The Bahamas FLAG

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAHAMAS MARITIME AUTHORITY

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Minister committed to maritime affairs



The appointment by Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham of Dion Foulkes as the Bahamian Minister of Maritime Affairs and Labour in May last year has shone a welcome spotlight on the country's maritime industry and on the increasing importance of the Bahamas Maritime Authority.

The Bahamas Register was set up 30 years ago and the BMA is now the third largest ship registry in the world but Minister Foulkes has ambitious plans for its future and that of The Bahamas shipping industry. "We are convinced that with a very aggressive programme of ship recruitment to the Register, we can continue to grow." he said. "My job is to give The Bahamas a much higher world profile which will in turn attract more revenue to our economy." Minister Foulkes said that given time and the right approach, maritime affairs could very well rival the financial services industry as one of the most important pillars of the economy. "Until now, we have not tapped into the potential of our shipping industry," he said. "I intend to upgrade docking facilities throughout the islands and to focus on the transhipment of goods through the country's ports. The whole question of inter-island shipping, shipping from Latin America through the Panama Canal and the use of The Bahamas as a transhipment point can have a direct effect on the prosperity of Nassau based businesses as well as on the rest of the Family Islands and will therefore play a major role in our economy."

A \$300 million expansion of the Freeport Container Port is planned which will provide an additional 300 new jobs. The BMA fully supports the new Minister in his drive to boost the country's maritime industry.

Bravery awards for Bahamian crews

Two officers from The Bahamas registered *Searose G* have been awarded the inaugural 2007 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea. Second Officer Mustafa Topiwala and Captain Zvonimir Ostric (who was on the vessel as onboard trainer at the time of the incident) displayed exceptional bravery in rescuing survivors from the sunken vessel *Teklivka* in the eastern Mediterranean.



Searose G Rescue Team

Searose G was bound for the Suez Canal with a full cargo of oil when it responded to *Teklivka*'s distress call. The ship had already sunk when they reached the scene and they found a partially deflated liferaft, full of oil and water with several crew on board. The prevailing weather conditions were appalling with force 8/9 winds and high seas breaking over the deck of the vessel. Since it was unsafe to launch a rescue craft, the liferaft was secured alongside. The oil soaked survivors were too weak to help themselves and had to be physically hauled onto the deck by the crew of *Searose G* despite the risk of being swept overboard.

Eventually two survivors were left but in such a weakened state that Capt Topiwala and Capt Ostric climbed down into the liferaft to try and rescue them. Sadly one man died but nine others survived.

The two officers were nominated by The Bahamas and by the International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA).

The Bahamas nomination included this statement "...the two crew who descended the ladder and entered the sea and liferaft to rescue the remaining survivors deserve particular commendation for their courage, particularly as they did so voluntarily in a situation when no reasonable order to do so would be contemplated."

Heroism at sea was also the theme of The Lloyd's List / Nautical Institute's Shipmaster of the Year Award which went jointly to Captain Youvraj Kapoor, Master of the Searose G and Captain Ostric, Senior Master of B+H Equimar, for their respective roles in the Teklivka rescue.

The award recognises and values the ultimate responsibility of the Master for the safety of the ship, crew and cargo carried, as well as for the safety of life at sea. Capt Ostric assisted the Master throughout the rescue operation and took command of the deck crew once the liferaft was sighted.

Director's message



It is now 30 years since the first ship was registered in The Bahamas and more than ten years since the BMA was established in 1995. It is no accident that the Bahamas Register is now the third largest in the world and continues to be the Flag of choice for quality shipowners.

But growth takes time, persistence and professionalism, And above all we must maintain our reputation and brand so that we are always in a premier position when ship registration is being decided. That is why I am delighted that Dion Foulkes, the Minister for Labour and Maritime Affairs has firmly set his sights on expanding the Registry and raising the profile of the Bahamian shipping industry. We at the BMA fully support him in his drive to change the nation's perception of shipping and to improve The Bahamas port facilities, which will provide more job opportunities in the industry.

The Bahamas Register has a steadily expanding fleet because shipowners know that our standards are extremely high and now that we have welcomed the China Classification Society and the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping onto the BMA's recognised list we can offer the added advantage of more choice about where to build as well as the opportunity to take full advantage of the rapid growth in Asian and Russian shipbuilding and the boom in global shipping.

Radical overhaul needed at IMO says Bahamas

Traditional maritime nations could lose some of their influence and some newer flag states gain more, under radical proposals to reform voting procedures at the IMO Council.

