EFFICIENT AND COMPLIANT FUEL MANAGEMENT
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By Olav Nortun,
Chief Executive Officer, Thome Group

This edition of TGN focuses on fuel management and energy efficiency which is a vitally important aspect of ship management, especially in light of the upcoming regulatory changes regarding the IMO’s sulphur cap on fuel to below 0.5% in 2020.

We have many challenges ahead to ensure we choose the right solution for each of the vessels we manage as there are a variety of options depending on the type of vessel, the ports it visits, the global availability of low sulphur fuel and whether the installation of scrubbers is a viable solution.

I am confident that we have the right personnel with the necessary experience to work closely with our partners to choose the most appropriate options in each case.

I am also pleased to read that we have won the best safety performance award from Pertamina for one of its Thome managed vessels called the Navigator Pluto. This is particularly pleasing as this vessel falls into the ‘Above 15 years old’ category which indicates a sustained effort from both crew and the office in maintaining such high safety standards.

The Thome Group’s annual conference is also reported in this issue and is always one of the year’s highlights especially with its overall theme “Partnering for Success”. The Group has always been at the forefront of the industry with initiatives designed to help improve the welfare of its office staff, crew members and their families. It is also an exciting time for TSM Group for the launch of the new TSM Privilege Card which is a first of its kind in the industry, bringing benefits and privileges to our Filipino Seafarers.

I also think you will enjoy reading about our seafarers’ experiences when they take time out to enjoy some shore leave. It is so important that we all take time to relax and unwind from the stresses and strains from our work life so we can return to it with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I have.
Efficient fuel management has always been an important and vital component when managing vessels and with the upcoming sulphur cap in 2020, it has become even more critical than ever. Fuel consumption represents the largest part of a ship’s total operating costs so it is vitally important that we have robust fuel management plans in place to make sure we use fuel as efficiently as possible.

There are some interesting articles in this issue on this very subject and I would recommend that you read and take note of the very good advice given by the authors.

There are many factors that affect a ship’s efficiency from its trim, ballasting, overall speed, engine performance to how clean the hull is to reduce drag from biofouling. Power management and ensuring that machinery is maintained and operated correctly is critical to vessel operation and is good ship management standard. Thome has fuel and lubs monitoring software and a technical support organisation ashore whom monitor and guides, however it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure the vessel is operated in the most cost effective manner.

The industry also has now the added complexity of the upcoming sulphur cap regulations to comply with in 2020 with options ranging from the use of scrubbers to switching to low-sulphur fuels.

Preparations for these alternatives need to be planned well in advance as they will all take time to implement or retrofit.

With many port authorities banning the use of open-loop scrubbers and the high cost of installation, it then comes down to whether or not there will be enough low-sulphur fuel alternatives available around the world and the implications that this will have for the industry as a whole.

However, I am confident that the Thome Group will work with its principals, charterers and other stakeholders to find the right solutions for their vessels to manage this changeover as smoothly as possible and ensure that we can continue operation without any major disruptions to vessel trading.

Ship management is about being the best provider of services to the satisfaction of the owners and charterers. Stringent fuel and power management ensures that we remain competitive and offer the extra edge.
Besides the focus on propulsion efficiency, the efficient operation of auxiliary machinery also contributes to fuel savings.

Optimising machinery load and minimising parallel operation ensures that equipment running hours are maintained as low as practicable, which reduces energy consumption and also minimises maintenance requirements. This not only applies to generators, but also consumers such as pumps, boilers, fans, compressors, air-conditioning and refrigeration units, and ballast and cargo handling equipment etc. To practise this effectively, close co-ordination between the departments on board is essential.

Often two machinery units may need to be used simultaneously, because of operational requirements to meet high load demands, or for reliability during critical operations where stoppage of the machinery cannot be afforded. However, it should be ensured that as soon as the operation allows, the additional equipment should be stopped, and operations continued with a single unit. Good equipment maintenance and regular performance testing at maximum loads is vital for reliability and availability, which enables proper utilisation for energy efficiency.

Only one auxiliary engine should be operated as far as possible, unless additional power requirements from cargo related operations like unloading, tank cleaning, cargo heating, inerting etc. cannot be met by a single generator. After ‘Finished with Engines’, with due situational assessment, ship staff should stop steering gear motors, motors for anchor handling and mooring, fire pumps for anchor wash, navigational equipment that is not required, pumps for main engine plant, fuel oil purifier, additional engine room ventilation fans and additional generators. Main cooling water pumps should be stopped wherever vessels are provided with harbour service pumps.

With centrifugal pumps used for the service system, the flow rate should be maintained at optimum levels for the process needs, by isolating the system branches that are not needed, and by throttling the discharge valve. Frequency converter drives can assist to achieve this by Revolutions Per Minute (RPM) control.

The minimum number of cargo pumps should be operated at a time to achieve the required manifold pressure, with an individual pump running at maximum capacity, instead of several pumps running parallel at reduced capacities.

Auxiliary boiler firing should be minimised, by setting up cutting in and cutting out pressures properly, and through operations that ensure minimum steam dumping. Optimum air fuel ratio, well maintained boiler burning equipment, clean gas side and water side, good steam trap condition and good insulation will play a role in ensuring fuel economy. Boiler water treatment and blow down should be well controlled. Excessive blow down causes loss of energy, while inadequate blow down will lead to poor boiler water condition and deposits that obstruct heat transfer.

In cold weather, switch off the air condition compressor to avoid it running on unloaders. Leakages of all kind (steam, water, oil, air) should be prevented, as these contribute to energy loss, besides being a housekeeping and safety concern.
Fuel efficiency has become a key component for shipping companies with the cost of fuel often accounting for more than half of the total cost of operation. With propulsion consuming major part of the fuel that a vessel consumes, it is vital to look at how the energy consumption for propulsion can be minimized. There are two key drivers for improving efficiency; optimizing the hull design of the vessel and reducing efficiency losses by improving operation.

Owners may optimize their newbuilding as much as possible and for existing vessels, they may evaluate retrofitting. Operationally, how well we maintain the vessel and cooperate with different units is vital. What is in our hands is to reduce efficiency losses by improving operations. Some drivers that need to be focused on, are as follows:

- **Weather Routing / Voyage Planning** – Using weather routing services, and reviewing the course throughout the voyage can ensure that energy losses due to impacts from adverse weather are minimised.

