

Newsletter

Volume: 15 No: 1 Jan 2012



Newcastle Visit - Harbour tour on E. C. Close

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NI 40th Anniversary event - Newcastle Anti-Piracy – President's letter **Merchant Navy memorial service 2011** Pacific 2012

People and Contacts Ready, set, ECDIS! Dates for your calendar



Carnival Australia is proud to support the Nautical Institute and in particular the NI's commitment to help drive continuous improvement of professional marine standards.

Welcome to 2012

So, another year has come and gone – and what better way to welcome 2012 than with a visit from NI Vice-President Michael Barritt who will be attending Pacific 2012? We look forward to Mike's visit, with a tentative schedule included here (see Pacific 2012, page 3).

But before we get too engrossed in activities for 2012, we should look back at the successful events of 2011 – and NI SE Australia branch had a busy year! A key event for the branch was the 40th Anniversary event held in Newcastle – with special guest NI Honorary Fellow Peter Morris. Some other events are provided here, while a number were reported through e-mail updates.

The AGM continued to focus on membership, as well as how the branch can provide opportunities for engagement of our members. We have also begun including our colleagues in Tasmania through e-mail updates. You will also see some input from NI colleagues in the Northern Territority, which does not have a branch at this time. Ideas on events and opportunities for members to exchange ideas are welcomed - please send to sec@nisea.org. Don't forget to review the revised membership criteria and promote the NI to those who are eligible - all areas of maritime professionals, including VTS Personnel and other shore positions. As always, the new year is the perfect time to review your status in NI and make sure your membership is up to date check out the on-line services www.nautinst.org - have your membership number handy and set up your password to gain access - and ensure your e-mail and snail mail addresses are correct – this site is where I go to get the addresses for mailings, so it if isn't right you might miss out on important NI information!

As always, your contributions to the branch newsletter are most welcome! Please make sure you forward these to sec@nisea.org. Thanks to Roger Womersley, Mike Wileman (NT member) and John Gates for their contributions to this newsletter. I also want to thank Prasanthen Anthipar for his contribution on Capt. Henrik Kurt Carlsen, which will be included in the next newsletter – so stay tuned!

Jillian Carson-Jackson Secretary, NI SE Australia Branch

People and Contacts

The NI SE Australia Branch Committee 2011-2012:

Chairman – Mike Drake mike.drake@carnivalaustralia.com Vice-Chairman – David Bendall david@maritrade.com.au

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Committee Members:

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New / change NI members 2011

The following NI SE Australia members joined NI during 2011:

Peter Bremner – Associate Fellow
Peter Cole – Associate Fellow
Josephine Clark – Member
Robert Young – Member
John Gates – Member
Rmanathan Shankar – Member
Adam Roberts – Associate Fellow
Paul Ware – Associate Fellow
Mike Doney – Associate Fellow
Christy Johnbosco Antony – Member
Charles Simson - Member

Welcome! Please verify your contact details on the NI HQ website, to make sure my records are correct!

Comings and Goings...

What milestones are being reached by our members? I can't be aware of them all, so please send them to me for inclusion in the newsletter. To be included in the next newsletter, make sure they are received by e-mail at sec@nisea.org

<u>NI Fellowship</u> – Congratulations to Michael Squires, Committee member of NI SE Australia, on his recent election as Fellow of the Nautical Institute!

Pacific 2012 - NI HQ visit!

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Pacific 2012 will be here before you know it – and with it a number of additional conferences. For the full listing of events, check out the Pacific 2012 website at: \www.pacific2012.com.au

In addition to the excellent presentations, simulation demonstration and industry display, we will be welcoming NI Vice-President Michael Barritt to Australia for the event. Mike will be arriving in Sydney on Jan 29, participating in the event, and then coming to Canberra for Feb. 3-4, leaving Australia from Sydney on Feb. 5th. A short visit, but we hope to have an opportunity for Mike to engage with the membership as much as possible during his time here.

In addition, the Committee will be participating in as many events at Pacific 2012 as possible, promoting the work of the Institute and benefits of membership. Active NI SE Australia Committee members Justin Jones and Ashley Papp will be engaged during the event. Keep an eye out for NI members at 2012!



