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# CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL AT INTERMANAGER ON THEIR 30 YEAR MILESTONE



Since its creation, InterManager has strived for three decades to improve standards within the ship management sector and the shipping industry.

This milestone marks InterManager's pivotal role in guiding and shaping our industry, and is a timely reminder that strong leadership and collaboration are solid building blocks at the core of shipping.

As an engaged and supportive partner, V.Ships looks forward to collaborating further with InterManager to continuously improve standards and achieve a safe, more environmentally conscious and reliable ship management industry for decades to come.

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# FOREWORD

BY MARK O'NEIL,  
PRESIDENT OF INTERMANAGER



*The commercial justification for an association of ship managers (and their contractual suppliers) remains as compelling today as it was 30 years ago at the birth of InterManager.*

In fact, more so. Ship managers today technically manage nearly 25% of the world fleet and that number is growing rapidly. They also look after and (indirectly) employ over 90% of the 1.7 million seafarers serving on that fleet. They are at the very forefront of technical, digital, logistic, procurement, human resource management, training and welfare

development. They deal with a wider visibility of issues across the shipping, offshore and commodity sectors than any other operator. Because of the scalability they can offer, they are able to deliver service level efficiencies and efficacies that simply cannot be replicated in-house to anything like the same levels; even during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, which saw the larger ship managers deploy such scalability advantages, resources and digital logistic solutions to such great effect. The argument for a ship management service sector has never been stronger and the Covid pandemic has acted as a catalyst for further massive expansion potential within the next 10 years. I say 'potential' because our achievable collective destiny very much lies in our own hands.

As an industry sector we are our own worst enemy. So focused are we on attracting the 25% of the world fleet to our own companies, that we engage in suicidal competitive pricing policies which render it all but impossible for anyone except the larger ship managers to survive, and then only by virtue of scalability and provision of other maritime services.

Turnover from huge numbers of vessels under management becomes essential and more important than profitability, and service standards inevitably become exposed. Such service standards vary significantly from the shameful 'cowboy' to the quality end of the service spectrum. The bar to entry in this industry of ours is not high – it is nonexistent. We have no Industry General Principles or Standard; literally anyone can start a ship management company tomorrow and manage container vessels and bulk carriers. And we wonder why the daily management fees achievable continue to fall to unrealistically low levels, and with them our collective reputation and regard within the shipping, offshore and commodity sectors.

The industry is at a veritable crossroads. If we do nothing, then third party ship management will all

but disappear as a separate recognisable sector – and deservedly so – at least for the small to medium operators. We will be left with the very large (almost industrial) managers who operate as platforms for the supply of maritime services of which technical and crew management are part. A high volume, low margin, variable quality service offering that will require huge investment on digital optimisation techniques and technologies. There will also be an increase in the joint venture approach whereby the larger operators take the third party ship manager techniques and process in-house and seek to benefit in the short-to-medium term before those advantages dissipate and/or are replaced.

Alternatively, if we collectively introduce and enforce an industry standard, work together and share innovation in the fields of digitalisation, technology, training, logistics, crew health and wellbeing, maritime regulation, the environment and decarbonisation – then we have the chance to massively improve our prospects as an industry sector – for all those operating within that sector big and small.

By introducing such a standard, we will increase the membership of InterManager as the association promulgating such a standard. We will increase the voice of InterManager to demand a place at the very top table of the maritime industry arbiters, and be able to lobby with governments and international organisations regulating our industry and others on important issues affecting the maritime sector. We will also seek to persuade other stakeholders and legitimate voices in the industry to speak with one voice on the very large macro issues affecting the environment, decarbonisation, employee health and welfare.

It was the above considerations which formed the basis of my 'One Approach' as my manifesto for election as President of InterManager in November 2020. One Approach – One Standard, One Voice, One Market, One Membership and One Team. A collective effort to ensure the successful future of our industry sector. A collective effort to increase the membership of InterManager and raise the standards of what we do and, with that, the regard within which we are held by operators within the maritime sector and without. A collective effort to attack the 75% of those operators who have yet to be persuaded of the relevance and compelling nature of third party ship management and maritime services.

I want to thank all members and associate members of InterManager for their support during this first year of my Presidency. My style has never been to everyone's liking but always know that my intentions are entirely genuine and true. We need to push through change and change is not always welcomed. It can be unsettling. It can be challenging.

Together we have achieved a lot along the 'One Approach' path. Full and Associate membership is up considerably, and we now have all but a small handful of managers who (for whatever reason) resist membership. Where InterManager membership will become the benchmark for quality, managers will have no option but to join or will be excluded from business. And quite rightly so, as why would any self-respecting manager resist genuine attempts to improve the quality of our industry sector. Associate membership will also rise where membership will offer huge networking and business opportunities.

We are successfully working on and are near completion of the General Principles of InterManager which will be the basis of assessment for new members and existing members alike. We are much more vocal within the maritime press on key issues and are taking a lead on key issues such as seafarer vaccination, medical care for seafarers on board, working in enclosed spaces etc etc.

We are also leading the call for 'one voice' in our maritime industry so as to ensure that the maritime industry's position is clearly and comprehensively put on such global issues as environmental protection and decarbonisation. As an industry we simply cannot afford to be the 'Johnny come lately' anymore where decisions taken by the international regulators must have regard to the importance of the maritime sector and the huge role it plays in international trade and commerce.

I end where I finished; the commercial justification for an association of ship managers (and their contractual suppliers) remains as compelling today as it was 30 years ago at the birth of InterManager. There is much work to do.

My special thanks to our Secretary General Kuba without whose 150% commitment we would not be where we are today and where we want to be tomorrow! 🚢

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# Stronger together

## AN INTERVIEW WITH CAPT. KUBA SZYMANSKI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF INTERMANAGER

*When asked why anyone should join InterManager, Secretary General Capt. Kuba Szymanski throws a question back: “Why shouldn’t they?”*

“If you’re a ship manager or crew manager these days,” he says, “you need to speak with one voice and we provide that.” InterManager is an association not only for third party managers but also in-house ones, he points out, and “being a Member gives you a platform to discuss and check where the industry is and also to contribute best practices.”

“Our approach,” continues Capt. Szymanski, “is ‘Educate don’t regulate’. There are a lot of regulations around the world but not all are being utilised and some are being abused. So, as InterManager we have to remind various parties that there are already rules in place affecting our members’ interests, and that the issues concerned are very sensitive and can put their situation in jeopardy.”

Being part of InterManager also allows companies to pool resources, he adds, and “usually bigger means stronger, faster and more efficient.”