- **Trim Optimisation** – Every vessel has a range of optimum trim for a given speed and draft. It should be endeavoured to maintain vessel’s trim accordingly, through appropriate load planning and distribution of ballast and cargo (and bunkers, to a limited extent). It needs to be ensured that vessel’s stability and stress allowance conditions are not compromised in the process. Fuel savings of up to 4% can be affected through good trim optimisation. For certain ship types, in particular those with higher speeds, slimmer body, pronounced bulbous bow and flat stern, trim will have more impact.

- **Speed Optimisation** – Depending on the voyage distance and indications on lay can, most economical speed should be adopted, in close co-ordination with the charterer. Using high speed for advanced arrival will result in higher energy consumption in comparison to operating at lower speed and arriving closer to the berthing time. For deciding on optimum speed, impacts on energy consumption from need to run auxiliary blowers and auxiliary boilers at low speed should also be factored in.

- **Ballast Management** – Carrying less ballast (less displacement) will assist in energy efficiency, provided vessel’s stability and trim optimisation is not compromised. Also maintaining minimal sediment levels leads to more cargo capacity and energy efficiency. Further, employing gravity assisted ballasting, and sequential ballast exchange (instead of flow through ballast exchange) are more energy efficient practises.
Hull Condition - Through regular evaluation of main engine power consumption and comparison against ideal power requirement, deterioration in hull and propulsion conditions can be picked up early for remedial measures to reduce resistance timely.

Main ship-board staff impact on improving operations

» The Master: The commitment to ship-board energy efficiency is vital to motivate entire crew in that direction. Good weather routing and vessel speed optimisation are the areas through which Master can significantly contribute towards fuel efficiency.

» The Chief Officer (2nd in command): Plays a significant role regarding cargo loading/unloading operations, ballast management operations, trim optimisation, etc.

» The Chief Engineer: Plays a major role in technical evaluation of condition and performance of engines and other machinery for improving efficiency.

» The Second Engineer: By virtue of being the most engaged person in the engine department regarding the day to day operation and maintenance of various systems, plays a significant role in ensuring that all machinery performs efficiently and is utilised optimally.
How a Vessels’ Speed Affects Fuel Consumption

By Nischey Chopra, Project Manager, Technical Support

A vessel’s fuel consumption for propulsion is the energy needed to propel the vessel through the water at a given vessel speed. The relationship between fuel consumption & vessel speed is exponential.

Power a Speed
A ship with a 10% speed reduction reduces the power and coherent fuel consumption by 27%. However, to assess the total fuel saving on a voyage basis we have to take into account the added time taken to sail a given distance due to the lower speed, yielding a total fuel saving of approx. 19%

Example: A cargo vessel at 56,000 DWT presented in Figure 1, with a 13% speed reduction saved almost 40% of the daily fuel consumption.

Speed management is applicable for all vessels types
It is very important to look into factors affecting the speed of the vessel. One of the most significant factors is hull fouling. This can be indicated by an increase in power required to maintain the same speed at similar draft conditions over a period of time.

With increasing fuel costs, it has become very important to monitor a hull’s condition closely, for proper planning of hull cleaning intervals. With proper monitoring of a vessel’s speed and fuel consumption performance, a significant fuel cost saving can be achieved.

Speed Consumption Performance Indicators – ISO 19030
The table below shows various performance indicators and methods as per ISO 19030 for vessel speed performance with regards to hull fouling

Ships Heading, Draft (FWD and AFT), time and date, wind speed and direction, speed over ground, speed through water, shaft RPM, shaft torque and Main Engine fuel oil consumption.
Other additional parameters are: water depth, rudder angle, atmospheric pressure

Engine Performance is a very important factor in optimizing fuel consumption

Engine fuel efficiency can be measured by the Engine’s Specific Fuel Oil Consumption (SFOC), which measures the amount of fuel needed per KW Hr. This is normally checked by measuring engine performance regularly.

The following Main Engine defects will effect the SFOC:

- Turbocharger: partly blocked or dirty nozzle ring, turbine or compressor
- Dirty intake air filters, Δp /diff press increase more than 50 mm H2O
- Partly blocked charged air coolers, Δp increase more than 100 mm H2O
- Worn injection pump elements
- Worn injection nozzles
- Increased exhaust gas back pressure more than 100 mm H2O

It is very important to get accurate data from the vessel for proper performance evaluation and analysis.
To comply with the forthcoming Sulphur Cap regulations, scrubbers offer the ability to use conventional high sulphur fuels (expected to have lower costs than low-sulphur fuels), and consequently a significant return on investment, in spite of the extensive capital expense increased maintenance costs and overall fuel consumption. However, only a small fraction of vessels are presently adopting the solution, due to extent of preparations and initial costs needed for scrubber installation, uncertainty about vessel owners’ ability to recover the investment if they are not the fuel purchasers, and the possibility of the prohibition of scrubbers use (mainly open loop type) in increasing number of ports and coastal areas.

Efficient fuel management will be important to ensure compliance for the majority of the vessels which will rely on usage of compliant fuels having a sulphur content below 0.5%. Challenges arise not only from the need of the alignment of procedures, systems, familiarisation of ships’ crews and shore staff with the requirements of the new regulation, but also from the uncertainty about costs, quality and availability of compliant fuels. Careful identification of the requirements in the vessel specific Ship Implementation Plans, and regular following up on the outlined measures, is therefore vital.

To avoid unforeseen problems, managers, ship owners and charterers need to ensure that all steps are well co-ordinated and completed in a timely fashion, including the stripping and preparation of high sulphur fuel tanks, bunkering of compliant fuel, and commencement of its consumption, preferably by early December 2019. In any cases of an inability to comply with the deadline, a Fuel Oil Non Availability Report will only be accepted by the port state control if supporting evidence is supplied regarding the diligent efforts made to procuring compliant fuel.