Useful stuff!

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Thanks to regular Newsletter contributor Roger Womersley for these bits of useful information – appropriate to the summer season!

Goodbye Fruit Flies

To get rid of pesky fruit flies, take a small glass, fill it 1/2' with Apple Cider Vinegar and 2 drops of dish washing liquid; mix well. You will find those flies drawn to the cup and gone forever!

Get Rid of Ants

Put small piles of cornmeal where you see ants. They eat it, take it 'home', can't digest it so it kills them. It may take a week or so, especially if it rains, but it works and you don't have the worry about pets or small children being harmed!

Piracy – letter from NI President

A letter from NI President James Robinson was forwarded to membership via e-mail late in 2011. The letter highlighted the fact that the members of the NI have watched for a number of year now as the piracy problem on the Horn of Africa, in the Gulf of Aden and in the Indian Ocean continues unabated. As of 23rd September 2011, 375 people are being held hostage on the coast of Somalia of which 284 are merchant seafarers and 91 are fishermen and crews of sailing vessels. 683 people have been released in 2011, presumably on payment of ransom.

Although the deployment of the various navies under different command structures is having some success at containing or displacing the activities of the pirates, the letter notes that the navies are restricted by their huge area of operations versus the number of warships available and by the rules of engagement under which they must operate. The temptation to blame naval colleagues must be resisted as military forces may only operate under the rules of engagement handed down to them by their governments.

The full letter is reproduced at the end of this newsletter, and members are encouraged to forward copies of this letter to local and national Ministers of Transport, or other appropriate political representative, requesting more action at the UN to tackle the political implications of piracy, including the need to tackle the political problems of Somalia / increased intervention.

In addition, branches are encouraged to hold a conference or seminar on the subject, or find other ways to raise awareness of the need to support seafarers in piracy waters. Your thoughts on what we, in SE Australia, might be able to do would be welcomed (sec@nisea.org).

Newspaper weeds away

Start putting in your plants, work the nutrients in your soil Wet newspapers, put layers around the plants overlapping as you go cover with mulch and forget about weeds. Weeds will get through some gardening plastic they will not get through wet newspapers.

No more cold pizza and warm beer...

Heat up leftover pizza in a nonstick skillet on top of the stove, set heat to med-low and heat till warm. This keeps the crust crispy. No soggy micro pizza.

Merchant Navy Memorial Service

The NI participated in this annual service, laying a wreath on behalf of the branch. The following is the text of the address provided by Mick Uzzell, RADM, RAN.



NI Wreath as placed by Ashley Papp and Jillian Carson-Jackson

December 7 this year marks the 70th anniversary of the raid on Pearl Harbor, an effort to curtail the US Navy's ability to influence the Sea Lines of Communication in South and East Asia that were so critical to Imperial Japan's resource demands and industrial expansionist agenda.

This event brought a new area of action to a war that had started in Europe two years previous.

The ability to maintain Atlantic Sea Lines of Control in order to transport the resources and personnel required by the Allies in that arena had been a constant focus of Allied commanders.

The Merchant ships of the allied forces carried the brunt of the wartime responsibility to utilise the sea roads, to maintain that vital, ongoing supply of equipment, commodities, and food to the fighting forces and the populations of the nations under threat.

Following the Pearl Harbour raid, Japanese forces moved quickly south and by April 1942 had occupied the Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaya, Singapore the Dutch East Indies, Northern New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and several other islands in the Pacific.

Singapore fell on 15 February 1942 and on 19 February 1942 Japan launched its first bombing raid on Darwin.



Mike Uzzell, RADM RAN

Imperial Navy vessels, aircraft, and personnel involved in the attack on Pearl Harbor were involved.

The Love Commission suggested that "approximately 250" people were killed and 400 injured in the Darwin raids.

Peter Grose, in his 2001 book 'An Awkward Truth', places the number of casualties at 292.