The Bahamas has submitted a paper to the Secretary General that sets out a number of options including a proposal to end elections to the Council and to open up membership to all countries. The Bahamas is an elected member of the Council but has felt for some time that membership is no longer representative of the world's leading maritime nations.

According to Captain Douglas Bell, BMA's Deputy Director (Maritime Affairs), a large number of observers attend Council sessions but under current rules, are unable to vote. "If an election system is to continue, we must find a way to ensure a more equal geographical spread of members," he said.

Amver-Assisted Rescue at Sea Award

Anthemis, a Bahamian flagged aframax, from Stamos Steamship Company was one of last year's Amver-Assisted Rescue at Sea Award winners. Supported by Lloyd's List since 1999, this award has become one of the most prestigious international awards for the crew of a vessel participating in the AMVER global-ship-reporting system, who have shown extraordinary courage and seamanship.

While sailing to Philadelphia, and about 500 miles from the Bermuda islands, Anthemis received a distress message from S.Y. Rochelle. The master, Captain Voldymir Kurash, immediately altered course. At the scene, Capt Kurash found four Canadians onboard the yacht which had lost engine as well as sail power and had a damaged hull. Strong winds and wave heights of seven to eight metres made for a difficult rescue operation.

The first person was rescued after only two hours but it took another nine hours to attach wire lines to the yacht and bring it into the shelter of



Anthemis Rescue Operation

Anthemis so that the remaining survivors could be brought onboard.

When the rescue mission was over the master with considerable modesty commented, "All four persons on board. They are in good health and having tea and sandwiches. Next port of call is Philadelphia in about two days."

Tsakos wins Tanker Company of the Year

Tsakos Energy Navigation (TEN) won the Lloyd's List Greek Shipping Awards Tanker Company of the Year 2006 Award at a ceremony in London. Sponsored by ABN AMRO, the award recognised an outstanding year for TEN.

The company, one of BMA's leading Greek shipowners, invested more than one billion dollars in its fleet last year including one of the largest fleet acquisitions, in which TEN took over Western Petroleum's nine ultra modern ice class 1A aframax and handymax product tankers. TEN has come a long way since it first went public on the Oslo stock exchange in 1993 with just four vessels. It now has a fleet of 37 tankers with 14 newbuilds underway. Whilst the fleet has grown in size, its average age has been cut to 5.9 years and it is 100% double hulled.

Tsakos' Chairman D John Stavropoulos (L) and Nikolas Tsakos, President & Chief Executive (R) are presented with their award by ABN AMRO Shipping Head, Dimitris Anagnostopoulos (centre)



Bahamas recognises all ten IACS Classification Societies

In December last year the Bahamas Maritime Authority signed agreements with Mr Li Kejun, Chairman and President of the China Classification Society (CCS) and with Mr Mikhail Sorokin, Head of the International Division of the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping (RS), authorising both organisations to perform statutory surveys and audits of vessels flying the Bahamas flag and undertake audits of their operating companies.



Mr Li Kejun (CCS President and Chairman) with BMA Director

The new agreements came into effect on 1 January 2008 and mean that all ten IACS Classification Societies are now recognised by The Bahamas.

Both the CCS and RS have worldwide representation of surveyors and auditors and they are actively involved in a variety of



l to r Captain Dwain E Hutchinson (BMA Deputy Director), Mr Mikhail Sorokin (RS Head of International Division), BMA Director, Vladimir Burenkov (RS UK Regional Manager)

initiatives to improve onboard safety and to set technical standards for ships and offshore installations. They have good port state inspection records of their classed vessels, with both Societies being non-targeted/low risk Class Societies by the major port state regions, including Paris MOU, Tokyo MOU and the US Coast Guard.

PRONAV flies Bahamas flag

PRONAV, the German based shipping company has, against strong international competition, been awarded a contract by Qatar Gas to supervise the construction of four new LNG carriers which will be flagged in The Bahamas. The company will also provide operational management once the carriers come into service between now and 2010.

The membrane type LNG carriers each with 210.000 cbm capacity will be built by Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering Ltd of Korea and will transport liquid natural gas between Qatar and principally the UK. The highly innovative vessels include a twin-slow speed diesel with reliquifaction, twin-skeg and twinscrew arrangements.

