

117

春季  
Spring  
2017



Institute of Seatransport

海運學會

# SEAVIEW

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JOURNAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF SEATRANSPORT

ICSHK Column -  
Exploring the World of  
Shipping as a Young Professional

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*Rory Macfarlane and Nicole Tsui*

**It has been six months since SOLAS VGM regulations (the “Regulations”) came into force on 1 July 2016. Now that the ‘grace period’ is over and the regulations have had time to bed in, the industry is able to assess the impact of the Regulations, both to date and going forward.**

*Post-implementation findings*

Reports suggest that contrary to pre-implementation fears, the full enforcement of the Regulations has not caused any major disruption to liner operations. Reviews conducted by CargoSmart[1] have shown that concerns about delays caused by mandatory reporting of container mass proved unfounded. The new SOLAS requirement has not impacted average vessel arrival delays, berth times or departure delays. This suggests that the additional work which shippers, forwarders, carriers and terminals must do to comply with the Rules has not disrupted vessel schedules.

CargoSmart also reviewed port performance at six ports in different geographical locations; Jawaharlal Nehru (Nhava Sheva) and Tanjung Pelepas in Asia, Rotterdam and Felixtowe in Europe and Los Angeles and Savannah in North America. The Review covered March-May 2016 and from July-September 2016; so

before and after the Regulations came into force. It was found that although vessel size distribution has remained largely the same, the overall vessel arrivals at the six ports analysed by CargoSmart fell from 3,444 in March-May 2016 to 2,834 in the July-September 2016 period. Whether this is due to the Regulations or, perhaps more likely, a reflection of market conditions and operational hardship is not clear.

The issue that seems to be causing most difficulty for those involved in the liner trade is the timely and efficient communication of the VGM information to all relevant parties and the accuracy of this information in certain less well regulated jurisdictions. In the last few months, we have seen a number of new attempts to tackle these ongoing issues.

*New opportunities*

All those involved in the industry have their own different systems and processes. Operational costs at every stage are significant, ranging from administrative requirements to weighbridge and new port charges. The requirements and additional obligations imposed on shippers, especially in relation to the transmission of VGM information to all stakeholders, sending multiple forms of documentation (documentary requirements vary from



jurisdiction to jurisdiction) and waiting for responses prior to the loading of the containers have opened up a US\$4 billion market for digital platforms and systems that allows VGM information to be shared with multiple parties swiftly and effectively.

One entity which has successfully entered the digital platform market is SOLAS VGTM, a software platform developed by Marine Transport International in partnership with a big data company, Black Swan. The platform enables shippers to submit VGM information of multiple containers to multiple parties directly through one portal. This allows VGM information to be shared securely with carriers, port operators and forwarders at the same time.

Innovative companies are also finding ways in which container weighing procedures can be improved or provided in more remote areas by introducing portable container weighing systems. One such solution is a four-corner hydraulic jack system, which was launched in May by engineering firm, Hy-Dynamix, in collaboration with Dynamic Load Monitoring (UK) Ltd. (DLM)[2]. Another approach is that of BISON C-Legs, which uses self-contained scales that attach to and lift a laden container just clear of the chassis to assess the VCM. The software then transmits the container weight data via Bluetooth to a smartphone app. This enables shippers to *“accurately weigh containers on chassis in any location, without reliance on capital-intensive weighbridges, cranes and container handlers, which are not always available at the right time or in the right place”*

[3]. However, those utilising these less expensive mobile VGM services must ensure that they are properly certified and approved by the relevant local jurisdictions. This is an important point to check as in some jurisdictions, including Hong Kong, the local authorities require those entities providing VGMs to shippers to be accredited and registered.

### *Summary*

It is of course early days. However the industry appears to have adapted well to the new legislation, save for the frustrations shippers share over what they see as new dubious charges in connection with Regulations. Examples include Kuehne + Nagel's VGM transmission fees and exports and logistics and shipping firm Grimaldi Agency Nigeria's charge of nearly \$71 to weigh 20-foot containers[4]. Shippers' groups such as the Hong Kong Shippers' Council have criticized freight forwarders for imposing administrative charges for the handling of VGM data, stating that the keying in of VGM data is too little work to justify the charges. As for enforcement, significant fines and penalties imposed on shippers have not yet been reported. As always, change has created opportunity and innovative systems and solutions are emerging to assist shippers with their VGM requirements. It remains to be seen what other major effects the Rules will have and we will continue to monitor developments throughout the next six months. Keep an eye on our **Twitter feed** for the latest updates on the SOLAS VGM Regulations and other Regulatory and Compliance stories and developments in 2017.