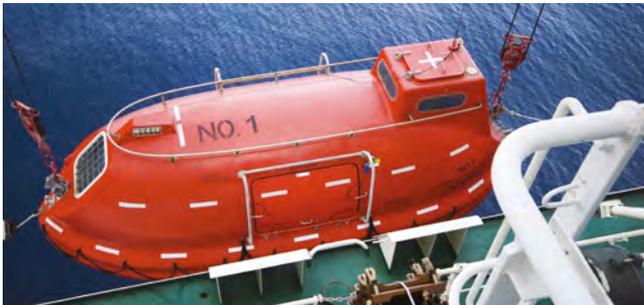
The Secretary General cites Covid as one recent example of where resources were pooled and “one member company was able to be of help to others.” “We act as one big family and treat others that way,” he says. “Everyone chips in and that way everyone is able to benefit.” InterManager currently has 41 full members – including seven of the 10 largest ship managers – and 42 associate members. Since there is no other association specifically for the crewing sector, it also “plugs that hole, giving a voice to crew managers and crewing agents and bringing them to the table,” says Capt. Szymanski. “That’s very important when 90% of crews today are managed by crew managers, with only 10% by ship owners.”

“That’s where we have a strength,” he continues. “You have a lot of technical managers that are also crew managers but you also have a lot of just crew managers and someone has to look after their interests.”

A point not always appreciated is that ship owners and managers don’t necessarily share the same viewpoint, and the fact that InterManager is not part of the so-called Round Table of shipping organisations – BIMCO, ICS, INTERCARGO and INTERTANKO, all in fact ship owner associations – rankles, which is why President Mark O’Neil has called for creation of a new pan-industry body (see previous article). “Members of InterManager are

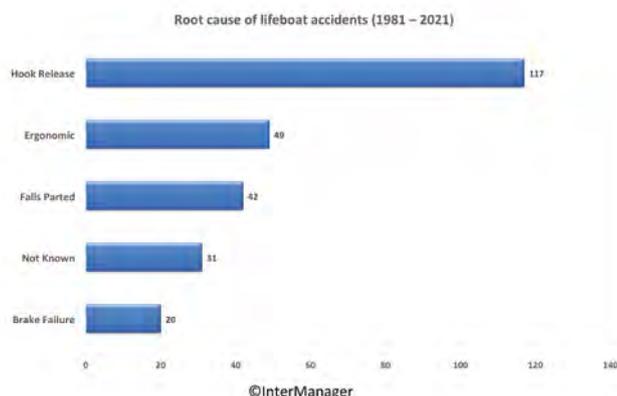
very concerned that as an industry we are not making enough progress in improving crew safety in two specific areas," highlights Capt. Szymanski.

### Lifeboat accidents



"The first is lifeboats," he continues, where "the industry, in particular flag states, has been slow in reporting accidents and we got to a stage where we said: 'Enough is enough'."

InterManager Members stepped forward, and with the help of IMO's Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) the Association has now collected data on those accidents stretching back to 1980, he explains. The data clearly suggest to InterManager that "it's not training that's missing," he continues, but rather "design, procedures and regulations" that are the root cause of lifeboat incidents. This is in stark contrast to the traditional assumption that "it was always seafarers that were looked on as the culprit," he adds.



"People tend to say 'why did the seafarer open that valve?' rather than thinking 'how can something break when it shouldn't?' We've created an environment where seafarers have no choice but to fail. When you have a 150kg hook connected to an eight-tonne lifeboat on a 150,000 dwt ship moving around on the ocean, it's hardly surprising that people get injured" he says. As a concrete step forward, InterManager now participates in the Industry Lifeboat Group (ILG), which is chaired by the International Chamber of Shipping

and also includes flag administrations, class societies and equipment manufacturers.

"We are urging stakeholders to look at the data and provide solutions based on statistics not gut feelings," relates the Secretary General. "We are also trying to show the world that whatever we have done in the past 40 years to improve the lifeboat safety situation simply isn't working."

### Enclosed spaces



Then there is the problem of enclosed spaces, which continues to take an unacceptable toll on seafarers' lives. "In 2018, a Member of InterManager suffered another fatal accident with five seafarers losing their lives," Capt. Szymanski reports. "We asked: 'Can we do something about this?'"

"We decided to do a survey among seafarers (and that was novel thinking because we didn't go to ship owners) basically asking: 'Why are you killing yourselves in enclosed spaces?'"

"We received nearly 5,000 replies, 4,986 to be precise, which basically showed that seafarers are confused by conflicting regulations. This refers to IMO Regulation A. 1050(27) *Revised Recommendations for Entering Enclosed Spaces Aboard Ships*, which is in conflict with – or could be interpreted as such because it is vaguely written – many other codes."

The issue hinges on whether or not to enter enclosed spaces wearing breathing apparatus (BA) sets, he explains. One rule suggests you shouldn't enter a space if it's unsafe, another that it's ok if you do so wearing a BA set. "But you can't work in a BA set," points out Capt. Szymanski. "You only wear one to go and rescue someone in an emergency, not to work." "And if you are wearing a BA set," he continues, "you can't enter spaces where the access measures only 50cm x 80cm. So there are two incompatible sets of goals and seafarers are being asked to do something that is impossible." Other most frequent complaints

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# Congratulating InterManager on their 30th Anniversary

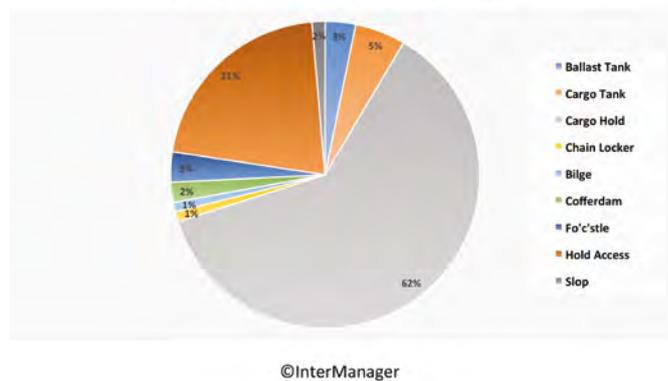


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setting new environmental standards for the industry

were about the design of spaces, he relates, and the time pressure to complete tasks. For example: “If you have 18 tanks, 24 hours to mop them and only six deck crew, it just doesn’t add up.”

One more, upon investigation of the issue it was found that “there were absolutely no statistics available because no one wanted to disclose them.” As a result, the association has set itself the task of collecting data taken from the public domain and is now working on publicising the results, which the Secretary General says is “another very good example of what InterManager is all about.”

Location of enclosed space accidents (2000 – 2021)



“

We are grateful to InterManager for its knowledgeable input on a wide variety of maritime issues. This includes not only safety at sea, but care for the welfare of Seafarers, the vast majority of whom are employed by ship and crew managers, the figure for which is currently touching 90% of the total

International Maritime Organization

## SAFETY IS A MINDSET

Safety can only be as good as the person who implements it. That's why at BSM we do not only provide a strong set of rules and procedures, but also make them easy to follow. Just one example: our airline-style Project Pilot Manuals. By simplifying the instructions of established safety manuals, we ensure that rules are understandable in any case. And since we run our LPSQ departments parallel to our Ship Management Centres, we have two dedicated departments to ensure that safety standards are met 100%. More at [www.bs-shipmanagement.com](http://www.bs-shipmanagement.com)

*Congratulations to InterManager for guiding and shaping the shipping industry for the past 30 years!*



**GUY MOREL**  
**PRESIDENT (1992-1993)**

“During my year as President at InterManager, or ISMA as it was then, the profession grew rapidly and shipowners grew accustomed to give their ship in management (crew only or full technical management) to professional shipowners. During these times, the shipowning profession changed quite substantially, with the arrival of institutional investors and tax investment schemes, that brought into the shipping world a new breed of shipowners, financially oriented, who did not have a tradition of ship operations.