For distillate type compliant fuels to be used for long periods; low lubricity, low viscosity, low flash point and cold flow properties (due to paraffinic content) will need to be tackled appropriately. While vessels trading in the ECA are already prepared for this, other vessels will need to evaluate the requirements for the installation of coolers, modification of boiler combustion control system, a review of procedures for bunker testing and dosing additives for lubricity, and a thorough review of practices in relation to performance monitoring, planned maintenance and minimum spares stock.

Non-distillate grade compliant fuels are expected to be available in a wide range of compositions varying from source to source, which poses concerns about compatibility, and the presence of undesirable contaminants and cat fines. Strong procedures need to be enforced to prevent co-mingling, with enhanced testing of bunker samples and fuel system check samples to be carried out and maintaining stability enhancement additives for dosing whenever needed. Due to the low tolerance of co-mingling, and the consequent inability to load bunkers on top of existing bunkers on board, the bunker intake capacity may be limited, further highlighting the need for closer co-ordination of all parties for efficient bunker procurement.

Viewing the uncertainties related to the marine fuel market, vessels will also need to maintain the flexibility to use any type of compliant fuel (distillate, blended or residual) through strong procedures of fuel management and segregation. Usage of appropriate lubricants of a lower base number would need to be implemented in conjunction with low sulphur fuel consumption, irrespective of the fuel grade.
Climate change has been a hot topic for many years, and has its fair share of skeptics. The 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change set a target to limit global warming to below 2°C (degrees). In order to achieve this target, we need to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions such as CO2 from shipping which currently accounts for 2.3% of global CO2 emissions. The IMO has set an ambitious target of a 50% reduction in GHG, based on 2008 baseline, by 2050.

In April 2018, the IMO adopted an Initial IMO Strategy on the reduction of GHG emissions from ships. The initial strategy will address short term measures (2018-2023) and will be revised in 2023. Current proposals for the short-term measures include further improvement of the existing energy efficiency framework with a focus on Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) and the strengthening of the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP).

The current solutions of using alternative fuels such as LNG, whilst going some way to reaching the targets, will not be sufficient to meet them in isolation. If we are to get close to the targets with alternative fuels then collaboration between all the parties concerned e.g. owners, managers, charterers and port operators, is required by driving efficiencies and reducing idling times to increase the utilization of the global fleets.

The end goal appears to be an end to the use of fossil fuels in shipping, and the introduction of zero emission vessels. Unfortunately there are few, if any, viable and cost effective options available at present, or even in the foreseeable future. It will require a substantial amount of investment in R&D to find these viable solutions against a background, in the current market, of low operating margins and limited access to finance.

In order to meet the targets, the zero emission vessels will need to enter into service in the next decade.
Test Your Fuel to Reduce the Risk of Engine Issues

By Balaji Krishnamurthy, Fleet Group Manager, Fleet Group 10

Fuel bunkering is an important aspect of vessels’ operations and there are several aspects related to this – sourcing, supply, sampling, testing – before the fuel is put into use.

The Bunker Delivery Note (BDN) is the only legal document when there is a bunker quantity and quality dispute, be it with the bunker supplier or the charterers. This is also the document that is used by external authorities to determine compliance with emission regulations. Hence, it is critical that the data entered in this document is verified prior to signing.

Since 1st January 2019, there are revisions to the declaration made by the bunker supplier in the BDN and these need to be verified as well.

Why test the fuel?
Bunker fuel oil quality testing is important as it helps reduce the risk of engine problems and forewarns the operator of any specific issues.

It is important that the samples are representative of the bunkered fuel for the analysis results to be truly helpful.

Prior to the commencement of bunkering, there should be an agreement on the location of the sampling point. Preferably this should be carried out at the ship’s manifold. The collection of the sample will be by continuous dripping and witnessed by all parties. This is not only stated in the regulation but also helps in dispute resolution, should one arise. For the same reason, it should be ensured that the sample bottle seal numbers are recorded on the BDN.

Even a simple issue such as pouring the contents of the containers, in which the sample has been collected, into the individual sample bottles is equally important. The contents should be stirred and poured 25% at a time into each sample bottle to have a homogeneous sample.

Only those sample bottles whose filling was witnessed, should be sealed and the seal numbers recorded in the BDN.

The analysis report should be available prior to the newly bunkered fuel being used and therefore sufficient reserves should be available on board.

How does the fuel analysis report help?
Analysis as per ISO 8217 advises on certain important basic parameters that guide operational improvement. These include: density (helps select correct gravity disc for the purifier), viscosity (helps adjustment of temperature), content of catalytic fines and water (helps to decide if increased settling and reduced purifier throughput is required). Depending on the experience and source of the fuel, certain enhanced tests may be recommended to identify problems arising from suspected contamination.

In conclusion, safe operation largely depends on the awareness of the quality of the fuel being used on board. A perfect example of the good old saying “forewarned is forearmed”.
Take-over of DP3 DSV Southern Star

By Sanjay Dasmunshy, Fleet Group Manager, Thome Oil & Gas, Thome Offshore

Thome Offshore took over management of the DP3 vessel Southern Star on 15th April 2019. The 112 metre, DP3, 135 man POB, Saturation/Air Dive and ROV operations vessel, is the most advanced IACS Classed DSV ever built in China for export and complies with the latest IMCA Codes of Practice and industry safety standards.

Vessel Capabilities:
- SURF Installation
- Deepwater Intervention
- Saturation & Air Diving Support
- ROV Support
- Support Light & Medium Deep-Water Construction

This being the first DP3 vessel in the TOM fleet, maximum attendance from the office was initiated during the takeover.

Preparing the vessel for her next deployment was a mammoth challenge due to the short 2 week window but we managed to get her going on time and were able to ensure that we have an outstanding and reliable vessel that can be operated competitively and flexibly in the field.

Her operational excellence features two moon pools and has a 300 metre rated, 15 man saturation diving system, with two self-propelled hyperbaric lifeboats and has a 150 ton, active heave compensated crane.

Its ROV hangar can house two deep-water, construction class vehicles, and the DP3 rated vessel’s diesel-electric propulsion system is supplied by ABB with VOITH main thrusters providing additional capability including active roll compensation and Rolls Royce bow thrusters.

She has three independent engine rooms and a unique 3-split redundancy concept for optimum DP capability. It can also be operated with a 2-split redundancy concept for flexibility of operations and flexible operation of the power plant.

