

# FLAGSHIP

**NEWS FROM  
THE WORLD'S  
LEADING SHIP  
REGISTRY**

## Liberia the main beneficiary as Greek controlled fleet hits record tonnage levels

**T**he Liberian Registry has strong historical links with the Greek shipping industry, and the mutually beneficial ties between the two continue to grow.

The Greek Shipping Co-operation Committee (GSCC) recently confirmed that Liberia is the leading independent ship register of choice for Greek-controlled shipping companies, second only to the Greek flag itself. GSCC figures show that, in the year ended 31 March, 2012, Liberia experienced a net increase of

38 Greek-controlled ships aggregating 4.63m dwt – comfortably more than twice the number of vessels secured by any other ship registry. In the same twelve-month period, Panama and Cyprus, respectively, lost 33 and 25 Greek-controlled ships. In deadweight terms, seventeen per cent of Greek-controlled ships are now registered with Liberia, compared to 22 per cent flying the Greek flag.

Although the Greek-controlled fleet decreased in terms of ship numbers in the year under review from 3,848 to 3,760 vessels, the GSCC says that gross tonnage rose from 153.13m gt to 155.90m gt, while, in deadweight terms, the increase was from 261.68m dwt to 264.05m dwt, a new record in the 25 years since the GSCC first published statistics. The latest figures include 437 newbuildings, aggregating more than 25m dwt, on order with shipyards around the world.

LISCR CEO Scott Bergeron says, "Greece is one of a number of countries in which Liberia is now the fastest-growing fleet. Liberia and Greece share a strong maritime history of co-operation and success dating back to the birth of the Liberian Registry. It is very gratifying to know that, more than sixty years on, Greek owners still value the efficiency, safety and responsiveness of the Liberian flag so highly."



*Pictured is the 4,580 gt oil tanker "Symi," built at the Qingdao Hyundai Shipbuilding Co Ltd, China, for Symi Navigation Inc, and registered with Liberia in April 2012. The vessel is managed by Aegean Bunkering Services Inc in Piraeus, Greece.*

### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THE LIBERIAN REGISTRY

**"Please express my sincere compliments to your staff for the timely service that they constantly provide. This reinforces Noble's decision to opt for Liberia as our flag of choice."**

Jim Gormanson, Director of Compliance, Noble Drilling

## Registry expands global presence with opening of Singapore office

**I**n January 2012, the Registry augmented its international presence with the opening of a full-service regional office in Singapore. The office will provide South-East Asian clients with the timely and professional service from the Liberian Registry that they have come to expect, trust and rely upon.

Scott Bergeron, CEO of LISCR says, "Liberia recognises the growing importance of Singapore as a shipowning community. Its intention is not to challenge the highly-regarded Singapore flag. On the contrary, Liberia respects the need for strong national flags, and aims to be the first choice in those cases where a national flag is not under consideration. Unlike those ship registries which set up one-man representation offices, Liberia builds its global network on full-service offices with fully empowered maritime professionals."

LISCR Singapore is strategically located in one of the world's busiest and fastest growing maritime centres and is readily available to assist clients with all aspects of the Registry's business, including vessel registration services, seafarer applications and certification services, vessel plan reviews and approval, technical and safety support and assistance, publication issuance, certificate issuance, and vessel inspection and audit services.

Benson Peretti, General Manager of LISCR Singapore, says, "The Singapore office has already proved itself to be a valuable source of support to the Registry's rapidly growing Singaporean client base. We look forward to building on this positive start, and establishing LISCR Singapore as an indispensable part of the Liberian Registry's worldwide network of advice and support."



## LET LISCR INTERVENE

The aim of Liberia's Detention Prevention Programme is to ensure that ships flying the Liberian flag are in full compliance with all national and international rules and regulations, and thus prevent costly and time-consuming detentions by Port State Control and other inspection bodies.