As had been the objective of the raid, the port facilities were extensively damaged and 8 ships were sunk, including two Australian merchant ships, the *Neptuna*, of the Burns Philp line, and *Zelandia*, of the Huddart Parker line.

As the Japanese invasion forces moved south in late 1941 and early 1942, a focus of the allied command was the protection of civilians and the logistic task of moving troops, weapons, vehicles,

munitions, food, and fuel into the theatres of action.

In March 1942 General McArthur was ordered to establish a base in Australia from which to undertake allied operations aimed at halting and reversing Japanese advances.

Regarding the Merchant Navy's role in these operations General McArthur said:

'They have brought us our life blood, and have paid for it with some of their own. I saw them bombed in New Guinea and the Philippine's ports. When it was humanly possible, when their ships were not blown out from under them by bombs or torpedoes, they delivered their cargoes to us who needed them so badly. In war it is performance that counts.'

With war looming in the late 1930's the situation that faced the Merchant Navy had been foreseen by the British Admiralty.

Accordingly, it embarked on a program to arm merchant ships for their own defence.

This arrangement was referred to as Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships, or DEMS, under which armaments were fitted to most merchant ships over 1200 tons.

Typically, this armament comprised low-angle guns mounted as defence against surfaced submarines and high-angle guns and rifle-calibre machine guns for defence against air attack.

The program also involved assigning a number of naval rating gunners to the ships.

The ratings were assisted by gunnery crews drawn from the ship's company that were provided with a three-day merchant seamen gunnery training course.

Those so trained received an extra payment of sixpence per day.

The story of DEMS has been recorded by Alex Marcus in his 1986 book titled 'DEMS'.

This book also provides a most fascinating and candid account of the role and activities of the merchant navy in World War 2.

Australia participated fully in the DEMS program - over 800 merchant ships being defensively armed in Australian ports after the outbreak of World War 2.

About 1000 Australian DEMS gunners were posted to these ships, which were flagged to a wide range of allied countries including Australia, Britain, France, Greece, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and the USA.

One of the first ships to be armed in Australia was the British freighter *Derrymore*, requisitioned from McCowen & Gross.

Two DEMS gunners were assigned to this ship which was engaged in worldwide trades carrying cargoes in support of the allied war effort.

In early February 1942 the *Derrymore* found herself in Singapore delivering military equipment.

When she sailed on the night of 11 February she had on board about 200 Australian Air Force personnel, some of whom had been wounded and were recovering in the local hospital.

A few days later the *Derrymore* was torpedoed and sunk by a Japanese submarine. Survivors were picked up by the corvette HMAS *Ballarat*.

Among the survivors was an RAAF fighter pilot named John Gorton – later to become Prime Minister of Australia.

Another ship to which Australian DEMS gunners were posted was the Blue Star liner *Melbourne Star*.

One of these two gunners was killed in a Malta convoy, and another was killed eighteen months later when the ship was torpedoed and sunk off the Azores with the loss of 117 lives.

The Shaw Savill liner *Ceramic* suffered a tragic end on a voyage from Liverpool to Australia.

She was torpedoed and sunk off the Azores with the loss of 660 passengers and crew which included three Australian DEMS gunners.

The only survivor was taken prisoner.

Other ships that were defensively armed in Australia included the *Queen Elisabeth* and *Queen Mary* which were engaged in the deployment of allied troops.

These ships were armed to such an extent that they resembled armed merchant cruisers.

Australian passenger ships like the *Kanimbla (requisitioned from* McIlwraith McEacharn), *Duntroon (requisitioned from Melbourne Steam)*, *Manoora* (requisitioned from Adelaide Steam) and *Westralia (requisitioned from Huddart Parker)* were also converted to armed merchant cruisers.

These were not trivial fitments; Westralia was fitted with seven 6-inch guns and two 3-inch anti-

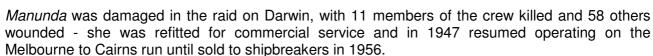
aircraft guns.

As an indication of the esteem it holds for the efforts of those marvellous ships and their magnificent crews, the Royal Australian Navy has since Commissioned ships carrying the names of Kanimbla, Manoora, and Westralia - the ship's companies of those ships have been well aware of their armed merchant cruiser lineage.