Although PRONAV's mainstream business is the transportation of automobiles, their LNG branch is expanding rapidly thanks to the ever increasing worldwide demand for liquid natural gas. PRONAV currently operates an 8-strong LNG fleet, with more in the pipeline, as well as two sister vessels which are run under a co-operation agreement.



Pronav Al Ruwais



Nassau Harbour

Cruiseships not cargo for Nassau

Major government plans are underway to transform the congested port of Nassau. All cargo operations will be moved to a new site in the south west of New Providence close to the island's industrial area. This will allow Nassau to concentrate almost exclusively on cruiseships. Construction of a brand new container, ro-ro and breakbulk facility should start late this year.

The Bahamas government, shipowners and other shipping interests are all behind the project which will require an estimated investment of some \$150 -\$200 million. Consultants are currently working on a business plan which will include cargo projections, funding and management structures, amongst others. One of the challenges will be to decide on the size of ships that the new port will cater for. But one thing is certainly for sure – the Prince George Dock area of Nassau will become a much more welcoming experience for cruiseship visitors to The Bahamas.

The Bahamas **Maritime Authority**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KEN McLEAN DIRECTOR **ISABELLA JONES** PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Finance & Administration ARTHUR BARNETT DEPUTY DIRECTOR	Registration CAROLYN MOREE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR REGISTRAR	Investigations & Manning FAZLUR CHOWDHURY DEPUTY DIRECTOR	Maritime Affairs DOUGLAS BELL DEPUTY DIRECTOR	Inspections & Surveys DWAIN HUTCHINSON DEPUTY DIRECTOR	Nassa ERMA RAH DEPUT REG
 Management of accounting functions Collection of annual fees Payment of creditors Shipowners Association Treasurer Implementation of information technology strategy Strategic planning Leon Dorsett Financial Controller Latonja Fox Senior Assistant Accountant Marc Phelps Accounts Assistant Geoffrey Guy Administrative Assistant 	 All ship registration matters Registration of mortgages Registration of changes of ownership Name changes Iranscripts of register entries Issue of ship radio licences Issue of CSR Benjamin McKinney Registration Assistant Barbara Campbell Registration Assistant Shavon McHardy Registration Assistant Bridget Chigbo Registration Assistant Bridget Chigbo Registration Assistant	 Investigation of casualties Investigation of MARPOL, COLREG & SOLAS infringements Manning & issue of Safe Manning documents STCW matters including issue of all officer endorsements/licences High speed craft operation Issue of Seaman's Record Books Icchnical/Compliance Officer Vacant Icensing Officer Donavan Williams Icchnical Assistant Paydell Gooding Administrative Assistant (Publications) Kendanique Ferguson Icensing Assistant Daguel Cheney Iccnsing Assistant Bangel Cheney Iccnsing Assistant Bangel Cheney Iccnsing Assistant Bangel Cheney Iccnsing Assistant Bernis Pinder Administrative Assistant Brian Dorsett Iccensing Assistant Iccensing Assistant Brian Dorsett Iccensing Assistant Brian Dorsett	 Coordination of The Bahamas at IMO Advice to The Bahamas government on accession to IMO Conventions Coordination of CAS Bahamas Shipowners Association Secretariat Advice on application and interpretation of ILO Convention(s). Ship documents/publications Melanie Knowles Shipowners Secretary 	 Liaison with Classification Societies Appointment & audit of nautical inspectors Management of programme of Bahamas inspections Advice on ISM/ISPS Code Port state control, including Caribbean MOU matters Advice on application & interpretation of IMO Conventions Colin Sandeman Assistant Director John Akhurst Assistant Director Chris Dowty Technical/Compliance Officer Rebecca-Ann Darling Technical Assistant Catherine Bethell Technical Assistant 	 Ship registrati associated fur Ship Documer Issue of Sear Issue of Safe / Issue of CSR Technical adv Issue of all off Liaison with E Government / Kati Registra Shir Registra Administra

London

120 Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1AR, UK Telephone +(44) 20 7562 1300 +(44) 20 7614 0650 Fax **E-mails** reg@bahamasmaritime.com

Nassau

E-mail

Gold Circle Complex, East Bay Street, PO Box N-4679, Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas Telephone +(1) 242 394 3024 Fax +(1) 242 394 3014

nassau@bahamas

maritime.com

New York

Fax

Bahamas House, 231 East 46th Street, New York, NY 10017, USA

Telephone +(1) 212 829 0221 +(1) 212 829 0356 E-mail cscavella@bahamas maritime.com newyork@bahamas maritime.com