A recent example of the effectiveness of LISCR's initiative in this regard is provided by a vessel which, as a result of its safety history, we had included in our programme for twice-yearly inspections. When Port State Control and Liberia's inspectors boarded the vessel simultaneously in May 2012, PSC wanted to detain the ship because its free-fall lifeboat propeller would not operate in astern mode, and its emergency fire pump was not operating.

The inspector attending on behalf of the Liberian Registry was able to obtain the agreement of the PSC officers not to detain the vessel on the understanding that the crew immediately rectified the deficiencies. This was duly done, and the Liberian Administration — as it always does — followed up on the issue and ensured compliance.

### Liberia continues to push for anti-piracy solution



Responsibility for protecting ships from the threat of piracy cannot be easily assigned. But flag states have an important role to play in this respect. Responsible ship registries

such as Liberia have led the way in promoting Best Management Practice, in concluding agreements with US and EU naval forces which allow naval detachments to board vessels flying their flags, and in creating clear lines of communication with naval forces. And owners and managers of Liberian-flag vessels who are concerned about the threat which piracy poses to the safety and security of their ships and personnel can turn to the Registry's administration for advice on issues which concern them.

The only viable long-term solution to fighting piracy is to introduce a functioning government and the rule of law to those parts of Somalia from which the pirates operate. In the meantime, however, Liberia believes that coordinated action against piracy should be effected through IMO, which should be empowered to develop guidelines on the use of private armed security personnel.

Liberia condemns piracy in all its forms. It was the original signatory of the Declaration Condemning Acts of Violence Against Seafarers, and has affirmed its commitment to supply to IMO all information which is provided to it following acts of piracy or armed robbery involving its ships. Liberia was represented by Yvonne Clinton (pictured), Deputy Commissioner of the Liberian Maritime Authority and Hara Gisholt (pictured), Assistant Chief Registrar and Assistant Counsel for the Liberian Registry, at the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA) luncheon, held during the recent Connecticut Maritime Association (CMA) conference, at which the Commonwealth of the Bahamas joined the three initial signatories — Liberia, Panama and the Marshall Islands — in signing the declaration.

### MLC implementation must be secured

Liberia is proud of its reputation for upholding the highest standards of crew welfare. The introduction of MLC 2006 will be analogous to that of the ISM Code, in that, for the most part, it merely formalises many of the systems, procedures and agreements which quality shipowners already have in place relative to seafarer concerns. Among other things, MLC 2006 should create a better connection between the people at sea and their management ashore, bringing a new level of openness and communication that will help eliminate many of the frustrations and insecurities that seafarers experience in their relationships with shipowners, managers and crewing agents. Everything should be transparent, open and, ultimately, audited.

There are provisions in MLC 2006 which do not already exist in organised form, and which make a compelling case for the convention's swift ratification — not least, the establishment of a formal complaints procedure which provides seafarers with a tiered system of issue resolution.

Liberia led the way in ratifying MLC 2006, and has well over a hundred ISM auditors on its staff. The Registry is determined to help push through MLC implementation, which is currently being held back by some of those states who pushed most strongly for the convention's introduction but who have signally failed thus far to ratify it.



### New LISCR corporate office for Monrovia

In March this year, LISCR opened its new corporate offices in Liberia's capital city, Monrovia. This milestone development was marked by an inauguration ceremony which brought together leading officials of the Government of Liberia and representatives of the Liberian business community.



H E Joseph Boakai, Vice-President of the Republic of Liberia, was highly complimentary of the role played by LISCR in building up the Registry to the dominant position it enjoys today. In his remarks he added "the Government of Liberia is proud that the agreement with the shipping agent is yielding fruitful results for the country." He also noted that Liberia Commissioner of Maritime Affairs, Binyah Kesselly had demonstrated his ability to use resources in the right way, and added, "This must be translated into improving the lives of the Liberian people".

LISCR Chairman Yoram Cohen, meanwhile, noted, "About 40 per cent of oil shipped to the US is currently carried by Liberian-flag vessels, because they are the best, and the most secure and efficient in the world. Our commitment is to continue running a world-class registry."