As well, there were six converted passenger liners operating as Hospital Ships in the Pacific Region in World War II.

Two of those, *Manunda* and *Wanganella*, were both

requisitioned from the Huddart Parker line, Australian Registered and crewed.



Wanganella, was returned to Huddart Parker Ltd late in 1945 and was sent to Melbourne for refit, returning her to her previous status as a luxury passenger liner.

The best known, the British-flagged Centaur, was torpedoed off Brisbane on 14 May 43.

Other Australian-flagged merchant ship losses off the Australian coast included:

Three bulk carriers, the *Iron Chieftain, Iron Knight*, and *Iron Crown* – all lost in torpedo attacks.

The small freighter Wollongbar - torpedoed and sunk off Coffs Harbour with the loss of 27 of her crew of 32, and

The Kowarra - sunk on passage to Brisbane with the loss of 21 of her crew of 32.

The efforts of these and those others that were lost were, for years, largely unrecognised.

Some 44 years after the end of World War 2 an inquiry into the Needs of Australian Mariners was undertaken by the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission, Ms Jocelyn McGirr.

In her report she noted that, taking into account conditions of service and the loss of life, the experiences of Australian merchant mariners was comparable with the experience of veterans of the Australian Defence Forces.



This led to Australian merchant mariners and their dependents receiving the same rights and benefits under the Veterans' Entitlement Act as veterans of the ADF.

In 1994, when the legislation was being processed through Parliament, the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Honourable Con Sciacca said:

> 'The Government's decision aives lona overdue recognition of the role played by Australian mariners during War 2 and World hazardous conditions experienced'.



Ashely Papp and Jillian Carson-Jackson after the service

It is difficult to put a number of Australian merchant mariners killed in World War II.

Seamen moved from ship to ship and went all over the world.

Australians were present in the Mediterranean and the North Atlantic convoys, while many of the merchant seamen killed in Australian waters were of other nationalities.

Available records show that during World War 2 around 5000 Merchant Navy ships were lost and 50,000 merchant mariners died.

British registered ships bore the brunt of these losses.

Against this background it is appropriate to recall, in closing, the words of His Majesty King George VI when describing the task of the Merchant Navy in wartime. He said:

the task of the Merchant Navy is no less essential to the peoples existence than that allotted to the Navy. Army and Air Force, and indeed none of them would be able to operate without these brave men'.

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The NI SE Aus Branch is pleased to receive sponsorship from our members





www.carnivalaustralia.com

Are you a maritime professional?



The presence and influence of The Nautical Institute confers professional standing on seafarers and those with nautical qualifications. Seaways is the monthly journal which links members and provides an opportunity to keep up-to-date and share knowledge.

The NI has changed its membership criteria in order to be truly representative of the maritime profession... There has never been a better time to promote professionalism in the maritime industry! The membership changes are available on the NI website.

Check out the NI website for all the details (www.nautinst.org). You can even register using the new on-line system!

Ready, set, ECDIS!

Thanks to John Gates, Hunter TAFE for forwarding on the information, including an excerpt from the UK P&I Club highlighting the implications of ECDIS

SOLAS Chapter V

The amendments to SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 19 – Carriage Requirements for Shipborne Navigational Systems and Equipment came into effect on 1 January 2011.

The amendments to the SOLAS Convention now clearly include ECDIS systems within the definition of nautical charts and publications with section 2.4 stating that "An Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) is also accepted as meeting the chart carriage requirements of this subparagraph." A new paragraph 2.10 further identifies a requirement for ships engaged on international voyages to be fitted with an ECDIS system under the implementation schedule.

ECDIS / ECS

An area which often leads to confusion is the simple question of what makes one system an ECDIS and the other an ECS (Electronic Chart System). The answer to this question is simply that one system complies fully with the IMO ECDIS performance standards and can be accepted as meeting the requirements of SOLAS Chapter V regulation 19 and the other does not.

