and potential. It all started with the publishing of Rules for Naval Submarines by Germanischer Lloyd in 2005. In 2006 the first contract was signed and in 2007 the first submarine was classed for the South African Navy. This presentation will highlight the experience and benefits gained by this groundbreaking exercise. It also reports on recent trends in the involvement of a Classification Society in the supervision of construction and repair of naval submarines. Finally, it provides an overview of Germanischer Lloyd's rules for Naval Submarines.

CODE OF CONDUCT AGREED

A high-level meeting of 17 States from the Western Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea areas, has adopted a Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships. The meeting, convened by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in Djibouti from 26-30 January agreed to take concerted action against pirates, share information and set up special training to help address the problem. (Recent global statistics from the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) in October 2008: "Global piracy attacks are on the rise again with 581 crew members held hostage, nine killed in the nine months to the end of September. The latest figures show that seven others were missing and presumed dead.")

Opened by IMO Secretary-General, Efthimios E Mitropoulos, and the Prime Minister of Djibouti, Mr Dileita Mohamed Dileita, the meeting was attended by Ministers, Ambassadors, senior officials and legal experts from 17

States. Observers from other IMO Member States; U.N. specialist agencies and international and regional inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations also took part.

The Code of Conduct recognizes the extent of the problem of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the region and take concerted action to stop it. Governments agreed to:

- ❑ share and report relevant information through a system of national focal points and information centers;
- ❑ interdict ships suspected of engaging in acts of piracy or armed robbery against ships;
- ❑ ensure those involved in acts of piracy or armed robbery against ships are apprehended and prosecuted; and
- ❑ facilitate proper care, treatment and repatriation for seafarers, fishermen, other shipboard personnel and passengers subject to acts of piracy or armed robbery against ships, particularly those who have been subjected to violence.

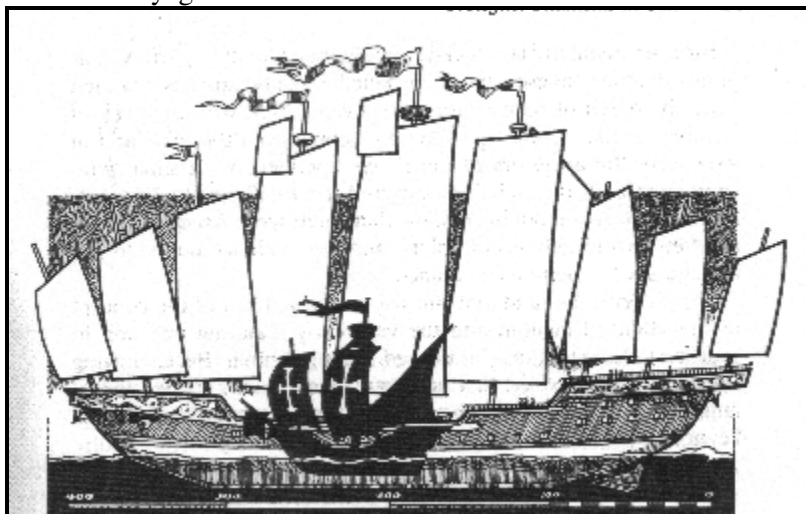
Participants intend to fully co-operate in the arrest, investigation and prosecution of offenders and rescue ships, people and property subjected to acts of piracy. The Code of Conduct covers the possibility of shared operations, such as nominating law enforcement or other authorized officials to embark in the patrol ships or aircraft of another signatory. The signatories intend to use piracy information exchange centers in Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen, to be located, respectively in the regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Mombasa, the Sub-Regional Coordination Centre of Dar es Salaam and a regional maritime information centre, which is being established in Sana'a.

The meeting also recommended the establishment of a regional training centre within the purposes of the Code of Conduct and, by means of a resolution, accepted with the appreciation the offer of Djibouti to host it. Each signatory intends to review its national legislation with a view towards ensuring that there are laws in place to criminalize piracy and armed robbery against ships, and adequate guidelines for the exercise of jurisdiction, conduct of investigations, and prosecution of alleged offenders.