Tokyo

Fax

Mr. Hiroyuki Miike, (Registrar) Mitsui Soko Co Ltd 22-23 Kaigan 3-Chome, Minato-Ku, Tokyo 108-0022, Japan

Telephone +(81) 3 6400 8521 +(81) 3 6400 8539 E-mail miike@mitsui-soko .co.jp

Piraeus

Mr Stylianos Anastopoulos (Honorary Consul)

Telephone +(30) 210 941 1603 +(30) 210 941 1606 Fax Mobile +(30) 694 538 8187 sma bahamas@ E-mail otenet.gr

Teleph Fax Mobile

E-mail

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CHRISTINE SCAVELLA DEPUTY DIRECTOR REGISTRAR

- Ship registration in New York & associated functions
- Ship Documents/Publications
- Issue of Seaman's Record Books
- Issue of Safe Manning documents
- Issue of CSR
- Liaison with the US Coast Guard

Juanita Butler **Registration Assistant** Younnique McDonald Administrative Assistant

Out Of Hours Emergency

If you need to contact us in an emergency outside the normal office hours of 0900 & 1730 London time, please telephone the Emergency Response Officer on +(44) 7977 471220 if you are outside the UK & 07977 471220 if you are calling from inside the UK.

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Mr Ulrich Hans Reinecke

ione	+(49) 0491 912 1787
	+(49) 0491 912 1790
2	+(49) 0174 323 6696
	ulli.reinecke@
	t-online.de

Liberty of the Seas

Let's tell the story says Secretary General

Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary General of IMO, Ken McLean, BMA's Director and senior IMO and BMA technical colleagues visited The Bahamas flagged *Liberty of the Seas* berthed at Southampton docks on her maiden voyage from Finland, where she was built, to the United States. The cruiseship, one of the largest in the world, with accommodation for 6000 passengers and crew, impressed the visitors by its sheer size but more importantly by the attention to detail in all the numerous safety, security and environmental measures built into the ship.

Speaking at the sub-committee meeting on Stability, Loadlines and on Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF) in April, Mr Mitropoulos said

that he was proud to see that IMO's rules, regulations, codes and guidelines had been adopted in the design, construction and operation of such a magnificent ship.



Secretary General of IMO

"It showed shipping at its best," he said, "an industry in continuous reform and transforming for the better, one that has a wonderful story to tell, which we should have no hesitation to go out and tell, as I do at every given opportunity."

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Bahamas Inspectors from around the world

Some 35 Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspectors from as far afield as Australia and the Far East attended a BMA hosted conference at the London Underwriting Centre in June last year. Since all Bahamas Inspectors are independent commercial consultants and surveyors who work 365 days of the year for the Bahamas fleet, the logistical effort involved in a gathering of this kind, required considerable dedication and sacrifice from those who attended the event. Inspectors also came from India, the United Arab Emirates, North, Central and South America, the Mediterranean region, the Baltic and Scandinavia, North West Europe and the UK – an excellent mix of the world's maritime cultures.



The Inspections department of the BMA: I to r: John Akhurst, Colin Sandeman, Dwain Hutchinson and Chris Dowty

"Providing a service" was the theme of the conference and presentations focused on individual areas of expertise that Inspectors provide to the Bahamian maritime community. As well as inspecting Bahamian ships, Inspectors provide a vital interface between the Bahamas Maritime Authority and the actual ships on its Register. One of the key objectives of the meeting was to emphasise the fact that Bahamian Inspectors are not just highly qualified individuals but that they are also part of a group - a single entity that draws from the rich diversity of the world's maritime population. Perhaps even more importantly and this is not always appreciated, they are an indispensable unit within the Bahamian maritime community.

The meeting was chaired by Captain Dwain Hutchinson, Deputy Director, Technical Inspections. John Akhurst of the Inspections Department made the primary presentation about Annual Reports. He emphasised the fact that there are three principle stakeholders in this process – the BMA, the Owners and Managers and the other Inspectors.

He also pointed out that Inspections are a function of an UNCLOS requirement not an optional extra insisted on by The Bahamas. They are as much a statutory requirement as ISM, SAFCON or any other statutory certification. Mr Akhurst explained the changes that have been made over the past few years, the information that the BMA needs and the style in which ideally it should be presented. BMA London staff members then gave a series of short presentations on the different tasks that Inspectors may be asked to undertake that are outside the requirements of a normal inspection but that are nevertheless vital to BMA operations. Subjects covered included registration, manning and personal certification, Ship's Articles and Official Log Book, security, Port State Control, casualty and investigations and the special measures process for vessels that fall below expectations.