These requirements are:

- The ECDIS equipment must be type approved to the performance standards as outlined in IMO Resolution A. 817 (19) as amended by MSC 64(67) & MSC 86(70) relating to back up arrangements.
- The system must use official ENC data (Vectorised Electronic Navigational Charts) to IHO S57 standard, which must be supplied by or authorised by a National Hydrographic Office. (ENC data to be corrected weekly)
- The vessel must have an adequate back-up system. This may be another ECDIS system or paper charts.
- ECDIS equipment having Raster Chart Display System (RCDS) capability may operate as a primary aid to navigation in the RCDS mode. (charts to be corrected on a weekly basis)
- When ECDIS equipment is used in RCDS mode, it must be used in conjunction with an appropriate folio of paper charts. The definition of 'appropriate' is to be decided by national administrations.

STCW - Statutory training

Under the provisions of the STCW 95 Code, general training obligations relating to the use of ECDIS exist.

The degree of knowledge and competency concerning the use of charts indicates that navigational officers are to posses "a thorough knowledge of and ability to use navigational charts and publications" along with the ability to show skill and ability in the preparation and conduct of a passage.

The IMO Model Course 1.27 The Operational Use of Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) is regarded as setting the minimum requirements for training. The Manila amendments to the STCW Convention, scheduled to enter into force on 1 January 2012 (i.e. now in force) indicate that both generic and type specific training is required for ECDIS operation.

ECDIS training

ECDIS training is offered at a number of venues in Australia and Australasia. For full listings of courses, check the appropriate websites. John Gates, who provided the highlights for this article, notes that Hunter TAFE has a number of courses — visit their website for more information: www.hunter.tafensw.edu.au

ECDIS training?

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Where else is ECDIS training being offered? A quick search of the internet provided the following websites for further information:

AMC Search:

http://www.amcsearch.com.au/courses/integrated-marine-simulator/electronic-chart-display-information-system/

Great Barrier Reef International Marine College (Cairns):

http://www.gbrimc.com.au/index.php/

and, yes, someone has created "ECDIS limited":

http://ecdis.org/welcome/(registered in England and Wales)

Please provide your thoughts on ECDIS implementation, including training at sec@nisea.org.

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ECDIS acronyms

Test your knowledge of ECDIS acronyms (answers on page 10):

ECDIS ECS ENG RNC RCDS IBS NACOS

2011 - Nautical Institute 40th Anniversary Event Newcastle, NSW

On a wet and windy October day, members of NI SE Australia gathered in Newcastle to celebrate the NI 40th anniversary. With sponsorship from Newcastle Port Corporation branch members from Canberra, Sydney and the Newcastle / Hunter Valley area were treated to a port tour on the E.C.Close (pilot launch) and then a tour of the Maritime Centre, before settling into a scrumptious meal at Customs House.

The harbour tour managed to get the best of the weather, with the rain only coming after the tour disembarked. Noting the significant growth in the harbour, both outgoing Harbour Master Tim Turner, and incoming Harbour Master Peter Dwyer, provided an excellent commentary throughout the tour.

Following the harbour tour, the Hon. Peter Morris treated participants to a personalised, guided tour of the Maritime Centre. Following a welcome hot tea, Peter provided insights into the maritime history of Newcastle. A moving and informative session, including a rare opportunity to see Peter's own seamans papers!

Following the visit, we made our way to Customs House where we partook in an excellent meal in, of course, the Harbour Master's Room! Peter provided an excellent talk, ranging from his time in office as Transport Minister to a number of maritime related anecdotes.

During the event a raffle was held for both existing and new members – with the following winners:

<u>'Existing' members draw</u> – a case of Hunter Valley Wine - for members who brought a 'potential' member to the event – Iain Steverson (who then passed the award to Malcolm Goodfellow. (I believe the prize ended up being provided to Peter as a further token of our appreciation for his ongoing support of the maritime industry).

<u>'New' members draw</u> – one year's NI membership (assuming membership conditions are met) - for 'potential' members to encourage joining the institute – Luke Redman (we are working on getting his membership sorted!)