Her lifting capacity includes a 150 tonne SWL, 3000msw AHC knuckle boom subsea crane to support all deep-sea construction activities.

A Helideck of 22 m diameter ensures fast transfer of crew and operating staff.

She is technically the most advanced vessel in the fleet to date and we are confident of handling her most efficiently to the best of the owner’s and charterer’s satisfaction.

World’s First IMO Type A LNT Design LNG Containment System

By Anshuman Sabbarwal, Vessel Manager, Fleet Group 9

A naming ceremony was held for the LNG carrier Saga Dawn on 13th March 2019, a ship owned by Saga LNG Shipping and its first ship at the China Merchant Heavy Industry (CMHI) Jiangsu yard.

The ship is the world’s first LNG Carrier featuring an IMO type A LNG containment system, based on the LNT A-BOX Design patented by LNG New Technologies (LNT) and is powered by a Wartsila Dual Fuel Main and Auxiliary engines.

The Saga LNG owner and founder is Land Mark Capital Pte Ltd, a Singaporean company with its operational base in Shanghai, China.

Thome Ship Management is Saga LNG’s partner for commissioning, trials, takeover and technical management.

Saga LNG Shipping was represented by Founder David Wu with Truls Rosenberg and Jonathan Verswijver

Thome Ship Management was represented by Capt. Ashish Malik, Head of Procurement Transformation and Mr. Prasanna Viswanathan, Senior Vessel Manager Fleet Group 9, during the naming ceremony.

Saga LNG aims to build, own and operate small to mid-size LNG vessels using the LNT A-BOX Technology

The vessel had already completed its successful sea trials during December 2018, gas trials will start in May 2019 and the delivery of the vessel is expected in June this year.
Management of visitors onboard vessels has always been important. It reflects the company, management onboard and the individual. Every visitor onboard should be treated with the same attention, respect and service. They are all important and must be seen as customers.

It is essentially customer management and everyone onboard must contribute and work together to create a good atmosphere onboard. If we compare to our daily lives ashore, we all appreciate feeling welcomed, positive energy and good service. It gives a good impression and we feel valued. There is no difference onboard. All visitors want to feel welcomed and appreciated.

The style onboard also reflects on all of us. Good housekeeping, dress code – uniforms or proper PPE is essential to be an impression of safety culture, management and crew competency.

Who are the visitors onboard? Visitors can be characterized in many categories – owners’ representatives, oil major inspectors, charters representatives, class surveyors, surveyors (cargo, bunkers, insurers, pre-purchase but not limited to), Port State inspectors, company representatives, makers representatives / service engineers, service companies and the list goes on.

It is important all visitors are treated well.

A few guidelines on hospitality management onboard:

Prepare for visit
- All visits in port, anchorage and on-voyage should be well planned. Complete all checklists, good housekeeping, instructions to all officers and crew on dress code, prepare food and beverages and prepare spaces that will be accessed.
- Make sure that all is well prepared for visitors and that they are taken care of. You should plan to attend to the visitors and give them attention.
- All papers work required must be well prepared.

Welcoming onboard
- One of the most critical moment is the welcoming and the first minutes onboard. All people will form an impression during the boarding and the initial interaction with the crew onboard. Ensure that the guests are met at the gangway, formalities followed and brought to meet the senior officer/s.
- The meeting must be courteous, informative and give a feeling of being planned and in control.
- If the initial impression is not good, it is difficult to change this opinion.

Hospitality
- Greet them as you would into your own home. Ensure that they have a cabins / space to change, leave their belongings. Offer them something to eat and drink. Let them feel comfortable, valued and at ease.

Understanding the Human Psychology
- We must have an understanding of the human psychology. The visitor/s may have had a difficult day, in a difficult period or personal problem that may affect their mood. This is where EQ – emotional intelligence is important. The ability to empathize, situational awareness and control emotions.
- Convey feeling of being respectful, show flexibility, being a problem solver and dependable.

Be cultural sensitive
- The shipping industry is global and we are exposed to multiple cultures and religions.
- Be aware, considerate and respectful to the local culture and religion.
- Pay attention to the visitor.
- With everything well prepared, listen to the agenda and plan accordingly. Ensure they are being attended to at all times. Give them attention and if not able to attend to them personally assign an appropriate officer to the task.

Communication
- Good communication skills are essential. Be clear and concise. Listen and do not argue. Your points and views should be conveyed in a proper manner.

Exit
- Ensure that the departure from vessel is well-planned, all points related to visit is summarized, action points agreed and wish them safe travels.
- Hospitality management is a team effort and everyone is vital to the experience and also the result.

Please remember that preparation, positive attitude, service mindset and a smile goes a long way.
Every year we conduct an annual sea-staff conference in the various regions globally to provide our staff working at sea and shore the platform to engage in a neutral and relaxed environment. At the same time, always with a focus on cost, we continuously endeavor to make our conferences a truly valuable learning experience. This year’s theme for the conference is “Partnering for Success” highlighting our focus to work in partnership with our sea-staff to ensure safe and reliable operations. To enhance the learning experience of the attendees we tried out a new approach which included elements of the 70-20-10 learning model and gamification.

As usual, day one of the conference covered messages from the Thome leadership, sharing our performance in 2018, focus in 2019 and key areas where we need to renew our focus. One such topic was the focus on fuel oil management, in response to the new low sulphur regulations, which will take effect in 2020, and our progress in this direction. The other key areas of focus for this year’s conferences were – Safety, Navigation, Engineering Practices, Environmental Compliance, Port State Inspections, Mental Well-being and enhancing learning onboard.

A major change in the conference setup was the introduction of elements of gamification – i.e. the conference sessions were setup like a gameshow, where the participants were divided into teams and points were awarded for active engagement by the participants in the various sessions, while following the Thome core values – EXCITES.

The team with the most points won a prize at the end of the conference. The key criteria for the points was to take the learning experience to the next level. We structured each session in two parts – the first part was learning (via a presentation by a subject matter expert) and the second part was applying the learning (via a game, brainstorming discussion, quiz session, etc.). This model is based on the experiential learning principal (70-20-10 model of learning) and gives the participants the opportunity to learn in a more immersive manner.