During lunch the celebrated Lloyd's List columnist Michael Grey gave a short and entertaining talk based on what an owner would want from a Flag State's Inspection Service.

The meeting then concentrated on what the Inspectorate thought they should provide to the stakeholders in their Annual Reports. Facilitated by Colin Sandeman, the delegates split into four small syndicates to answer a short series of questions on how to provide an improved service. Two groups considered the questions from the Inspectors perspective – what did they think the BMA wanted to know.

The other two groups considered the same questions from the Owners and Managers perspective and what they might want to see from the attendance and reports. A spokesman from each syndicate then presented their findings to all the participants and this led to a general discussion of the issues raised. Finally a general question and answer board was held where queries sent in prior to the meeting were answered as well as questions from the floor.

The results of this whole exercise, in particular the opinions of the Inspectorate, are now being used to revise Inspection forms and procedures in order to provide all stakeholders with a more consistent and informative Annual Flag State Inspection Report. More details will be published in due course.

Although some delegates had to leave at the end of the conference, almost 30 were able to visit the BMA's new London premises the next day. They had the opportunity to meet all the staff and get a better understanding not only of how the BMA functions on a day to day basis but also of the ethos of the organisation so that they will be able to better understand and integrate with the London staff in the future.

For instance, the Inspectors were given a short "live" presentation on how Initial and Annual Inspection Reports are processed and how, by providing a consistent style of Report, Inspectors can directly contribute to the BMA's aim of providing an improved reporting process.

Judging from the feedback so far, the meeting was a huge success and the BMA would like to thank all who attended for their commitment, their professionalism and for their continuing contribution to the success of the BMA and The Bahamas maritime community.

Lifeboat safety

Despite the prolific distribution of advice and information with respect to all aspects of lifeboat safety, the most recent accident statistics make for an unsettling read. Many incidents involve a lifeboat that has been accidentally and unintentionally released from the falls by the on-load release gear. Being dropped into the sea from a considerable height above the water often results in substantial damage to the boat and equipment, severe injuries to crew, and tragically, fatalities.

Two seamen were killed in the lifeboat accident detailed below, when the on-load release gear opened, releasing the lifeboat unexpectedly from the falls at the traditional embarkation deck level.

Five men were trapped inside the lifeboat and because the access hatches were all completely underwater, only two of them managed to escape! They got out of the boat while it was in the inverted position, which is how it settled, having fallen stern first into the sea. The remaining three crew members, who were trapped inside, were recovered when the boat was manoeuvred towards the quayside and lifted clear of the water by a shore crane. One crew member received first aid treatment on the quay and survived. But despite the heroic efforts of their shipmates and others at the scene, the bosun and a young cadet tragically lost their lives in the accident.

The full accident investigation report into this casualty has been published, circulated to interested parties, and submitted to IMO. The report, which is available from the BMA, takes a fundamental look at lifeboat safety and contains a number of strong recommendations to IMO and the industry to prevent similar accidents in the future.

One of the key issues for the industry to consider and for crew members to be aware of, is that many on-load release systems currently in use have proved to be inherently dangerous. They are actually designed to "fail-unsafe". If the system fails under load, it opens and the boat is released! This is contrary to all normal risk management principals, where equipment is usually designed to be "failsafe" so that if the system fails under load, it closes, locks, is safe but in the case of a lifeboat, it cannot be released. There is a fundamental and direct conflict between standard risk management practice and the intended purpose of a lifeboat's on-load release system which is focused primarily, or only, on getting the boat away from the ship. There is often little or no consideration given at the design stage to the other practical requirements or intended purpose of the lifeboat and falls equipment.

The BMA has already issued a number of BMA Information Bulletins, prior to and following this accident, which can be downloaded from the Technical section of the website and a number of reputable Bahamas ship owners and managers have



acted on the BMA's guidance. They have improved their onboard training facilities and procedures. They have produced in-house training videos, DVDs and/or arranged for "mock ups" of the specific lifeboat release equipment that is fitted to their vessels, to be available on board for crew training purposes. These preventative measures have been put in place proactively. Have you and your Company noted and taken action on any of these preventative safety measures? Please do not wait to have a serious accident before you act.

Questions we're often asked...