“These new owners were typical clients of InterManager members as they wanted a quality management: managers were chosen on the basis of their reputation (no longer on the basis of low budgets) and membership to InterManager was guaranteeing this quality.

“A regret? Yes, one. Notwithstanding my patient efforts [including later as General Secretary] I was not successful in convincing the various shipowners associations that we should work closely with them on solving the common problems that we face in the shipping industry. InterManager remained outside the ‘Round Table’ of shipping associations - what a pity, so much of our experience could have benefited the industry at large.

“Now that InterManager is reaching its 30th Anniversary, I would like to wish it luck and to extend a salute to the many friends that I still have in the profession.”



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# Maritime safety COMPETITION

## CAN YOU HELP SAVE A LIFE?

*InterManager is joining the Nautical Institute and IMarEST to call on members of the shipping industry to help us to save lives by identifying innovative solutions to the dangers faced when working in enclosed spaces.*

Many seafarers die each year when working onboard in enclosed spaces. Sometimes mistakes have been made – but what a price to pay for a momentary error or oversight!

Often, a closer examination of the circumstances can identify what caused the fateful decisions which led to loss of life. Perhaps the time allowed for the task was insufficient? The training given inadequate? The procedures unpractised? The confined space too restrictive to work safely in?

Whatever the reasons, as an industry we must pool our knowledge and experience to reduce the risks and prevent deaths in enclosed spaces. After all, surely our most important role at sea is to ensure our colleagues return home safely to their family and friends.

These deaths can and must be stopped. No-one should die carrying out their daily work.

***26 is so young. Yet it was a birthday 2nd officer Robert Fisk never got the chance to celebrate. He died just two weeks before his 26th birthday after inhaling hydrogen sulphide. You see, Robert Fisk went to work in an enclosed space – and died.\****

\*This example is a composite of several real-life incidents

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Talk! You can share your experiences and your thoughts with us.

By pooling our collective knowledge we aim to identify solutions and procedures which can make working in enclosed spaces safer and help to avoid accidents.

To raise awareness of the issues and to encourage seafarers, ship operators and shore staff to come forward and share their concerns and propose solutions, InterManager is working with the Nautical Institute and IMarEST to launch this competition.

We believe that doing so will benefit everyone. Perhaps you and your colleagues could join forces and work as part of a team to identify key issues and suggest safer practices. By working together in this way we can all generate new ideas and solutions that can SAVE LIVES.

**More than 20 seafarers have lost their lives in Enclosed Space-related accidents over the past 12 months. This is a trend that has occurred for the past 20 years**

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE

This competition shines a spotlight on the importance of safety when working in and around enclosed spaces. Together we can stop people dying in the workplace.

We can save families from the trauma of losing a loved-one while at work. We can make your workplace better and safer!

However, we recognise that you are all busy people and in order to reward your time and effort there are prizes available for the most innovative and practical ideas to prevent deaths from entry into confined spaces.

In shaping your proposal feel free to address any aspect of the confined spaces dilemma, from regulations and procedures to equipment, design and the use of technology. In fact the more innovative your proposal the better.

Your response can be creative too and will be accepted in any format which might include a report, a poster, a video or just an email – it's up to you.

You may like to team up with your colleagues on board or ashore, so you can bounce ideas off each other (no more than four in a team please). Or you may prefer to steer a solo course.

Either way we look forward to receiving your proposals by the closing date – which is expected to be at the end of January 2022. The proposals will be judged by the following panel of experts and revealed at a special Nautical Institute 'confined spaces' webinar in early 2022.

Entry is open to all maritime professionals.

## AWARDS AND PRIZES

Sponsored by The Nautical Institute, InterManager and IMarEST, prizes will be awarded for the best solutions aimed at reducing the risks of enclosed space deaths.

Prizes will be awarded for the

- **Best submission from an individual**
- **Best team submission from a team**
- **Best team submission from combined ship / shore team**

- **Bonus points will be awarded for cross discipline team entries and teams involving both ship and shore staff**

Submit your entry to:

**Enclosedspacecomp@nautinst.org**

The closing date is expected to be end January 2022 – please see Nautical Institute website [www.nautinst.org](http://www.nautinst.org) for further details and latest updates.

# NEWS



## Project MARTHA A PRESCIENT WARNING

*InterManager together with The Warsash Maritime Academy presented the findings of their joint seafarer fatigue study, Project MARTHA, to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in early 2017.*

Speaking at the presentation, Capt. Kuba Szymanski, Secretary General of InterManager, urged the maritime industry to take notice of the findings of the report, which highlighted growing levels of fatigue, particularly among Masters and Watch Keepers, and noted that motivation was a major factor in fatigue experienced by seafarers.

In particular, the report focused on fatigue's effect on Masters, whose role on a ship is central to its performance. The project noted a number of reasons how a Master's role differed from that of other crew members, including that they have more weekly work hours and suffer from mental fatigue rather than physical fatigue like other seafarers, leading to a cumulative effect of greater fatigue at the end of a contract.

Meanwhile, seafarers whose views were canvassed for the report pointed out that not being relieved on time was having an effect on motivation, with nearly 50% reporting that stress was higher at the end of a voyage.

The cultural differences Project MARTHA sought to examine threw up some interesting results, including a

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**INTERCARGO** extends its sincere congratulations to InterManager on the occasion of its 30th birthday. Our Association applauds the contribution that InterManager has made and continues to make to the complex dynamic that is the shipping industry, and looks forward to many years of cooperation ahead.



clear divide between European and Chinese seafarers. It was found that European seafarers worked fewer hours than their Chinese colleagues. For example, Chinese seafarers on dry bulk carriers worked an average of 15.11 hours a day compared to European seafarers who worked an average 10.23 hours a day. As a result, there was evidence of higher levels of fatigue and stress in Chinese seafarers than in European seafarers. Addressing IMO delegates and invited guests at the presentation, Capt Szymanski said: "I sincerely hope the results of our research will be read and acted upon by ship managers and ship owners who will go on to revise their attitudes and procedures."

"There are a number of 'low-hanging fruit' which, with a little adjustment, could make a big difference. These are not necessarily costly changes – such as having seafarers relieved on time and organising work onboard with humans and not regulations in mind, and engaging sea staff in decisions – empowering seafarers to take care of their lives more than today."

"Our people are our assets and we need to develop a strategy whereby shipping is once again seen as a career of choice for tomorrow's young talented people."

"There is no avoiding the fact that the global fleet is increasing and more manpower is needed. However, we are demanding more from current seafarers rather than recruiting even more cadets into the market. Attracting new seafarers and retaining them will test the industry, but we cannot ignore these findings in making the industry an attractive place for aspiring seafarers."

Occurring as it did three years before the onset of the Covid, Project MATHA can be seen as having first raised those concerns over timely crew changes and seafarer wellbeing and morale that have since come to the fore during the pandemic. 