This conference is our first step towards changing our approach to learning. While we conduct these conferences globally, we are also exploring options to implement the 70-20-10 approach to learning onboard across our organization and we are confident that this approach will produce more confident officers and staff while at same time improve our overall performance to be able to achieve our mission of being the trusted maritime partner in delivering global maritime services.

Learning by Doing

By Sunil Parashar, Senior Learning and Development Manager
The TSM Group held its annual conference on 25th March 2019 at the Makati Diamond Residences, Makati City, Philippines. With over 300 guests in attendance, this year’s conference tackled industry challenges, latest training trends, key competencies, innovations, mental health and wellness, amongst other topics.

The theme, “Partnering for Success” is geared towards meeting the standards and the demands of the global maritime industry. The TSM Group strongly believes that forging new and beneficial partnerships is crucial to the promotion of the welfare and interests of its employees, seafarers and their families. Over the last three decades, the TSM Group has managed to stay at the forefront of the industry with the hard work and dedication of its people who continue to uphold world-class standards.

A special “Dinner and Awards” night was conducted after the conference to celebrate the success, dedication and loyalty of the TSM Group’s seafarers. The guests were amazed as the spotlight was turned on for the TSM Singing Idol grand finalists – Deck Cadet Ms. Xandra Mae Villacarlos emerged victorious as the TSM Singing Idol 2019. Furthermore, the traditional dance competition did not fail to spice up the night with powerful and heartfelt dance performances from the TSM Group’s employees – “The Royals” team took home the Grand Champion title.

The conference also paved the way for the launch of the TSM Privilege Card Program – another milestone for the company. The TSM Group prides itself for being the first to offer this program in the Philippines. The TSM privilege card gives Filipino seafarers, employees and their families access to exclusive discounts, privileges and assistance – affordable housing, car loans, insurance policies, a health and wellness program, prepaid health insurance, postpaid plans and other exciting discounts and special offers.

As it is committed to providing unparalleled service to all its seafarers and employees, the TSM Group will find more innovative ways to improve the quality of life of its people and bring them closer to their goals. Through the TSM Privilege Card Program, the door to great opportunities will surely open – owning a property, financial stability and long-term benefits for the family. “You and your family come first” remains the TSM Group’s promise.
Thome Group in partnership with the TSM Group, has recently introduced the TSM Privilege Card – the newest benefit program for its Filipino seafarers and onshore staff.

The TSM Privilege Card was launched during the Gala Night of the Annual Conference held last 25th March 2019 at the Makati Diamond Residences in Makati, Philippines. This newest benefit program was well accepted by the clients, principals and seafarers who attended the event.

This innovative benefit program was introduced by Claes Eek Thorstensen, President & CCO of Thome Group and Ian Garcia, President of TSM Group, for Filipino seafarers and onshore staff.

This is a first in the maritime shipping industry in the Philippines. The TSM Privilege Card will house all the non-monetary benefits, giving all seafarers and employees access to special rates and exclusive packages for housing and car loans, insurance and health care programs, pre-paid mobile phones and a lot more!

“We partnered with reputable companies in their respective industries, not just for our people to have access to the best products available in the market, but more importantly to make sure that our seafarers and employees are well taken care of,” said Ian Garcia, CEO of TSM Group.

Some of the partners in this program who are providing exclusive offers to TSM Privilege Card members are: Ayala Land Inc., BPI Family Savings Bank, Autohub Group, Toyota Makati Inc., BPI/MS Insurance, Smart, Maxicare and a lot more!

The new TSM Privilege Card will not just open new opportunities for its members to uplift their quality of life but to also instill the importance of right financial management that will help them and their families to a more secure future.

This program has been initially launched in the Philippines but the plan is also to introduce it to other countries as well.

The TSM Privilege Card will once again cement the TSM Group’s position in the industry as a forward-thinking employer and will surely raise the bar on the benefits given to seafarers and employees in the maritime shipping industry in the Philippines.
Mental Health at Sea

By Rancho Villavicencio, Executive Director, Seacoms Maritime Development International, Inc.

The Sailors’ Society conducted a survey into seafarers’ mental health with Yale University in 2018. The results highlighted that more than 26% of seafarers showed signs of depression yet nearly half had not asked for professional help. Around one-third had turned to family and/or friends, and only 21% had spoken to a colleague.

The major factors affecting seafarers’ mental health are isolation from family, length of contract, lack of shore leave, quality and quantity of food on board, workload and fatigue.

A peaceful mind, and a joyful heart keeps us safe, strong, happy, and healthy.

Having peace of mind allows us to sleep well, eat well, feel refreshed, and ready for work the next day. Aside from having regular exercise, listed below are 5 ways to maintain a happy and healthy state of mind on board every day. These will help your brain release the four happy hormones such as serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, and endorphin. Moreover, it lowers the stress hormone called cortisol.

1. Quiet Time
   Regularly set aside time to be quiet, without distractions, in order to reflect. Reflecting on positive things nourishes and protects our brain, it releases serotonin which helps regulate our mood and social behavior, appetite, digestion, sleep, and memory. Therefore, it boosts our well-being and happiness.

2. Attitude of Gratitude
   Instead of being angry about what you do not have, think and be thankful about the many blessings that you have on board. According to Dr. Travis Bradberry, “It reduces the stress hormone cortisol by 23%, and improves mood and energy and substantially reduces anxiety.”

3. Personal Growth
   Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses and aim to improve each day. Personal growth and reaching your full potential are the only assurance that your future will become bigger and better. Achieving your growth-goal releases dopamine resulting in increased motivation.

4. Generosity
   Do not forget to do good and be generous towards those with less, and never be envious of those with more. One study of adults found that the brain’s reward center, which turns on when people feel pleasure, was more active when people gave $10 to charity than when they received $10.