In addition there were two door prizes:

Door prize 1 – book – From paper charts to ECDIS (Harry Gale) – Robin Heath

Door prize 2 - NI Tie Pin - Glenn Hunter



harbour tour; Peter Morris with his maritime documents; Peter and Mike at the Maritime Centre and at Customs House, Harbour Master Room.

Some General Dates for your calendars...

2nd Wednesday of the month 1830 hrs

Sydney Branch of the Company of Master Mariners Of Australia Standing invitation to members

NSW Sports Club, Hunter Street, Sydney

Contact Barclay Ross (02 9975 5578) or Jillian Carson-Jackson (sec@nisea.org)

2nd Wednesday of Feb, May, Aug and Nov – 1830 hrs Joint NI / CoMMA meeting

NSW Sports Club, Hunter Street, Sydney

Contact Barclay Ross (02 9975 5578) or Jillian Carson-Jackson (sec@nisea.org)

Melbourne Branch of the Company of Master Mariners of Australia Standing invitation to members

4th Wednesday of the month 1830 hrs

RACV City Club, 501 Bourke Street, Melbourne

Contact Ms. Alex Evered (<u>secmel@mastermariners.org.au</u>) or phone 03 9699

3332)

Last Wednesday of the month 1230 hrs

South Australia Branch of the Company Of Master Mariners of Australia Standing invitation to members

Largs Pier Hotel, 198 Esplanade, Largs Bay

Contact: Howard Pronk (08 84475924 / 0417 714 649)

Note – if you have an event or date for calendar, please provide prior to the deadline for input to the next newsletter. Remember, this is your newsletter!

Please be aware that the NSW Sports Club not only wishes to have advance notice of numbers attending meetings but will also charge for any "no shows" – cost for the excellent, fully served three course meal is \$35.00. The Sports Club is quite strict about this and so, please, if you would like to attend a meeting advise Barclay Ross (barclay.r@optusnet.com.au) or Jillian Carson-Jackson (jillian.carson-jackson@amsa.gov.au) by the 1200 on the Thursday before the meeting. Realizing that unforseen events often arise, should you find that that you cannot attend please advise Barclay by 0930 on the Monday before the meeting and the "no show" charge should be avoided.

ECDIS acronyms

To the state of th

Diamond Princess – photo courtesy of Mike Wileman, NI member, Darwin, NT

From page 8

ECDIS Electronic Chart Display and Information System

ECS Electronic Chart System

ENC Electronic Navigational Chart

RNC Raster Navigational Chart

RCDS Raster Chart Display System

IBS Integrated Bridge System

NACOS Navigation and Control System

and a last note.... Manilla Amendments (STCW)

A quick guide to seafarers on the IMO STCW Manilla amendments: www.marisec.org/quickguide.htm.pdf



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28th September 2011

An open letter to each Branch and Member of the Nautical institute

We have watched for a number of year now as the piracy problem on the Horn of Africa, in the Gulf of Aden and in the Indian Ocean continues unabated. We have waited for the various initiatives taken at international and regional level to yield fruit and show some signs of coming to grips with this problem. As of 23rd September 2011, 375 people are being held hostage on the coast of Somalia of which 284 are merchant seafarers and 91 are fishermen and crews of sailing vessels. 683 people have been released in 2011, presumably on payment of ransom. As the Monsoon subsides we can expect a new wave of pirate attacks.

The deployment of the various navies under different command structures is having some success at containing or displacing the activities of the pirates but the navies are restricted by their huge area of operations versus the number of warships available and by the rules of engagement under which they must operate. The temptation to blame our naval colleagues must be resisted as military forces may only operate under the rules of engagement handed down to them by their governments. At least those governments are making a contribution to the naval effort.

The IMO continues to try highlight the issue and to raise it with the UN. It has made "Piracy; Orchestrating the Response" the theme for its activities of this year. Various countermeasures have been proposed to try to prevent the pirates gaining access to vessels. However when thwarted the pirates will look for a softer target and ultimately will seek a tactic to overcome those measures.