## DAVID UNDERWOOD PRESIDENT (1991-1992)

Douglas Lang, who worked closely with the late Mr Underwood at Denholm Ship Management, recalls how ISMA's 'founding fathers' first came together.

"Against a backdrop of Exxon Valdez and the 'Ships of Shame', it was realised that all sectors of the industry had to clean up their act. During a late-night discussion between David Underwood of Denholm and John Spruyt of Wallem they contemplated an alliance of managers setting industry [shipmanagement] standards."

"Although the rivalry between the managers was fierce, they hoped some could be united behind a common cause, so they decided to approach the five largest players at that time, namely: Barber, Columbia, Denholm, Hanseatic and Wallem."

"Following a lot of diplomacy, Svein Solli, Otto Fritzner, David Underwood, Andreas Droussiotis and John Spruyt held a number of meetings to discuss the way forward. I don't think they ever called themselves the 'group of five' but that is how they immediately became known."

"Their aim was to produce a standard for safe ship operation. In parallel, the IMO was developing its Annex 617 which morphed into the ISM Code eventually."

"Understandably there was some friction between those managers who were in the 'group of five' and those that weren't, the latter seeing the group as trying to impose standards and also competitively disadvantage them. Fortunately, good sense prevailed and discussions were started to create a more inclusive organisation for ship managers which launched as ISMA."

"Apart from the membership fee it was a condition to operate, as a minimum, to the ISMA Code. An audit team was created between DnV, GL and LR – another first in terms of cooperation outside of IACS and probably the most difficult to achieve."



# Co-ordinated Covid response

*InterManager has been at the forefront of efforts to ensure global recognition of seafarers as key workers in order to allow safe crew changes to take place, that maritime personnel are not disadvantaged when it comes to vaccinations, and that anyone falling sick whilst at sea receives the best possible medical treatment.*

Early on in the pandemic a Maritime Champions Club was set up to acknowledge the efforts of ship managers and organisations in the repatriation of seafarers. An Open Letter was also addressed to the IMO Secretary-General protesting at restrictive crew

change measures that were in place at certain points and pointing out the implications that this could have on the free flow of international trade.

More recently, InterManager members have pledged to go above and beyond international maritime regulatory requirements in their onboard provision of medical oxygen – to be better able to save the lives of crew at sea.

The move followed a life-threatening scenario when a seafarer suffering from Covid-19 almost died during a long ocean crossing due to a shortage of oxygen. InterManager discussed the situation internally and it was unanimously agreed to double their onboard provision of oxygen from the standard one 40 litre cylinder to two. Members also recommend stocking oxygen concentrators which can provide a continuous flow.



“

ICS is proud to have been part of InterManager's foundation 30 years ago (as ISMA) providing the first secretariat when it evolved from the old 'Group of Five' and did so much, in its early days, to consolidate best practice among third party ship managers. This was when the concept of professional 'ship managers' was still relatively new, and many shipowners remained sceptical about entrusting their assets to others. The ISM Code and STCW 95 then changed everything. And look where ship management and InterManager are today!

Simon Bennett, Deputy Secretary General, International Chamber of Shipping



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## InterManager 30 Years Anniversary

Announcing the new measure, InterManager President Mark O'Neil explained: "This distressing incident highlighted the shortcomings of the existing requirement for onboard oxygen, particularly when dealing with Covid-19 which can have very serious respiratory effects.

"Crossing the Pacific Ocean can take 12 days, and it's seven to eight days to cross the Atlantic. One cylinder of oxygen would not last that long in a medical emergency, which would result in crew members having to ration a patient as they desperately tried to keep them alive until shore could be reached or a medivac arranged."

He continued: "I'm very grateful to Anglo Eastern for highlighting this issue. It was a matter InterManager members took very seriously and responded to immediately with decisive action. We believe the regulations are not adequate and we need to do more to safeguard the lives of our crew."

Working with the procurement platform GenPro, Columbia has secured a low price for InterManager members to obtain oxygen concentrators and cylinders on a bulk-buy no-profit deal. InterManager members are advised to contact the InterManager Secretary General or speak with GenPro directly for further details. 

“

InterManager's 30 years anniversary is testament to the fact that ship managers provide a key service to the shipping industry and has established a framework for managers to work together on important topics including crew change and well-being. BIMCO wishes InterManager all the best for the next 30 years.

David Loosley, BIMCO Secretary General and CEO



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# Adopt a Ship

*To promote greater awareness of the importance of shipping and the maritime career opportunities it presents, InterManager actively promotes the Adopt a Ship programme for schools and offers information packs and teaching aids as a free tool to members and interested parties.*

Adopt a Ship was initiated by the Cyprus Shipping Chamber (CSC), and is implemented together with the Cyprus Marine Environment Protection Association (CYMEPA), in 2006 to forge links between elementary schools and seafarers onboard ships operated by CSC members.

Assisted by InterManager and its members, the programme expanded

into the Philippines, Poland, India and Greece in 2017 and 2018. Today some 90 ships now participate in the Cyprus programme, with more than 20 vessels taking part in the Polish programme. Students take part from schools, colleges and orphanages, and now some 40,000 children are taking part in Adopt A Ship programmes around the world.

Versions of the programme vary from country to country but are usually based around a senior officer (usually the Captain) onboard a ship exchanging a short email message with a school classroom or orphanage centre (via a teacher or administrator) once a week. The children are given a 2x3 metre world map showing sea lanes that they use to track the movement of that ship, and they are able, via their teacher, to ask questions of the Captain or crew to find out more about life at sea. 📧

**Further information on the Adopt a Ship programme is available on the [InterManager website](#).**



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# TIMELINE OF PRES



**1993 – 1995**  
**JOACHIM MEYER**  
(HANSEATIC SHIPPING)

**1999 – 2001**  
**PETER CREMERS**  
(ANGLO EASTERN  
SHIP MANAGEMENT)



**1995 – 1997**  
**OLAV EEK  
THORSTENSEN**  
(THOME SHIP  
MANAGEMENT)



**1991 – 1992**  
**DAVID UNDERWOOD**  
(DENHOLM SHIP  
MANAGEMENT)



**2001 – 2003**  
**DIRK FRY**  
(COLUMBIA  
SHIPMANAGEMENT)



**1997 – 1999**  
**HARRY GILBERT**  
(WALLEM SHIP  
MANAGEMENT)



**1992 – 1993**  
**GUY MOREL**  
(V.SHIPS)

# PRESIDENTS



**2003 – 2006**  
**RAJAISH BAJPAEE**  
(EURASIA  
SHIPMANAGEMENT)



**2010 – 2012**  
**ALASTAIR EVITT**  
(MERIDIAN MARINE  
MANAGEMENT)



**2016 – 2020**  
**BJØRN JEBSEN**  
(ABOITIZJEBSEN)



**2008 – 2010**  
**ROBERTO GIORGI**  
(V.SHIPS)



**2020 – PRESENT**  
**MARK O'NEIL**  
(COLUMBIA  
SHIPMANAGEMENT)



**2006 – 2008**  
**OLE STENE**  
(ABOITIZ JEBSEN)



**2012 – 2016**  
**GERARDO BORROMEIO**  
(PHILIPPINE  
TRANSMARINE  
CARRIERS)



**InterManager**





# From the Founding Fathers to InterManager today

## THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

*What five men from five leading shipmanagement companies created 30 years ago led to a complete shake-up of the industry and built the foundation stones to help shape InterManager into the success it is today.*

InterManager has gone through many ups and downs since it was first inaugurated in 1991 when the 'founding fathers' put their individual interests to one side and came together in a bid to improve the quality, safety and reliability of the shipmanagement industry.