- [1] <http://www.supplychaindive.com/news/SOLAS-vgm-port-delay-capacity/431500/>
- [2] <http://www.maritimeprofessional.com/news/portable-container-weighing-offers-cost-298251>
- [3] <http://www.globaltrademag.com/global-logistics/first-system-weighing-containers-chassis>
- [4] [http://www.joc.com/regulation-policy/transportation-regulations/international-transportation-regulations/global-solas-disruption-minimal-shipper-frustration-over-fees-intensifies\\_20160701.html](http://www.joc.com/regulation-policy/transportation-regulations/international-transportation-regulations/global-solas-disruption-minimal-shipper-frustration-over-fees-intensifies_20160701.html)

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This still sounds a little unbelievable to me, that such distinct opportunity came just because I attended an examination: To meet with the Lord Mayor of the City of London, Lord Mountevans! I will always remember standing on the stage, receiving a certificate from him, shaking his hand and being encouraged affirmatively: “Congratulations! Well done, young lady!”

### **The Baltic Exchange Award and the Institute Prize Giving Ceremony**

The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (“ICS”) holds its annual prize giving ceremony in London to felicitate all the prize winners in the academic year who receive the highest marks in individual subjects of their qualification examinations. It was indeed a great honour to receive the Baltic Exchange Award for securing the highest mark, worldwide, for “Dry Cargo Chartering” in the ICS Professional Qualifying Examinations in April 2016.

This year the ICS prize giving ceremony was held at the invitation of the Lord Mayor at Mansion House, which is his official residence and office in London.

It was a great honour to be hosted by the Lord Mayor, who presented the awards and congratulated all the prize winners during the ceremony. Further, this year ICS organised this traditional award event in conjunction with the annual meeting of FONASBA (The Federation of National Associations of Ship Brokers and Agents). This gave the young professionals like me an opportunity to meet with many experienced and distinguished shipping professionals.

Thanks to the support and generous sponsorship from the ICS Hong Kong Branch, I had a smooth trip to London and participated in this memorable event at Mansion House. It is a rare opportunity for a young professional like me, new to the shipping industry, to be able to talk to so many professionals in the industry and listen to their comprehensive insights. I also had the pleasure of exchanging views with other young students from around the world. Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank the sponsor of the Award as well, Mr. Clive Weston, the CFO of The Baltic Exchange, whose talk with me was very impressive and inspiring.

It was out of curiosity and desire to learn more about shipping that I chose shipping as my major in college. I did not expect this to be my career. However, along the way and through my involvement with shipping professionals and a gradual understanding, I realized that the shipping industry offers a most diverse and exciting career. I learnt to appreciate that during the pursuit of professional development and career growth, we cultivate a global network of co-workers, friends and industry colleagues.

I highly appreciate all of the support, which gives me and other young people great confidence and encouragement to keep learning and exploring the world of shipping and contribute to the development of the shipping industry as a young professional.

### **ICS examination is not a competition but an experience**

This was my first time to attend the ICS Professional Qualifying Examinations, and to start with, I chose two subjects - namely, Shipping Business and Dry Cargo Chartering both of which had a connection to my daily work. I was not thinking of treating the examination as a competition from the first day, but was naturally willing to take this opportunity to consolidate and expand upon the basic knowledge acquired in college, which would hopefully be

useful in my daily assignments. Upholding such an opinion, I discovered that what I gained has been much more than I originally expected. If I had to summarize my learning and examination experience: I have learnt two valuable lessons, "Believe in your potential." and "Hard work really does pay off"!

*"Believe in your potential."*

Obtaining the highest marks and winning the award was beyond all my expectations. I can hardly believe it! Sometimes, I think of a number of reasons why I really do not deserve it: Like I am new to the shipping world with only 2 years of working experience; like I am not a native English speaker and my hand writing is not good enough, and like I enjoyed writing in the examination so much that I wrote down too many ideas in 3 hours...But truth be told, you must get into it and experience it, only then you can know what can be achieved!

*You may not have years of working experience, but you must pay attention to every detail that you handle.*

*You may not write beautiful sentences, but you may have special insights.*

*You may be not good at writing skilful answers, but you can explain your understanding in your way.*



Having said that, we as young people must thank the industry seniors who patiently listen to our opinions and create an inclusive environment for us. There is no reason why we cannot believe in ourselves, do our best and try as hard as we can.

*“Hard work really does pay off.”*

The examination is not just an exercise in choosing 5 questions you are good at and giving your “prepared” standard answers by rote in 3 hours. It focuses more on testing one’s understanding of tactical knowledge and applying it in a dynamic shipping environment.