## Liberia on the road

Wherever leading shipping people gather, you will find the Liberian Registry. So it was that the Registry sponsored a luncheon at the Connecticut Maritime Association (CMA) conference in March this year, at which LISCR CEO Scott Bergeron (pictured) updated a full house of attendees on the developments at the Registry.

Liberia was out in force, also, at the Posidonia exhibition and conference in Piraeus, Greece, in June, where the Registry hosted a healthy stream of visitors, both old friends and new, at its stand in the Metropolitan Exhibition Centre. Michalis Pantazopoulos, Managing Director of LISCR Hellas SA, says, "The Greek shipping community greatly appreciates the quality services offered locally, including vessel registration, plan approvals, seafarer certification, and technical and safety assurance. During the course of Posidonia, it was very evident that the international shipping community values those same services which LISCR provides on a worldwide scale."



*Cindy Edwards, Client Services Manager, Seafarers' Department*

Cindy Edwards joined LISCR in February of 2006 after attending Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. She is a Client Services Manager in the Seafarers' Certification and Documentation department, which means that anything related to seafarer documentation may come to her attention.

Cindy explains, "It can be something as simple as helping a client with a documentation query, or a more intricate issue such as guiding a potential client through our Filing Agent Process. I work closely with Anthony Geegbae, Director of the Filing Agent Programme, to help ensure that the annual Controlled Self-Assessment is completed for all authorised Liberian filing agents. I also assist with department projects. My personal daily goal is to ensure that all client needs are met in a timely, professional manner."

Cindy says, "One of my favourite parts of working for the Registry is building relationships with clients over the years. Although I do not get to meet our clients in person, I want them to feel appreciated and welcomed to the Registry. The diversity and dynamics of the Seafarers' Department make every day spent working for LISCR an enjoyable experience."

Cindy has plans, in the near future, to attend George Mason University to pursue a higher degree in management. Meanwhile, her second job as mother to an eight-year old daughter keeps Cindy busy outside office hours with a full range of extracurricular activities. Any time left over from those two careers, Cindy likes to spend exercising, dancing, reading novels, or travelling.

## Liberia leads the way on ISM compliance

The ISM Code should be regarded as the ultimate operational regulation, and strict compliance sought at all times. The reality, inevitably, is somewhat short of that ideal. Sadly, familiarity can breed contempt, or neglect, and the concept of continuous improvement envisaged by the architects of ISM is not always fully embraced.

Certifying compliance is one part of the process, and one in which Liberia - with a team of fully trained inspectors and auditors worldwide - has taken a leading role. Monitoring ongoing compliance, meanwhile, is another matter entirely.

The flag state, if acting as an auditor, can issue notices of non-conformity. If the nature of the non-conformity is serious, it may require its immediate correction, otherwise it may suspend or cancel the ISM certification. For minor non-conformities, the company has time to put things right and the ship or office is revisited to check that the issues raised have been dealt with at the following periodic audit.

If a ship and a company are given an ISM certificate, it does not guarantee that the ship will be run safely at all times. Specifically, it means that, at the time of the audit, the company had a management system in place which complied with the code and was relevant to that company's operations. It means that, at the time of the audit, the personnel on board and in the management team ashore knew their roles, and that company records showed that procedures were being followed on a regular basis. Ultimately, it is the company's responsibility to ensure continuous compliance with the code.

Liberia was a leading proponent in the implementation and ratification of ISM, and was the first ship registry to combine audits for the ISM and ISPS codes, thereby saving owners time and money while achieving swift compliance. It has an unrivalled team of auditors and inspectors, which it continues to augment, and it remains committed to ensuring that the Liberian flag is fully compliant.



### NEW TO THE REGISTRY

The 24,196 gt bulk carrier "Prosperous Seas" was built at Zhejiang Ouhua Shipbuilding Co. Ltd., China and joined the Liberian fleet in April 2012. This newbuilding is managed by Allseas Marine S.A.





# NEWS FROM THE WORLD'S LEADING SHIP REGISTRY

## THE LIBERIAN REGISTRY WORLD-WIDE OFFICES

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