5. Social Connections
   Social connections ease depression. Always find time to connect with your colleagues. Share your good times and bad times together, listen more and speak less, observe confidentiality, show compassion and sincerity, then provide genuine care and support to each other. According to Harvard’s longest study on happiness: “Good and close relationships keep us happier and healthier.”
Safe fuel handling onboard the vessel will be a highly critical and complex task in coming times, bearing in mind the various fuels that will be available in the market and supplied onboard plus the compliance issues required to reduce the Sulphur Oxides (SOx) emitted by ships from 1st January 2020. In order to comply with this regulation, the following fuels and arrangements are being considered:

a. Global Sulphur (S) Limit on marine fuels will be reduced from the present 3.50% to 0.50% Sulphur- effective from 1st January 2020.

b. Continue to use higher Sulphur Fuel (>0.5% S) beyond 1st January 2020 and reduce the Sulphur Oxide (SOx) emission by using scrubbers to remove excess SOx from ship exhausts to comply with the regulation.

c. Continue to use the current 0.10% or less sulphur fuels as required presently in the Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECA).

d. Option of using alternative fuels such as LNG, Ethane, Methanol or LPG using dual fuel engines.

The decision to use which of the above options to comply with the new sulphur regulations will be driven mainly by the difference in the cost of these bunkers and the availability of the bunkers across various ports of the shipping trade. The present/ planned installation of scrubbers by various ship owners is mainly based on the assumption in the cost difference between compliant and non-compliant fuels and how quickly the cost of the scrubber installation can be recovered. With regards to the type of compliant fuel used (<0.50% S, Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oil - VLSFO), it will be a range of distillate (DM) or residual (RM) type of fuels.

Leaving the option of using dual fuel engines (using LNG, LPG ++) - most of the vessels are expected to handle a minimum of two and maximum three grades of fuels with 0.10%S distillate fuels for SECA, <0.50%S – Compliant fuel for outside SECA and >0.50%S non-compliant fuel for outside SECA on ships fitted with scrubbers. Also, the Compliant fuel (VLSFO - <0.50%S) will present the following challenges:

1. Fuel quality will vary between batch to batch more frequently than before.
2. Different fuel types may be incompatible, increasing the importance of proper segregation and mixing (comingling) onboard.
3. Important fuel parameters and quality is expected to vary.
Viscosity could vary from low (distillate type) to high (residual type) and the temperature adjustment required in the fuel system
b. Density
c. Cold Flow properties e.g. the optimal temperature required to maintain fuel flow and handling
d. Stability of the fuel – long storage and inadequate maintaining of the right temperature could result in asphaltene to precipitate and form sludge
e. Compatibility issues due to mixing
f. Catfines – Elevation due to processing and blending

On top of the above expected compliant fuel challenges, another extremely critical issue will be the process of changing over the present fuel tanks to the respective grade of fuel before 1st January 2020 which involves emptying the tanks, cleaning (either through chemicals/ additives or manual cleaning) and segregation from other grade tanks. In order to ensure this process of changing over to compliant fuel or to handle various grades of fuel for 2020 – the Ship Implementation Plan (SIP) is being developed as per the IMO guidelines.

This Ship Implementation Plan (SIP) will take care of the following:

a. Risk assessment and mitigation plan (impact of new fuels)
b. Fuel oil system modification and tank cleaning (tank segregation, fuel transfer and filtration modifications and removing sediments from the tanks)
c. Fuel capacity and segregation capabilities (sufficient tankage for different grades/ supplies)
d. Procurement of compliant fuel (ensuring timely supply of compliant fuel)
e. Fuel Oil Change over plan (conventional residual fuels to compliant fuel (<0.50%S) before the due date) and,
f. Documentation and reporting (in case of modification – update of trim & stability booklets, steps to limit the impact of using non-compliant fuel and a procedure for reporting Fuel Oil Non-Availability (FONAR).

For the safe handling of fuels as above – the following operational precautionary measures should be considered:

1. Avoid mixing of bunkers from different sources/ grades wherever possible.
2. If mixing is unavoidable – consider:
   a. Reducing the amount of fuel to a minimum before bunkering new fuel
   b. Fuels with similar viscosity, density and pour point, show acceptable compatibility
   c. Don’t mix distillate (MGO/ LSMGO) and residual (HFO) fuels
   d. If it is impossible to avoid mixing, then don’t load on top in excess of a 20% mixing ratio
3. Store the fuel separately until the Fuel Oil lab results are confirmed for the compatibility, stability and presence of catfines / harmful substances.
4. Check the heating and cooling capabilities of the fuel system to handle both high and low viscosity and pour point fuels and also maintain proper viscosity
5. Assessment of the fuel quality and effective use of the ship purification and filtering system to clean the fuel onboard (correct gravity discs and maintaining correct temperature),
6. Preparing an effective fuel change over procedure and take into consideration all possible risks and failures.
7. Crew training and raising the awareness of the challenges ahead and training them for effective operation.
8. Effective communication both onboard the ship and also with the office staff, principals and charterers to address the challenges.
9. Regular onboard test should focus more on the compatibility & stability factors of the fuels.
10. Shore lab analysis should be tested according to the latest standard.

Let’s all work together to handle this fuel management challenge both safely and effectively.
EU Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Regulation

By Sean Hutchings, Chief Technical Officer

Submission of CO2 emissions report - 30th April 2019

Owners and operators responsible for vessels subject to the EU MRV Regulation should have submitted to the EU Commission an annual emissions report, through the EMSA Thetis MRV database. The report contains the CO2 emissions and other relevant information for the entire reporting period for each ship under their responsibility. Once uploaded the accredited verifier will mark the report as “verified as satisfactory”. The verified MRV emission report constitutes the basis for the issuance of the Document of Compliance (DoC).

Carriage of Document of Compliance (DOC) - 30th June 2019

Ships arriving at or departing from an EU port and which have carried out voyages during that reporting period, must carry onboard a DOC issued by an accredited verifier, not later than 30 June 2019. The DOC shall be valid for a period of 18 months from the end of the reporting period and includes the following information:

- ship’s name, IMO identification number and port of registry;
- name, address and principal place of business of the ship owner;
- identity of the verifier;
- date of issue of the DOC, its period of validity and the reporting period it refers to.