The process of review and preparation is time consuming but it is more interesting to acquire the knowledge. One simple question can involve comprehensive knowledge from various aspects. Textbooks are only a guide. Students should spend more time self-reading and exploring their daily practice. One question can be answered by 500 standard words or only 50 short words, but can also be explained in detail by a book of hundreds of thousands of words as well.

I think this is where the charm of shipping lies. Shipping is comprehensive and dynamic, and learning is never ending. The more we think, the more we get involved, the more we find we need to learn ... it is a never-ending circle but, in the end, we acquire more knowledge.

More preparation, the better it is, but it will not necessarily translate into the best result in an examination, one should also think as to how to streamline and highlight the knowledge and experience to answer in a skilful way in the set time.

To assist students in preparing for the examinations, ICS Hong Kong Branch organises its Study Group programme before each examination session through tutorials and group discussion. Tutors from ICSHK are experienced professionals dedicated in various fields in the industry. This time I attended the sessions of “Introduction to Shipping & Shipping Business” by Mr. Y.K. Chan, and “Dry Cargo Chartering” by Mr. Manson Cheung. The review sessions did help me a lot in preparing for the examinations. The Study Group also provides a platform for exchanging views with other students and professionals in the industry.

The most valuable thing I gained from the examinations was not only the professional knowledge and examination skills itself, but the attitude of learning. It is not a kind of competition, but a process of learning through curiosity and pursuit of knowledge.

### **The spirit of ICS**

Prizes are material and awards come and go. What lasts forever is the knowledge itself and the attitude to keep learning. Having said so, the majority of

young people nowadays are pursuing quick success. We are keen on obtaining a variety of certificates and qualifications. We even treat passing ICS examinations as a 'must' in the shipping world. Sometimes we are confused. We must know that ICS can give us not only the honour of being a member, but also the process of learning and the spirit to keep learning and exploring the shipping world.

We, as young people, really appreciate the patience from the industry, which gives us opportunities to develop ourselves, patiently listens to our sometimes immature opinions and is willing to guide and

encourage us continuously and generously. Finally, I strongly believe that one can gain more than what one expects in shipping.

---

*(Ms. Vita Wang has been working in Uni-Asia Shipping Limited, HK for Ship Owners since July 2014, assisted in vessel operations and chartering in the dry bulk sector. She obtained Master (Eng.) degree of Industrial Engineering and Logistics Management in The University of Hong Kong with distinction in 2014 and her Bachelor degree is majored in Shipping Management at Dalian Maritime University.)*



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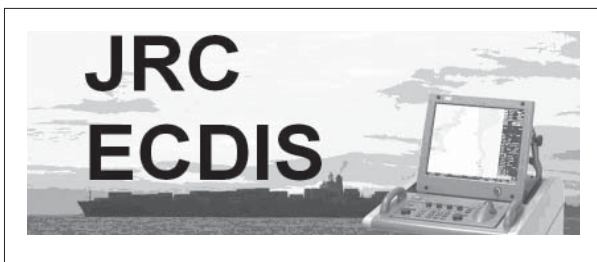
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*Editor's Notes: The following notes are contributed by Richards Hogg Lindley, Average Adjusters and Marine Claims Consultants.*

#### **Venetico Marine SA v International General Insurance Co Ltd and Others**

**THE "IRENE EM" QBD (Comm Ct) (Andrew Smith J) [2013] EWHC 3644 (Comm) November 2013**

This was a first instance trial in which the underwriters of the "Irene EM" attempted to defend a claim for an actual total loss, or alternatively a constructive total loss following grounding. The factual matrix of this case brought to light some interesting points from an adjusting and case management perspective. What was particularly apparent was the need to maintain objectivity, both in external and internal communications.

#### **The claim:**

The claimants, Venetico Marine SA, who owned the vessel "Irene EM",

claimed \$18 million from the defendant underwriters on the basis that on 30 October 2009 the vessel suffered damage caused by an insured event in the Gulf of Khambhat. Their primary case is that the vessel grounded fortuitously and the damage was caused by a peril of the seas.

The claimants contend that the "Irene EM" was an actual total loss ("ATL") or a constructive total loss ("CTL").

#### **The underwriters' defence(s) to the claim:**

- i)** That the claimants have not proved how the grounding happened, and so have not proved that it and the resulting damage were fortuitous and that a peril of the seas or any other insured peril was a cause of them.
- ii)** That the vessel was not damaged as a result of any grounding to anything like the extent that the claimants alleged.
- iii)** That the vessel was not an ATL as a result of the grounding.

**iv)** That the vessel could have been repaired for no more than \$12 million, and so was not a CTL as a result of the grounding.