The 'group of five', who created what was originally known as the International Ship Managers'

Association (ISMA) was made up of Barber International, Columbia Shipmanagement, Denholm Ship Management, Hanseatic Shipping Company, and Westcol International Marine.

However, the initiative was not welcomed with open arms immediately by the sector, its leaders initially came in for criticism and were accused of creating a cartel - a claim that has always been baseless.

Despite the backlash, the five companies pressed ahead and drafted a Code of Ship Management Standards, the first quality shipmanagement system in shipping, and then went on to form the association, the code becoming known as the ISMA Code. Membership to the association was reliant on companies' ability to comply with the requirements set out in the code.

*continues on page 27*

“

On behalf of our members and the whole team at INTERTANKO, we extend our warmest congratulations to InterManager on reaching this significant milestone. Thank you for making our industry better and safer and for the extensive collaboration on anything from security to seafarer welfare during the pandemic. Here's to the next 30 years!



**JOACHIM MEYER**  
PRESIDENT (1993-1995)

“The challenges when I took over as President lay in the fact that for the first time a very competitive group of people and companies were trying to do something together for the good of the industry. Examples of this were the ISMA Code itself but also other novelties where we tried to do things that previously might have been thought of as ‘secrets’.

“One of the subjects closest to my heart was bringing higher standards in terms of training, safety and a reduced number of accidents. By achieving this I thought we might be able to approach the insurance industry and receive more favourable terms as ship managers abiding by the ISMA Code.

“I can’t say I succeeded in terms of any sharing of hard accident data but at least we as ship managers had regular meetings and exchanged views and were able to get a clear view that there was an improving safety trend, and maybe that triggered a new approach by making the first steps towards fostering a less hostile and competitive way of thinking.

“Today not only ship managers, but the shipping industry as a whole, faces unprecedented challenges in terms of the environment and the effects of Covid on areas such as crew changes, things that have never weighed so heavily before. I am a natural optimist but I believe it will require an even greater spirit of collaboration, and that nobody will benefit more than the companies themselves.”



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The first President to take on the running of ISMA, from 1991-1992, was David Underwood who sadly has passed away. Following him, the Association has gone on to have another 12 Presidents who have led it through its first three decades.

The idea to create the ISMA Code was born as shipmanagement was emerging as an industry in its own right and was receiving what was perceived as unfair criticism. At the time, industry representatives believed that ship managers were being used as scapegoats for an apparent deterioration in shipping standards. With the entry standard for people joining the industry very low at the time, it was a challenge to fight back against the criticism, President Rajaish Bajpae recalls. (see separate box)

Despite ISMA's efforts to bring the shipmanagement industry together as one to improve standards the idea was not universally welcomed in the early days. Dr Malcom Willingale, formerly of V.Ships and co-author of the mid-1990s textbook 'Ship Management', recalls the early scepticism by some towards ISMA's vision. "The initial announcement by the founding members of ISMA to launch its new quality ship management code came at a challenging time for third party shipmanagement," he says. "In the early 1990s, when I joined V.Ships as one of the leading ship managers, I recall that criticisms of third party ship managers included a perceived lack of transparency, limited resources dedicated to raising operating standards and a belief that ship managers were too good at keeping bad ship owners in business.

"Against this background, the ISMA initiative was not universally popular. Those independent ship managers such as V.Ships which were excluded from the initial



**OLE STENE**  
PRESIDENT (2006-2008)

"When ISMA was established 30 years ago by the 'group of five,' the basis for the association and the main focus area was quality management and quality assurance and the so-called ISMA Code was introduced which again then became the forerunner for the ISM Code.

"Under my Presidency we started to focus on the most important asset in any ship owning company and ship management company - the people/seafarers, and in this respect focusing on competence building and investment in human capital.

"Over the years, it has been and still is a shortage of crew and in particular officers. One of the tasks of InterManager to attract young people to join the industry, was to improve the image of the industry and its impact on recruitment – strong image to attract new entrants. 'Ships don't move cargo, people do.'

"We also focused on improving working life onboard, motivation and respect, and tried to ensure that crew members onboard were equal to their onshore peers in respect of career opportunities.

"In addition, InterManager also worked on building partnerships between shipowners and ship managers when it came to competence building and retention. InterManager participated in the revision of BIMCO Ship Man and BIMCO Crew Man.

"In today's shipping world, I believe that InterManager with its tasks and focus has a great future and potential to improve the quality of the shipping industry, which we have seen with the contribution that InterManager has made during these very difficult coronavirus times, and I wish InterManager all success in the future."



## DIRK FRY PRESIDENT (2001-2003)

"I have been lucky over the years through my position at Columbia Shipmanagement to be able to have been instrumental in the establishment of the Quality Code, later to be adopted as the ISMA Code, to promote quality assurance in shipping. We wanted to make a difference in shipping and are proud to have helped found InterManager, or ISMA as it was then, in 1991.

"As President of ISMA, I would say that the most challenging question was: 'In view of being a global business, are we doing enough to meet the environmental concerns and the general raising of standards on a global basis?'

"It was then very rewarding that in 2003 during my tenure as President, the KPI project was born, a collaboration between InterManager, the research and consultancy group, Marintek, Wilh. Wilhelmshaven ASA and the Norwegian Research Council.

"Concluding, I would like to say that InterManager has come quite a long way in the past 30 years and is now an international establishment of the shipping industry. I would like to wish InterManager continuous growth and success in serving to improve the shipping industry."

discussions by the founding members – often referred to as the 'gang of five' – viewed the formation of ISMA with suspicion."

The code triggered a movement within the industry that continues today, with classification societies creating their own codes, and the International Maritime Organization adopting its own ISM Code as a mandatory requirement for flag states. Also, implementation of the ISMA Code didn't come without its teething problems, as potential members struggled to meet the requirements set out in the complex code.

Dr Willingale explains how V.Ships, which by now had agreed to join ISMA, struggled with its involvement in the early days. "Once we had engaged, the magnitude of the challenge ISMA was attempting to address became all too apparent. For, however clear the wording of the ISMA Code appeared on paper, the interpretation of what it actually required meant different things to different people.

"I recall in particular, a painful visit to our office in Limassol to assist in our initial external audit. It soon became readily apparent that the three Class Societies – DNV, LR and GL – appointed to conduct external certification audits had very different views on interpretation. Without naming names, one society took a pragmatic view, one an extremely bureaucratic one, while the third member was keen to promote a different route entirely, supported by extensive consulting fees. Not surprisingly, the end result was a negative one which didn't go down well with our staff in the different departments who took issue with a number of observations and non-compliances."