The Commission will make publicly available the following information:

- ship names, IMO identification numbers and port of registry
- technical efficiency of the ship (EEDI or EIV, where applicable)
- annual CO2 emissions
- annual total fuel consumption for voyages
- annual average fuel consumption and CO2 emissions per distance travelled of voyages
- annual average fuel consumption and CO2 emissions per distance travelled and cargo carried on voyages
- annual total time spent at sea in voyages
- method applied for monitoring
- date of issue and the expiry date of the document of compliance
- identity of the verifier that assessed the emissions report
We Must Always Be On Our Guard

By Capt. Mayuresh Jayade, Sr. Superintendent - DPA

Continual efforts to achieve excellence in Port state control inspections and the drive to achieve nil deficiencies remains a top priority of the Thome Group in 2019.

Each month, we record around fifty PSC inspections globally which means at least one Thome vessel gets inspected in some port around the world every day.

Maritime regulations are getting stricter day by day and there is no tolerance to non-compliance.

PSC officers are giving no leniency to any vessel which has clear grounds and objective evidence of non-compliance.

We have also seen a growing trend in global OSC regimes where PSC officers go beyond hardware assessment into knowledge and competency assessment of the deck and engine officers.

As a world class ship manager, we are continuously evaluating our strategy to ensure vessels are getting relevant resources and guidance based on emerging trends in global PSC.

Our focus remains on the training and mentoring of our junior officers as their role is very crucial in ensuring PSC readiness. Lifesaving and firefighting appliances are most common areas for PSC and proper maintenance, inspection, familiarization, record keeping is important.

At times, shipboard records do not correspond with actual status of equipment which leads to a deficiency. The cause may be attributed to a lack of proper training and application of skills and knowledge in conducting periodic inspections.

Senior officers onboard and office staff during vessel visits must ensure that the process of periodic inspections and maintenance is carried out with due diligence, and that the officer in-charge has the required knowledge and guidance which can be improved where necessary.

Proper periodic inspection of LSA / FFA must be carried out with due diligence.

The authorities in Canada and Australia have been focusing on “MLC 2006-working and living conditions” recently. Weekly accommodation, galley and provision space inspections must be carried out by senior officers and masters to ensure proper housekeeping is maintained and rooms are in a presentable condition.

Our fleet wide survey in Q1 2019 was concluded satisfactorily and the management is pleased to know that enhanced actions under the company’s “No detention campaign-2019”, are having a positive effect. A significant number of masters also provided constructive feedback on achieving successful PSC where soft skills, first impressions on gangways and advance declarations of any defects were amongst those highlighted as key factors for smooth PSCs.

PSC workshops are included on the sea staff seminars in 2019 as dedicated workshops, one such workshop was conducted recently in Manila and proved to be highly effective to convey the company’s stand on its PSC improvement strategy.

Marine & Safety, a group support division has been formed to assist fleet vessels and operations teams on PSC related tasks. The division shall lead the group’s strategic plan for PSC related programs and campaigns.
When “Vessel Inspection Questionnaires-version 7” (VIQ7) was launched last year, we saw a major shift in the inspection style and found that inspectors can now ask numerous questions directly to officers / engineers on their knowledge and familiarity with various shipboard systems, cargo operations, navigation practices, navigation equipment, engine room practices and safety management.

This was a huge shift in the inspection style compared to the previous version (VIQ6). There are at least 98 questions in VIQ7 starting with "Are officers familiar with" and at least 180 places where the question or guidance is worded as “Are crew familiar with”. This presents many opportunities for inspectors to find weak areas and record observations.

In particular, as per guidance notes under the VIQ questions, “4.14 Are masters and deck officer’s familiar with the operation of the ECDIS system fitted on board?” or “4.15 Is the master and deck officers’ familiar with the safety parameter settings for the ECDIS and have the safety settings been correctly applied for the vessels passage?”, we have noticed inspectors asking masters to demonstrate the operation of the ECDIS and show how they carry out route checking, plot manual fixes, set the safety depths and safety contours.

If masters are unable to satisfactorily answer the inspector’s question, then the ship may end up getting a high-risk observation in Chapter 4 (Navigation) of VIQ7 and this will lead to the vessel getting rejected for business by the oil majors.

We have enough guidance material to face the inspectors and will continue to provide support to ship staff to prepare well for SIRE Inspections, however we want ship staff to read the VIQ7 questionnaire and prepare well for questions where their knowledge, skills and familiarity will be checked.

Remember that “A good SIRE report is our ticket to TRADE” and we will only be able to ensure good business and profitability to our owners if we consistently perform well in our SIRE inspections.
The 2020 Sulphur Cap is Here to Stay

By Jambunathan Raju, Compliance Manager, Environment Compliance Department

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) will enforce a new 0.5% global sulphur cap on fuel content from 1st January 2020, lowering from the present 3.5% limit. The global fuel sulphur cap is part of the IMO’s response to heightening environmental concerns, contributed in part by harmful emissions from ships.

The shipping industry, the one on the receiving end of the IMO regulation, will have to deal with not only the upcoming global 0.5% sulphur cap, but also the existing 0.1% sulphur cap in designated Emission Control Areas (ECAs).

There are three options set out for ship-owners, in order to comply with the IMO regulations. First, ship-owners can install exhaust gas cleaning systems on their ships. Second, owners can simply buy compliant fuels at higher costs. Third, ships can run on alternative fuels like LNG.

Ships trading in designated ECAs have had to burn bunker fuel with a sulphur content of no more than 0.1% since 1st January 2015. Further, some countries have voluntarily made positive steps to clamp down on shipping emissions in view of their own environmental agenda. China has its own version of ECAs, enforced in phases since April 2016, requiring ships berthing at 11 ports to use 0.5% sulphur fuel. The 11 ports are Guangzhou, Huanghua, Nantong, Ningbo, Zhoushan, Qinhuangdao, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Suzhou, Tangshan, Tianjin, and Zhuhai. Hong Kong has required all ocean-going vessels to switch to fuel not exceeding 0.5% while at berth since 1st July 2015. While Sydney, Australia has imposed a 0.1% sulphur limit for cruise ships berthing at the port. Some areas touted as possible future ECAs include Japan, Norway, Mexico and the Mediterranean.

Switching to the use of the compliant low sulphur products is a costly solution for shipping, hence the industry will try to pass the cost to consumers with freight rates from the Middle East to Singapore possibly be increasing by up to $1 a barrel. Higher bunker bills, on the other hand, may make the installation of scrubbers a more attractive solution as the price differential between low sulphur fuels and HFO would widen and consequently the scrubber repayment period would be quicker.