**(a) Grounding as a peril of the sea**

Point i) was quickly dismissed. It was held that the grounding itself was a peril of the sea and therefore there was no need to show that it was *caused* by a peril of the sea. This is a well-established principle and the judge's treatment of this ground is unsurprising.

**ii) What was the extent of damage?**

The underwriters contended that much of the damage was caused whilst the vessel was eventually being scrapped, and that in any event it was not twisted and hogged to the extent claimed. In this regard criticisms of both the objectivity and thoroughness of the underwriters' surveyors quickly came to the forefront. Of particular note in respect of thoroughness the judge commented at para 33:

*"...First, his inspections were not detailed and careful; he was unclear about what he had observed on his different inspection visits to Alang; and he was vague about the extent and the location of*

*damage that he described. Secondly, he readily drew upon his experience of dealing with other vessels in other situations: I conclude that this coloured his approach to this case in that he did not distinguish carefully and reliably between damage that he actually had observed and what damage he would have expected if the vessel had been grounded. Thirdly, he expressed firm opinions without proper consideration..."*

This highlights the need for experts to treat each case on its particular merits and not make assumptions based on previous experiences too readily. Further, criticisms were raised in the manner in which the task of assessing the damage was approached, namely from the perspective of trying to build a case for underwriters. This serves as warning about the nature that correspondence should be conducted in, especially in respect of more contentious matters.

Ultimately the judge decided in favour of the claimants due to the diligent and thorough approach taken by their surveyors and engineers which was reflected in the evidence. Paragraphs 33-37 encapsulate the manner in which the defendant's evidence was treated on the whole and the basis for the inferences drawn later in the judgement.

### iii) Was the vessel an ATL?

The claimants pleaded that the “Irene EM” was an ATL because she became a dead ship, in that she could not be operated or restored to an operational condition and therefore she had ceased to be a thing of the kind insured. This was argued on the basis that (a) the vessel could not legally be moved except to be scrapped, or alternatively (b) that she could not physically be moved for repairs because the damage was of such an extent that any voyage, even under tow, was impossible without the vessel breaking up. The judge found that this was not the case and the she would endure a voyage under tow, albeit a restricted one.

With regards to (a), this argument was based on the premise that, even if the vessel could be towed to Mumbai (the closest suitable port for temporary repairs), she would not be able to enter without paying bribes to officials there. This was primarily based on a number of internal e-mail exchanges between the underwriters’ and their surveyors. Smith J took a dim view of this and the below e-mails bear repeating in full as they highlight the dangers of engaging in this type of correspondence:

On 15 February 2010 xxxxx sent an email to xxxxx offering to “do a cost guesstimate” for the vessel being towed to Mumbai, and observing “*but the bribes at Mumbai will be difficult!*”.

On 5 May 2010 xxxxx wrote to xxxxx that Mumbai dry docks could accommodate the vessel, explaining that “Harbour Master and Dry Dock Supdt have confirmed the possibility. *We need to give them a confirmation along with their perks to confirm the same at the earliest.*”.

Ultimately the claim for an ATL failed on various grounds, however the entire section is instructive in respect of the rigorous test that needs to be passed in order to succeed in a claim for an ATL (see paras. 398-403).

### iv) Was the vessel a CTL, and what was the cost of repair?

The defence’s points ii) & iv) (above) were problematic, and both sides proffered various witnesses of both fact and expert opinion. The judge’s task was to review the reports and cross examination provided by all the surveyors and, more importantly, the context in which they were made.

This point boils down to the cost and manner of repairs, and whether this would exceed the insured value on the H&M policy of US\$12m. The claimants’ suggested, based on a quote from COSCO repair yard that the repair cost was in the region of US\$28m, whilst the underwriters’ surveyor suggested an estimate of US\$5m.

Smith J undertakes a fairly forensic review of the various costs involved from para 437. However in summary the judge



erred in favour of the claimants because they provided a full quotation from a reputable yard that could stand up to scrutiny. On the other hand, underwriters simply used a ‘back of an envelope’ figure to support their claim that the vessel was not a CTL, which the surveyor struggled to justify under cross-examination.

Based on both the extent of damage and the cost of repairs the judge found that the vessel was a CTL. The claim succeeded and the underwriters were ordered to pay an aggregated total of US\$18m, in respect of the H&M (US\$12m), Increased Value (US\$3m) and Anticipated Cost of Replacement (US\$3m) policies.

#### **Points to note:**

- Both shipowners and underwriters must ensure that they maintain objectivity in both internal and external communications in order to show that they are diligently managing their claim.
- As discussed above (point ii) experts should consider each case on its particular merits, even if they have experienced a similar case before.
- Claims for CTL, especially ones that are not clear cut, must be supported and defended with substantive documentation. The estimates must be as reflective as possible of the actual cost of repairing the vessel.