MARPOL Infringements

MARPOL infringements have hit the headlines on many occasions recently and appear to be on the increase. In response, the BMA have compiled a brief summary of frequently asked questions and answers which touch on this important issue.

- Q The quality of equipment and systems used onboard for the handling of oily wastes are technically superior to older equipment. If this is the case, why are MARPOL infringements on the increase?
- A In these days of environmental awareness, greater use is being made of available technology to detect oily discharges from ships. Coastal States have become more proactive in the surveillance of their waters. Port States are vigilant in the inspection of equipment onboard ship. And, seafarers are actually being paid vast sums of money for information which may be used as proof that oily discharges have been made.

Q It appears that ships are sitting ducks. After all, they are often awash with the stuff. Is there anything owners can do to avoid being tarred by the "MARPOL Infringement" brush?

A Oily waste is generated by the ship but ultimately it is the owner's responsibility to ensure that it is handled in an appropriate manner.

- The owner must ensure that ship's crew are trained in all relevant aspects of handling oily waste
- Procedures must be implemented and adhered to
- Resources must always be available to ensure that equipment is functioning, and back-up systems must be in place for storage and disposal of waste, in case of equipment malfunction
- Most importantly, every action involving transfer or handling of oily wastes must be documented in the ship's oil record book, in order to show that it has been dealt with in a responsible manner

The above is a waste of time if a crew member decides it is easier for him to ignore it all. Get your crew on your side. Make it clear that there is no penalty for reporting problems with waste management onboard

What is the BMA view on MARPOL infringements?

A The Bahamas takes a dim view of any illegal discharge from ships within the fleet and will support parties to the MARPOL Convention who detect and penalise such infringements. However any penalty must be in proportion not only to the amount of pollution, but must also take into account the circumstances of the pollution incident. Accidents still do happen at sea and it is vitally important that this is recognised by all concerned.

News in brief...

Nassau promotion

Mrs Erma Rahming Mackey, who heads up BMA's Nassau office, has been promoted to the position of Deputy Director.

Mrs Mackey, who has enjoyed a lengthy career in the maritime industry, joined the Ministry of Transport in December 1976. She began her career as an Executive Officer attached to the Maritime Affairs Division which pre-dated the establishment of the Bahamas Maritime Authority in 1995.



She then matriculated within The Bahamas Public Service to the level of Senior Assistant Secretary and after completing the First Assistant Secretary's assessment, she elected to remain with the Maritime Division.

Mrs Mackey has been responsible for administering Part II of the Merchant Shipping Act, which deals with the registration of ships and related matters since 1977. She also chaired the Oil Spill Contingency Planning Committee of The Bahamas from 1979 to 1997 and organised and participated in the Clean Caribbean of the Americas (CCA) Oil Spill Mobilisation and Deployment Exercises.

Mrs Mackey, who is a Hubert Humphrey Fellow, holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration, a Bachelor's Degree in the Principles of Leadership and an Associates Degree in Financial Management.

Recent Appointments

Having passed his Masters CoC in 1981,

and Detection. Supplementing his work

in the commercial sector, he spent 20

years as a visiting lecturer at the

Petrochemical Unit, on the Tanker

and Seminars on Drug and Alcohol

Mr Dowty's career also includes

positions as Operations Manager

operating a fleet of 22 Coastal Bulk

Safety and Chemical Safety Courses.

Additionally he ran Marine Workshops

Awareness, Respiratory Equipment and

Care and Maintenance of Gas Detection

Warsash Maritime Centre

he joined a marine safety company

specialising in Respiratory Protection

Chris Dowty has recently joined the Technical Section of the BMA as Technical/ Compliance Officer.



Carolyn J Moree is the new Registrar and Assistant Director at BMA's London office.



Following two and a half (2 1/2) plus

years as the Assistant Registrar, Miss Moree was promoted to the new post, effective 1 December 2007.

A native of Rock Sound, Eleuthera, Bahamas, she obtained an LLB (Hons) Degree from the University of Buckingham, England, and an MBA (International Business) Degree from SIU, Paris, France.

Miss Moree was called to the Bar of England and Wales, and to the Bahamas Bar in 2005. She is a member of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn and her chosen field is Maritime Law.

Carriers around the UK and with Sealion Shipping based in Farnham.

Equipment.

Debbie-Lou Carey BMA's London Registrar and Deputy Director has left the Authority to pursue personal opportunities. Her enthusiasm for the shipping industry generally as well as her considerable contribution to the work of the BMA will be greatly missed.