To sum up, the new Sulphur Cap of 0.5% is a reality we have to live with and plan accordingly to ensure compliance at all times.
Thome Group’s Annual Officers Conference 2019 was held at Makati Diamond Residences 25-26th March 2019 in Manila. It was attended by more than 90 of Thome’s officers joined by owner representatives from Marinvest Shipping AB, Odfjell, Saga LNG Shipping Pte. Ltd., Chembulk Tankers, Ardmore Shipping Pte. Ltd., A/S J. Ludwig Mowinckels Rederi, Frontline, Golden Ocean Group Ltd. and Thome Ship Management, Singapore guest.

This year’s conference was slightly different than previous years with the Plenary Session by the TSM Group on the first half day of the conference. Interesting topics relevant to the maritime industry such as Mental Health Awareness was conducted by an external speaker. Kjell Vassdal from Odfjell talked about “Learning from Incidents” from an owner’s perspective. In the afternoon the Thome Group Annual Officers Conference began with Olav Nortun and Hanus Mikkelsen making opening remarks, followed by Technical and Commercial updates conducted by Thome SG representatives, and setting an expectation conducted by Siddharth Kumar of Green Jakobsen. This year’s conference was intended to be a learning experience for all the attendees to achieve maximum engagement of the officers through a series of planned workshops which divided the group up into three teams.

The team competed using elements of gamification and prizes were given to the Red Team for having the highest number of points earned during the conference. We received a lot of good feedback from the participants, they enjoyed the process of learning while having fun. Breakout sessions were also led by the owners’ representatives to take the opportunity to meet the officers sailing in their fleet.

The Learning and Development team is proud to have delivered a fun and engaging conference and is looking forward to the upcoming conference in other regions to repeat the same positive experience which officers had in Manila this year.
Seafarers Travelling the World

By TGN Editorial Team

While the life of a seafarer can be demanding and quite stressful, there are times when some shore leave can help to alleviate the tensions and restrictions of being on board a vessel for months at a time. Visiting different places around the globe and experiencing a variety of cultures and cuisines is the reason why many people choose a life at sea. Here are some of their experiences when enjoying some well-earned shore leave:

“My most memorable trip was when I was in Barcelona, Spain. I went to visit its most famous church which is La Sagrada and Barcelona Cathedral, situated in “The Gothic Quarter” in Barcelona. For me this is one of my most unforgettable experiences because not only seeing the place but also, I was able to get a sense of the extent of the influence it has had on our culture. Being a seafarer has given me this exclusive opportunity to visit extraordinary places at almost/little cost. I hope one day I can visit this place again together with my family and plan to attend mass at this very famous Cathedral of Barcelona.”

“Hollywood California, USA. This place is so famous! I mean this is the home of The U.S. Film Industry and this is where some of the famous stars live. We had a little tour around there, we visited the “Walk of Fame”, “Hollywood Sign”, Universal Studios, etc. After that we went to Lakewood to buy more souvenirs and chocolates. It was really fun! Someday I will bring my whole family there! Soon.”

“I was able to visit the La Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain last January. Being onboard allows me to go to different places around the world but seeing this big church in Barcelona was the icing on the cake! I was raised by a devout Catholic mother and value the faith which I learned to embrace as I was growing up. It’s something that I will treasure and share with my kids. I hope to revisit the blessed place with my family someday.”
“I am Motorman Richard Tavarro of the M/T Hafnia Henriette which docked in one of the famous cities in the world, Amsterdam. I spent a whole day with my 3rd Engineer Armsly Diamante Jr. and 4th Engineer Roz Polaris Abarico in this beautiful city. As a way of destressing and unwinding from work onboard, we toured around the whole city and visited beautiful museums. It was also our way of celebrating a zero deficiency result during our vetting inspection. It put wonderful smiles on our faces and as we got back onboard, we brought back the city’s good vibes to the rest of the crew.”

MTM Richard Tavarro

“Strolling in Amsterdam! Some would call it a dream; some would call it a plan. But for us sailors, it’s a perk, an opportunity where work, travel and leisure are possible all at once. We really had so much fun in Amsterdam. From seeing the great views of the city – the beautiful canals and the thousands of bikes along the streets.

The great architectural structures, down to strolling the busy streets, mingling with the locals and enjoying the local cuisine with the colleagues. A memorable and great visit to a perfect city indeed.”

3/O Villabrille Lester Giducos

“So, as you can see from our sailor’s experiences there are many good times to be had during shore visits. They say that travel broadens the mind and it certainly seems to be true in the experiences of our seafarers above. We wish all our sea staff save travels and many more pleasant shore visits.

CREW MATTERS
Running for Education

By Jill Charmaine Aizpuru, Human Resources Executive, Thome Ship Management Pte. Ltd. - ROHQ

Incorporated in 1920, the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines has been striving to contribute to the Philippine economic growth for the socioeconomic development of Filipinos.

Every organization here in the Philippines should have this common goal, to help improve the quality of life by continuously helping in providing better opportunities.

Thome Group has always been serious and committed in contributing to the local community.

Since the Thome Group values its Corporate Social Responsibility, its staff have been participating in AmCham Fun Run for 3 years now, believing in its purpose of supporting the education of their beloved scholars. The AmCham Foundation held its 8th ScholaRUN on 3rd March 2019 at SM By the Bay in SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City. This year was different as the theme revolved on how we Filipinos enjoy eating. There were several stops along the track that participants or runners could enjoy, which offered different types of American food.

Thome Ship Management ROHQ Pte Ltd. was represented by 110 strong employees and 38 of their dependents. Our new ROHQ Vice President enthusiastically supported and personally attended the event as well. Aside from the food provided by AmCham, the Thome Group also gave out incentives such as Starbucks GC and Certificates to the following winners: For the 3k runners: Danilo Tausa and Jeselien Marquez, for the 5K race we had our Vice President, Per Selmer-Olsen, and Jessica Rubina, and for the 10K run, the winners were Rodney Labay and Regee Cenabre. We are looking forward to participating again and supporting this kind of cause!