The full text of an IMO communiqué on the subject is available at: www.imo.org under the heading of Press Briefings. (Briefing 03, 30 January 2009)

FLASHBACK ON SHIPPING

Compare the size of the Chinese treasure ships of the 1405 to 1433 era to that of the *Santa Maria* that Christopher Columbus used on his voyage to America in 1492.



A comparison of a Treasure ship and the *Santa Maria*
Source: Jan Adkins, 1993

The Yuan (Mongol) dynasty (1279-1368) built up the strength of the Chinese navy, however they failed in their assaults on Japan. Then the Yuan dynasty was overthrown in 1368 and the new Ming dynasty also wanted to assert Chinese sea power so another shipyard, named Dragon Bay Shipyard was built at the mouth of the Yangzi near the new capital of Nanjing; it consisted of seven 1,500 feet long building dry docks. In a long term project to support shipbuilding in wood, thousands of trees were planted at the nearby Purple Mountain and a school for foreign languages was established. It is claimed that the ships of that era, with the masts staggered off the ship's centerline and bamboo batten sails, were superior to the European vessels. The treasure ships also had balanced rudders and watertight compartments. The Chinese studied the Arab and Indian contributions to navigation and geography and then created their own star and sea charts as well as studying the tides and currents in the China and Indian Oceans. They measured time aboard ship by burning graded incense sticks whereas on European ships it was measured by an hour glass.

Zheng He was born in 1371 at Kungyang in the Yunnan Province and he followed the Islamic religion. Both his father and grandfather had made pilgrimages to Mecca so he had heard of foreign travel. Yunnan had been a stronghold of Mongol support so when the Ming dynasty captured the province, Zeng He was a boy of eleven years of age so he was subsequently castrated and placed as a eunuch in the household of Prince Zhu Di the fourth son of the Ming Emperor. At that time the Chinese Court consisted of two main groups of advisors; the Confucius scholar officials who were isolationists and considered that the land was the main basis for the emperor's prosperity, not the sea. The other group was the palace eunuchs who, besides attending to the harem, also served as palace administrators, often dealing out contracts and thus were more commercially minded. In 1402 Prince Zhu Di deposed his nephew on the throne and, in the ensuing battles, Zeng He distinguished himself during the capture of Nanjing. Zhu Di set about improving the infrastructure of China that included the repair of the Grand Canal and expanding the maritime capability. Then in 1405 he gave the Imperial Palace Eunuch, Zheng He, the title of Admiral of the Western Seas and sent him on a mission to the Western Ocean.

Because China had developed its culture in isolation, the rulers saw themselves as centre of the world and claimed that China was "the Middle Kingdom". The Ming maritime effort was primarily for prestige and diplomacy. Zheng He described how the Emperor, Zhu Di, had ordered him to sail to "the countries beyond the horizon"; his mission was to display the might of Chinese power and collect tribute from the "barbarians from beyond the seas". There appears to be no instructions to colonise the lands that they were to visit. Zheng He made seven major voyages for the emperor and visited 37 countries throughout Southeast Asia, the East Indies, India, Arabia and the east coast of Africa. Zheng He was also in control of the shipyards where a total of 1622 ships were built between 1405 and 1430. Zheng He organised seven major expeditions on an enormous scale as you will discover.

The first expedition, consisted of 317 ships with a total crew of 27,000, sailed from Nanjing in 1405, Louis Levathes in "When China Ruled the Seas" describes a treasure ship as being about 400 feet long by 160-165 feet wide; they were basically a larger model of the previously built "Fuchuan" boats. The Treasurer ships were subdivided into seventeen watertight compartments based on the multi-chambered structure of a bamboo stalk. They employed a balanced rudder, had nine staggered masts with square shaped sails made of red silk cloth. The second largest type of vessel was the eight-masted "horse ships" which were approx. 339 feet by 138 feet; horses were part of the tribute trade; these ships carried tribute goods and building materials that were used for repairs. The next biggest class was the "supply ships" which were about 257 feet by 115 feet, these were used to store food for the crew – the several books referenced on the Chinese voyages do not mention scurvy that was the scourge of European sailors. Then came the six masted "troop ships", 220 feet by 83 feet beam, which housed the fleet's large contingent of soldiers. Two kinds of warships were employed, the 165 feet Fuchuan boat and the faster oar-propelled ships about 125 feet long that terrorized pirates. The last type of vessel was the two tankers, that carried enough fresh water to supply the fleet for at least one month. The fleet endeavoured to berth at ports at least every ten days. The crew included 180 medical officers and pharmacologists to attend to the crew and also to collect herbs in foreign countries.