The emergence of private security parties and commercial escort ships while having a deterrent effect is viewed with some concern for legal reasons including the status of the master of a vessel with embarked armed civilian personnel.

As President of the Nautical Institute I have raised this issue (and the issue of Criminalisation) whenever I have addressed an audience, whenever I have given an interview and whenever I have spoken with a person of influence. On each occasion my message has been the same. The issues of piracy and criminalisation are not natural causes for the Institute, being as we are primarily devoted to the advancement of nautical science and the professional development of our members. We cannot, however, ignore piracy and criminalisation as they are doing so much damage to our profession and the shipping industry. We know that the problem of piracy is the symptom of a political problem on land. Treating the symptom while ignoring the disease may bring some relief but it will not cure the disease. The resolution of the problem of piracy rests with the

governments of the international community perhaps working through the United Nations dealing with the political problem in Somalia. I remain convinced that it will not be resolved at sea.

I am now of the opinion that the Nautical Institute, with our branches scattered across the globe, should become more proactive in the fight against piracy. I have been able to obtain, through the good offices of the EU Anti-piracy Operation EUNAVFOR, the number seafarers, whose nationality is known, who were held for ransom on the Horn of Africa on the 23rd of September 2011. These figures do not tally with the total number of merchant seafarers held as it is not possible to verify the nationality of all.

See table below

| Nationality | Number |
|-------------|--------|
| Filipino | 33 |
| Indian | 30 |
| Chinese | 18 |
| Syrian | 18 |
| Algerian | 17 |
| Georgian | 15 |
| Indonesian | 14 |
| Vietnamese | 12 |
| Italian | 11 |
| Myanmar | 11 |
| Yemini | 9 |
| Ukrainian | 8 |
| Thai | 5 |
| Ghanaian | 4 |
| Korean | 4 |
| Romanian | 3 |
| Turkish | 3 |

| Danish | 2 |
|---------------|---|
| Pakistani | 2 |
| South African | 2 |
| Sudanese | 2 |
| Jordanian | 1 |
| Russian | 1 |
| Sri Lankan | 1 |
| Taiwanese | 1 |

We have branches in many of the countries mentioned in the table. We have members in many of the others. It is now time for our branches and members to alert our public representatives (and the media if appropriate) that their citizens have been kidnapped while doing their jobs and are being held against their will in a foreign country. The period of their captivity will range from weeks to almost a year. They are being held in very difficult conditions and there is no way of confirming their wellbeing but we suspect that many are being ill treated. Some have been put to death. Those that remain will not be released until their captors have been paid large ransoms.

While acknowledging the initiatives of the IMO and the work being done by the international navies, the problem of piracy is not waning. The total ransom paid in 2011 will be double that paid in 2010. This impacts on the shipping industry and the world economy. It appears, however, that the international community is content to continue to pay although the sums involved in financing pirate operations and the assets of the recipients of ransoms might be open to financial investigation by the international police or intelligence communities.

My main concern however is the cost to our seafaring colleagues and their families. The continuation of this level of human suffering has now become a shame on us all because of the apparent lack of a cohesive response to solve, rather than just contain, the problem. Continuing to treat the symptom will no longer suffice.

I call on all our branch committees and our individual members to resolve to take some action to alert their governments to the plight of their citizens. It is a government's responsibility to protect its citizens and the fact that the people being held to ransom are seafarers does not absolve governments of that responsibility. We must do all that we can to ensure that the plight of our seafaring colleagues and our fellow countrymen and women is not forgotten.

I ask each branch to resolve to do one or all of the following;

Forward this letter to your Minister of Transport and local political representative requesting more action at the UN to tackle the political problems of Somalia and or increased naval intervention;

Hold a conference or seminar on the subject to raise awareness of the issues and develop cooperation and an exchange of ideas with your navy;

Raise the awareness of the need for support of seafarers in piracy waters before, during and after capture and support for their families during the incarceration period.

I remain available to assist in any was possible to keep this issue to the forefront of public debate.

J.A Robinson

Captain J.A. Robinson DSM FNI Irish Navy (Retd)

President

The Nautical Institute