Despite these teething troubles, he concludes, "I have fond memories of the early years of ISMA. It provided a means to collaborate rather than compete in a number of key areas and the Code, while far from perfect, did help to pave the way for the introduction of the IMO's ISM Code later in the same decade."

Once the ISMA and ISM Codes had been established, the Association started to shift its focus onto becoming a representative voice for the whole industry and working on behalf of all ship managers across the sector.

Former President Joachim Meyer (1993-95) remembers the novelty of competitors openly discussing what were previously thought of as 'secrets', while later President Peter Cremers (1999-2001) remarks on the unique 'togetherness' and 'purposeful agenda' of a group of industry professional working together to discuss issues and potential solutions (see separate boxes).

In 2003, the association played a leading role in an industry-wide initiative. The Key Performance Indicators

(KPI) project was a set of standardised performance indicators that was developed as an incentive to improve the reputation of the still fairly new shipmanagement sector.

The aim was to develop a standardised tool for communicating operational performance in a transparent manner using a set of mathematical KPIs measured on a performance scale from zero to 100. Examples of where the performance indicators were applied includes: budget performance, crew disciplinary frequency and contained spills. The project has since been passed over to BIMCO, which has pledged to ensure the system's ongoing

development will take into account the broader needs of shipowners and operators as part of the continued development of the KPI standard.

After five years of development, including input from influential stakeholders such as BIMCO, INTERTANKO, INTERCARGO, ICS, OCIMF and the IMO, the system and its corresponding set of quality standards were unveiled for the first time at InterManager's AGM in November 2010.

Following its launch in 2011, the project went from strength to strength, receiving endorsements from the European Commission,



Ship Managers are the most vibrant, professional and creative part of the shipping community and InterManager does a great job of representing them in so many industry fora. IMEC and InterManager share quite a few Members and for this reason our objectives are often aligned and we, more than any other association, see the difference they make on the ground rather than in meeting rooms. I would like to congratulate InterManager and Kuba in particular, on such an auspicious anniversary and wish them all the best in their, next 'crusade'.

Francesco Gargiulo, Chief Executive Officer, International Maritime Employers' Council Ltd.



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the International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA), the Nautical Institute and the IMO, for shaping not only the way that the shipmanagement sector operated, but also the way in which it was perceived.

Former President (1992-93) and later General Secretary (2007-10) Guy Morel recalls the KPI project and viewed it as great progress in the InterManager story. "I am proud to say that InterManager was the first body to seriously work on the subject of introducing KPIs in ship operations.

"A long collaboration with the University of Trondheim led us to create and present the first ever coherent set of Shipping KPIs, and I am very proud of this achievement. This was a common work of many of our members and I am thankful to them for their enthusiasm and time investment in this project.

"When I retired from InterManager, our Executive Committee realised that the implementation of a shipping-wide KPI computerised system would require resources that InterManager did not have. We therefore approached BIMCO, with its strong financial resources, and agreed with them that they would take over the task of distributing the system to the shipping world. This is what they have done with success. Long live the Shipping KPIs!"

Later President (2012-16) Gerardo Borroneo believes the Association's introduction of KPIs was "one of its most important contributions to driving enhanced operating standards establishing, for the first time, a platform to allow the benchmarking of results versus objectives. This effort ushered into use data analytics, which today has become the symbol of efficiency in almost all aspects of business and economics" (see also box).

Meanwhile, in 2005 the Association had taken the decision to change its direction and name in a bold move to increase membership and become more inclusive, signalling a turning point for ISMA. It relaunched as InterManager, with the new aim of being a trade association for all ship managers (including in-house as well as third party) crew managers and other shipping-related entities.

Since its inception in 1991 ISMA had faced heavy criticism from leading figures in the shipmanagement industry over its failure to secure membership from the big companies in the

*continues on page 34*



On behalf of the Cyprus Shipping Chamber we offer our sincere congratulations to InterManager on the occasion of completing 30 successful years in representing and servicing the needs of the ship management industry globally and we warmly wish InterManager similar, if not bigger, future success.

Since its establishment, InterManager has indeed been an important associate of our Shipping Chamber and its Member-companies. We also we take particular pride in having the CEO of our Chamber's Member-company as the current President of InterManager and we look forward to continuing our excellent cooperation in the years to come.

Cyprus Shipping Chamber



**HARRY GILBERT**  
PRESIDENT (1997-1999)

"When I was elected President of ISMA in the 1990s the Code of Ship Management Practice was well established. The Code had been developed by the 'founding fathers' of ISMA in order to establish a common, auditable standard of ship management practice.

"The ISMA Code preceded the mandatory ISM Code and once the IMO Code had been implemented the raison d'être for the ISMA Code, and indeed ISMA itself, was questioned. Ideas were considered such as sharing training facilities, common purchasing platforms and other shared services but unfortunately ship managers are very competitive and none of these ideas were taken up.

"It did however become obvious that ship managers needed and deserved a voice in the shipping industry and ISMA, and later InterManager, became that voice in the same way that Intercargo and Intertanko are voices and influencers for dry cargo and tanker owners."



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**PETER CREMERS**  
**PRESIDENT (1999-2001)**

“How time flies! Thirty years is quite the milestone, so please accept my heartiest congratulations on InterManager’s 30th anniversary this year.

“ISMA, as it was known back then, stood at the cradle of an infant ship management industry that was slowly but steadily carving a role for itself in the shipping space – a role that has continued to grow and mature ever since. The novel idea to introduce quality assurance principles, systems and standards to manage ships was undoubtedly kick-started then and there.

“We, as ship managers, wanted to make a difference – not only by offering competitive crewing solutions, but more so by driving and delivering a quality, value-added service as the main differentiator. What was certainly unusual and unique in those days, for me at least, was seeing industry professionals seated together around one table, discussing common problems and solutions, whilst the bosses were out there fighting for market share.

“It was this ‘togetherness’ that has served our industry well. As with most associations, a united front is often more important than the agenda, and at ISMA, we were fortunate to have both unity as well as a clear, purposeful agenda to make ship managers the trusted, value-added partners of shipowners that we are today.”



**RAJAISH BAJPAEE**  
**PRESIDENT (2003-2006)**

“My Congratulations to InterManager on its 30th birthday. Looking back at the turbulent period from mid- to late-1980s when the shipping industry was in a crisis and a ‘blame game’ was on, a lot of that blame was heaped on the nascent third-party ship management industry through naming and shaming publicly with such remarks as the ‘cowboys’ of the shipping industry.

“I joined the association at the outset on the invitation of Capt. Meyer and was involved in the work of the Code Committee first as a member and later as its chairman. The strict, independent, and impartial audit by the Audit Body, comprising three leading classification societies, ensured compliance to the ISMA Code which became the sole criteria for maintaining membership status.

“The realisation of the gap in the regulatory regime identified through the root cause analysis of some major accidents involving the loss of life, led to the IMO legislating a safety management code (ISM) in 1993 which became mandatory from 1998. Soon ISMA members began to question the need for the additional costs of auditing which resulted in shrinking membership of ISMA. Something had to be done and soon.