On the way home from his first voyage, He encountered a pirate fleet in the Strait of Malacca and they captured its leader and brought him back to China for trial. Zheng He was authorized to use the military forces of his expedition to support a local ruler, providing the local ruler was sympathetic to the Chinese cause, and, at other times, Zheng He gave support to a pretender's cause providing the Pretender acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chinese throne. An example of Zheng's military capacity was when he considered that King Alagakkonara of Ceylon had treated him contumely, Zheng He took military action, captured the King and brought him back to China to be tried by the Emperor. Under Zhu Di, the Ming Dynasty (1367-1644) reached the apex of its power. Emperor Zhu Di died in 1424 and his successor commissioned Zheng He to make his final seventh voyage in 1430; when Zheng He returned from that voyage in 1433, he was sixty-two years old and he died the following year. With a new Emperor on the throne a court favourite wanted to continue Zheng He's voyages but he was turned down because China was fighting another land war and the court officials destroyed the logs of Zheng He and so we only know of the voyages from the accounts that his crew members kept and also from archaeological finds.

NUCLEAR SUBMARINES COLLIDE

The UN Foundation's news service, UN Wire, reported recently that on the 2 or 3 February two submarines – one British, one French and both armed with nuclear warheads – collided in the Atlantic Ocean. The report said the incident was characterized as a kind of undersea “fender bender” without any discharge of nuclear material and no loss of life. The French and British governments confirmed the outlines of the incident after news had leaked to the media.

The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, later made the following statement. “Two submerged SSBN, one French and the other UK, were conducting routine national patrols in the Atlantic Ocean’ Recently, the two submarines came into contact at very low speed. Both submarines remained safe and no injuries occurred. We can confirm that the capability remained unaffected and there has been no compromise to nuclear safety. HMS Vanguard returned safely to Faslane under her own power on 14 February.

AMC'S TRANSPORT FORUM A SUCCESS

The success of the Australian Maritime College's recent Maritime Transport Industry Forum 2009 will see the event run on a biennial basis. The 16-17 February forum saw 100 delegates from industry, government and training meet in Tasmania to discuss a range of issues facing the national maritime industry. Plenary sessions and smaller panel discussions ran throughout the two days.

According to AMC's National Centre for Ports and Shipping Director, Captain John Lloyd, the event created the perfect environment in which to make headway on issues from each sector. “It was a tremendous success. We had people here from all sectors of the maritime community – regulators, ship owners, ship operators, surveyors, people from education and we managed to bring them all into the same environment to thrash out some of the important issues facing the maritime sector right now. First of all this was a review of the progress we've made since the forum in 2007. The last one was two years ago and we think that's about the right interval because some really important actions came out of it for us as trainers and for informing the rest of the shipping industry about areas such as alternative use of fuels, training and certification structures and so on. We've been able to discuss all those issues and another forum in two years will be able to inform us as to where we should be going for the next two years after that.”

He said finding the best process for industry input into coastal shipping was a major point to come from the forum. “One of the key things is that the government undertook a review of coastal shipping in 2008 and it's importance that we can all be consulted in the solutions for that in how we can reach the best answers for Australia”. A company called Thompson Clarke is engaged in that process and this forum gave people the opportunity to discuss they can best contribute to that process in the future.

For further information contact Patrick Cranny (Communication Officer, AMC, phone: (03) 63354484, mobile: 0429 117 000, email: p.cranny@amc.edu.au)

NEXT TECHNICAL MEETING

06-05-09 “**Resistance of high-speed Transom-stern Craft**”, - Simon Robards, NSW Waterways Authority