

IS Activities : Visit to CSSC Guangzhou Longxue Shipbuilding Factory

(參觀廣州中船龍穴造船廠)

On the early-summer morning of Saturday on 25th May, 2013, the Institute of Seatransport (IST) paid a Visit to the CSSC Guangzhou Longxue Shipbuilding Factory, co-organized with the Hong Kong Shipping Circles Association. In total, there were 23 participants from the associations and the industry, including Mr. PC So (current Chairman of IST), Mr. Raymond Wong (Emeritus Chairman of IST) and Capt. CW Li (Chairman of Hong Kong Seamen's Union).

Upon arrival at the head office building of the Longxue Building Factory at Nansha, on the opposite side of the Pearl River Delta to Hong Kong, the Visiting Group was greeted and welcomed by top management of the Shipyard. For the first part of the visit, the Visiting Group watched a short video, which gave a brief introduction on the background, history, development, scale and direction of the Shipyard. From the video, it was noteworthy to the Visiting Group that the Longxue Shipyard has been attracting the attention of Chinese government leaders on the provincial, national and even strategic levels, with shipbuilding being a critical foundation and pillar of developing heavy industries in China.

After the video introduction, the Manager further introduced the overall layout of the Shipyard area with the assistance of a giant model, followed by more detailed descriptions on the different sizes and types of the vessels built by Longxue Shipyard as demonstrated by respective ship models. Through interactive and in-depth discussions between the Shipyard Management and the Visiting Group, it was learned that besides traditional product lines like capsize bulkers, ore carriers and medium-sized containerships, the Shipyard is now on the road to developing offshore projects like OSVs (Offshore Supporting Vessels) and the conversion of sea-based oil platforms. Also, national policy support has offered an additional order book of VLCCs (Very Large Crude Carriers), which will accommodate future strategy and the security of an energy supply in China. Amidst the ongoing hardship of the shipbuilding and shipping industry around the globe, the Visiting Group learned that the Longxue Shipyard has been able to maintain their order book with placements from Shipowners and facilitation by ship financiers.

For an on-site understanding of the Shipyard, the Shipyard Management invited the Visiting Group to an Observation Point on a small hill beside the main office building. At the Observation Point, the Group was offered a panoramic view of the Longxue Shipyard, as guided and explained by the Shipyard Management. In addition, the Visiting Group and the Shipyard Management took group photos together at the Observation Point, along with the exchange of souvenirs.

Following the Shipyard visit in the morning, the Visiting Group and Shipyard Management had lunch together in a riverside village of local markets and restaurants, and was served with local featured seafood and cuisines, alongside the vibrant market of fruits and vegetables.

In the afternoon, the Visiting Group turned to sightseeing surrounding Longxue Island and Humen, where the Group visited the Naval War History Museum and Weiyuen Fortress. In the Museum, there are long-standing exhibitions of the history of the opium wars during the Qing Dynasty in Guangdong and the invasion by English navies. The exhibition contains a large collection of old documents and armory, plus vivid models demonstrating the battles and defense during the wars. Outside the Museum is the Weiyuen Fortress, which was a well-established military facility during Qing Dynasty. Finally, the Visiting Group travelled on the coach back to Hong Kong at around 5pm.

This Visit to CSSC Guangzhou Longxue Shipbuilding Factory has not only facilitated the understanding and relationship between the shipping communities of Hong Kong and the shipbuilding industry in Longxue and China, but also offered a pleasant local-style lunch, as well as a leisure historic tour to learn about the history of our neighbor in Pearl River Delta and Guangdong. As a member of the IST and the maritime industry in Hong Kong, we were delighted to observe the vibrant and on-going growth of the ship-building and shipping industry in China.

(Mr. Davin Chan : Chinese Secretary of Institute of Seatransport)