“This was the trigger for the Shipping KPI initiative – conceptualised, planned, and executed during my more than one term of Presidency. During the same period, I presided over the transformation of the association from a ‘cozy club’ to a ‘trade association’, combined with a new name and new logo. This could not have been possible without the initiative of Roberto Giorgi and the unflinching support of my fellow board members. ISMA was reborn as InterManager.”



**BJØRN JEBSEN**  
PRESIDENT (2016-2020)

"I would first like to congratulate InterManager on its 30-year anniversary and salute the men and women that have worked with and supported the organisation during these 30 years.

"Jepsens has been an active supporter of InterManager from its foundation as ISMA. We have always believed that quality of service and operation is critical for a successful, safe and responsible shipping business. The establishment of ISMA was a key step in introducing universal quality standards to the ship management business in the form of the ISM Code and ISO Standards.

"For an organisation like InterManager to be an effective and influential promoter of the interests of the ship management industry, it is important to have a membership that reflects a large part of the business. As a former President I can say that it has been a challenge to get the backing of some of the larger ship management companies. Not an unusual 'common good' problem.

"This being said, the development over the last 12-18 months has been very positive with several new members joining. So, a job well done by the management of InterManager.

"The Covid crisis has shown the importance of having the ship management companies work together to solve our common challenges. The recent 'One Voice' initiative will hopefully get the support of the entire maritime industry. Working together, we can be 'Stronger Together' and contribute to a robust, safe, and sustainable business for the future."



**ROBERTO GIORGI**  
PRESIDENT (2008-2010)

"When I started my role as President of InterManager my main challenges were promoting and raising the profile of the association with a much stronger focus on the people/seafarers' condition standards and how we could enhance their important role in the global economy.

"I consider the main achievements, aside the KPI project development, were directed towards people issues, such as the campaigning against piracy, the strong crusade against crew criminalisation and the continued open defense of seafarers' rights.

"There are a number of memories which one day I shall share but definitely one of the best moments was the release of the two Indian officers wrongly detained in South Korea for the Hebei Spirit affair. On this issue I would like to thank not only Mr Skuld on a great job but also Kitack Lim, in his former role [at Port of Busan]. That campaign, which we led together with V.Ships, was fully supported at global level by all the maritime associations.

"Despite all the fully combined efforts by all the associations during the last 10 years, still there is a lot we need to do to raise the important role of our seafarers. The Covid-19 emergency demonstrates how fragile and unchanged the sector is, regarding the important work of our crew. I strongly suggest that InterManager and all the other international bodies should concentrate on improving the recognition for the role of the crew at a level of 'essential workers', with all the benefits involved. The global economy depends on sea transportation – and people are essential!"



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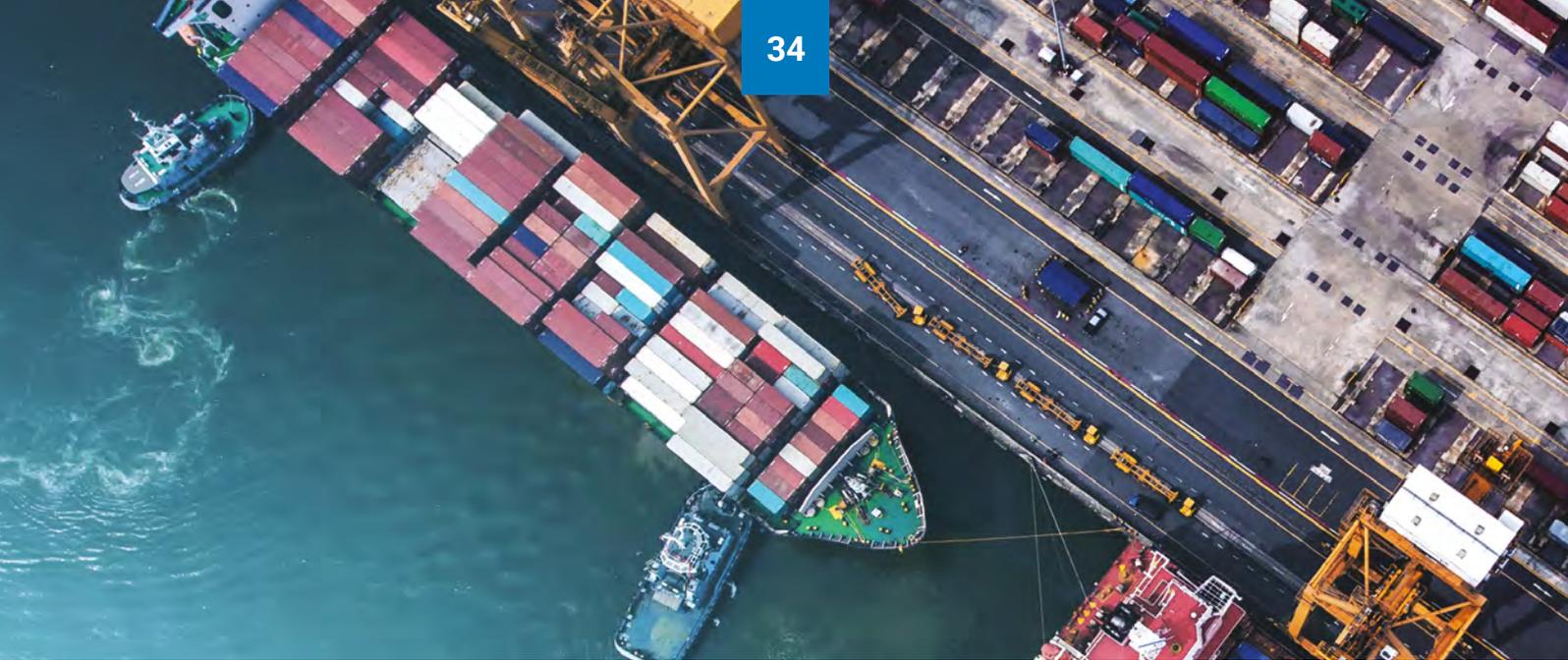
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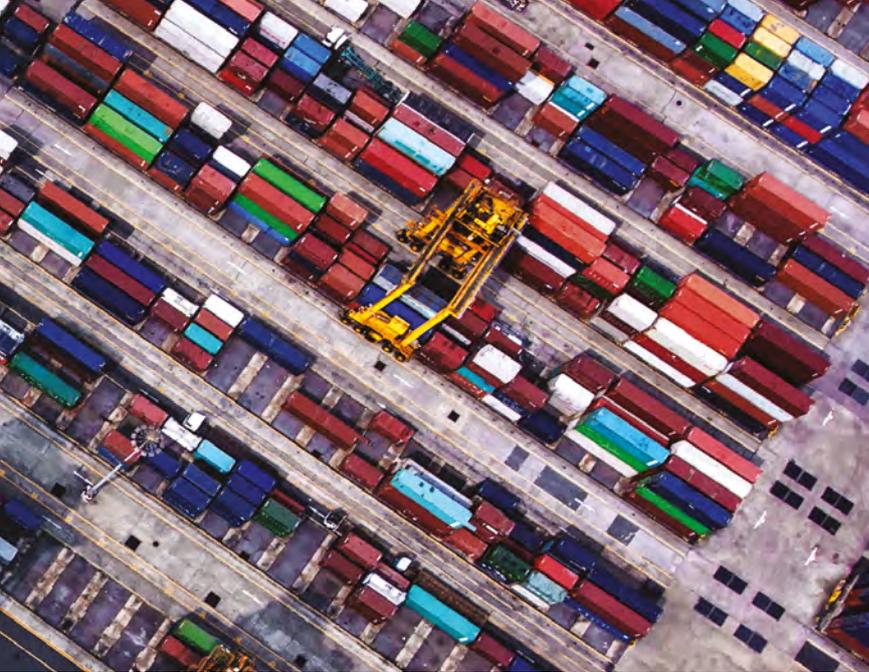
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industry. The association had just 13 full members and 14 associates on its books at the time of its relaunch.

Mr Morel returned to the association as Secretary General amid fears from members that the association was dying. At the time InterManager was trying to form close relationships with ship owner members as it felt the goals of ISMA were too similar to others like INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO and BIMCO. With its new name and new direction, the association managed to align itself with a number of ship owner groups. Things started to look up and after a lot of promotion and encouragement to join the association, InterManager began to see an influx of new members signing up.

Following its relaunch, InterManager's focus started to shift towards the human element, including crew welfare and competence building. Part of this was to support existing crew manager members and attract new ones, particularly in the Philippines which supplied more than 30% of the seafarers to the international fleet, former President Ole Stene (2006-08) recalls (see box).

InterManager really came into its own and showed how it can lead the shipmanagement industry at times of crisis when two seafarers were arrested and held in South Korea following a collision. In December 2007, a tug-towed crane barge owned by Samsung Heavy



**GERARDO ('DITO')  
BORROMEIO**  
PRESIDENT (2012-2016)

Industries lurched towards the anchored Hebei Spirit, a Hong Kong-registered oil tanker, and punched three holes into her hull, causing some 10,800 tonnes of oil to leak out. As a result the Captains of the tug, as well as the Hebei Spirit's Captain and Chief Officer, were arrested and held in South Korea, pending a trial.

A first judgement saw the two crew members acquitted but they were forced to stay in South Korea as prosecutors appealed against the decision. In December 2009, 12 months after the incident, the Court of Appeal reversed the ruling and the men were sentenced to 12 and 18 months in prison. The shipmanagement industry was hugely critical of the way these two hardworking crew members had been detained in South Korea.

Appalled at the imprisonment of the seafarers, InterManager led protests against the injustices, with a number of initiatives. These included:

- Encouraging all seafarers from all members to send a personal message of protest to the Korean authorities;
- Adding a clause to any contract InterManager members agreed with Korean firms, indicating that both parties supported the legitimate request for freedom of the two seafarers;
- Appealing to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations for it to intervene with the Korean Government.

InterManager has been heavily involved in a number of other initiatives to help improve the safety and welfare of seafarers, including enclosed spaces deaths, onboard alarms, seafarer fatigue, the single window system, and paperless shipping, to name but a few (see previous sections).

In 2011, InterManager joined other associations, including BIMCO, ICS, INTERCARGO and INTERTANKO, in launching the Save Our Seafarers campaign. The

"From its inception, InterManager set out to raise the standards of shipmanagement in terms of global best practices, while moving to enhance the overall image of ship managers as reliable and strategic partners of this very dynamic industry; an industry which unfortunately the general public does not get to always fully appreciate.

"While it can be viewed as one of its continuing challenges – that of ensuring the relevance and strategic importance of third party shipmanagement services – for InterManager, this has been its opportunity to shine, reinforcing its invaluable role to the maritime industry.

"As a global trade association, we can be very proud of the way that InterManager has punched way above its weight, particularly in its meaningful contributions through engaged discussions at the IMO, as well as in other industry fora.

"On the occasion of its 30th Anniversary, I would like to offer a toast to Mark O'Neil – InterManager's current President, for his creative leadership, to Capt. Kuba Szymanski, the indefatigable Secretary General of the association, as the yeoman who ensures that InterManager's lights never go out 24/7. It is through their dedicated efforts that InterManager is stronger today than it has ever been – a shining beacon of how quality shipmanagement can make a difference to the maritime industry.

"And to the entire membership of InterManager, a big thank you for the continued belief and support of this trade association. Your combined involvement has helped shape and defined the dynamic and purposeful association that is InterManager."



## ALISTAIR EVITT PRESIDENT (2010-2012)

“There were a number of high points and challenges during my tenure as President from 2010 to 2012.

“The ‘horror’ of piracy dominated my term as President of InterManager but in that capacity I was fortunate enough to be invited to chair the ‘Save our Seafarers’ (SOS) campaign. SOS was a pan industry initiative to raise governmental awareness of the atrocities and consequences of piracy in the Indian Ocean.

“This was probably the first time that all the recognised international shipping representatives (ICS, ITF, IMEC, BIMCO, INTERTANKO, INTERCARGO, InterManager, P&I Clubs and many more) united in a common cause. I was honoured to accept, on behalf of SOS, a ‘special’ Seatrade Award at the Guildhall in London and given the opportunity to address the awards ceremony.

“It was a very rewarding and proud moment for InterManager and showed what we, the maritime industry, can achieve when we all work together and pull in the same direction.”

initiative was aimed at encouraging millions of people around the world to put pressure on their national Governments to crack down on piracy. At the time of the launch, 225 seafarers were being held hostage by pirates, remembers then InterManager President Alistair Evitt (see box).

More recently, InterManager has been focusing on the recruitment of seafarers, encouraging young people into the industry and the welfare of crew members. Seafarer fatigue has been an area of focus for InterManager, and in 2017 the association revealed the findings of its MARTHA fatigue study to the IMO with the aim of highlighting how the issue should be tackled at a global level.

One of the biggest challenges to hit the sector in recent years has been the Covid-19 pandemic that saw the world come to a shocking standstill in 2020. Crew members were left in crisis as many were stuck onboard for months at a time, due to a reduction in crew changes and port lockdowns. InterManager has been working on behalf of crew members since the pandemic began. This vital work continues as it fights for vaccination roll-outs for all seafarers.

InterManager is currently working with the IMO and other NGOs in speeding up international efforts to enable vaccinations to be available to all seafarers globally.

It is no exaggeration to say that over the past 30 years, InterManager has truly revolutionised ship and crew management. As the only organisation dedicated to representing these sectors, it is internationally recognised for working on behalf of members to ensure their views and needs are considered within the worldwide maritime industry. There is no doubt that the challenges it faced in its early days have helped shape the association into the success it is today. Through the hard work and dedication of all 14 Presidents and the secretariat over the previous three decades, it has earned its position as the well-respected, leading voice of shipmanagement. 

“

We very much welcome the opportunity to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of InterManager. For many years the ITF and InterManager have worked on a collaborative basis for the benefit of the world’s seafarers so that best practice for ship managers is promoted worldwide. In particular, the InterManager Secretary General, Kuba Szymanski, has worked closely with the ITF on a number of projects, and he is a passionate advocate for seafarers.

Steve Yandell, Assistant Coordinator, ITF Seafarers and Inland Navigation

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