### **Connect Shipping Inc and Machrimar Management SA v The Swedish Club and others**

#### **“The MV Renos” QBD (Comm Ct) (Knowles J) [2016]**

This was a first instance trial in which the underwriters of the “Renos” attempted to defend a claim by the assured for constructive total loss of the vessel following significant damage caused by a fire in the engine room in Suez in August 2012. Notice of abandonment was tendered in February 2013. From an adjusting perspective, it raises some interesting points concerning which costs should be included in the assessment of a claim for constructive total loss. We also take the opportunity to note some of the differences in approach to claims for CTLs between the conditions commonly used in the market.

#### **The claim**

The issue concerned the level of indemnity due to the assured. The assured argued that they were entitled to be indemnified for a constructive total loss. Insurers contended that the assured was entitled to be indemnified on a partial loss basis. The vessel was insured for US\$12,000,000 on a hull policy, subject to ITC – Hulls 1/10/83 and US\$3,000,000 under an increased value policy.

## **Underwriter's defences**

### **1) Had the assured elected not to abandon the vessel to insurers by delaying notice of abandonment.**

The judge quickly dismissed this point, considering that at no stage between the casualty and provision of notice of abandonment (NOA) did the assured behave in a way that amounted to an election not to abandon the vessel to insurers. He also did not consider that the passage of time between the date of the casualty and provision of NOA in this case amounted to an implied election not to abandon the vessel.

### **2) Was NOA given too late?**

The judge considered that in circumstances where the assured had received conflicting information from experienced sources regarding the estimated repair costs, obtaining reliable information was difficult and took time. In the context of the statutory requirement (s.62(3) Marine Insurance Act 1906) that the assured use reasonable diligence after the receipt of reliable information of the loss, the judge considered that the amount of time between the casualty and provision of NOA, during which time further enquiries were made, in this case was reasonable.

### **3) Which costs rank towards the CTL calculation?**

In accordance with s.60(2)(ii) of the MIA, in order to establish whether a vessel is a CTL, the estimated costs of repairing the damage to the ship caused by a peril insured against are compared with the value of the ship when repaired. Clause 19 of the policy conditions provides that in ascertaining a CTL the insured value is taken as the repaired value.

Insurers argued that the question of a CTL is to be assessed at the time when a NOA is tendered. However, the owner will take account of the cost of future salvage operations, and it is only once he has made this calculation and elects to treat the vessel as a CTL, that NOA is given. The judge advised that nothing within s.60 of the MIA or the policy conditions provided that the costs of recovery / repair should be limited to those costs incurred after the NOA. The insurers contended that owner's position would lead to an over indemnity because those costs incurred during the period between the casualty and tendering NOA would rank towards a CTL and in addition the assured would claim those same costs as sue and labour. However the judge reiterated that the CTL calculation is used to determine the cost of repairing the vessel. Whether or not the assured is entitled to recover sue and labour expenses is a separate matter for the policy of insurance.

Insurers also argued that SCOPIC liability is not a 'cost of repair' for the purposes of assessing a CTL under s.60(2)(ii). They considered that this is supported by the fact that P&I insurers pay the SCOPIC element of a salvage award, avoiding an otherwise significant environmental damage liability. Insurers considered that only costs covered by the policy ought to be ranked. However, the judge advised that this is not the provision under s.60 (2)(ii). He considered that SCOPIC is an indivisible part of an item which the balance, underwriters agree, did form part of the cost of repair. Accordingly he found that ship's proportion of the salvage award inclusive of SCOPIC ranked towards the CTL.

The judge also considered that in calculating those costs ranking towards a CTL, a *"suitable allowance for uncertainty is to be properly made"*. The judge considered that the wide range of estimates provided highlighted the fact that precision was difficult. He recommended a contingency of 10% be added to the estimated repair costs for the purpose of determining whether the vessel was a CTL.

## **Conclusion**

The judge held that the assured was entitled to provide NOA, that this was effective when it was provided and that

the vessel was a CTL on the facts. Insurers were liable to pay the insured value under the hull policy (US\$12,000,000), the increased value policy (US\$3,000,000) and sue and labour costs in addition.

## **Adjusting observations**

In this case the vessel was insured on ITC-Hulls (1/10/83). It is worth noting the differences in approach to claims for CTL depending upon the policy provisions to which the claim is subject.

Under the American hull conditions, it is specifically provided that expenses incurred prior to giving NOA, and which will be claimed under the sue and labour provision, cannot also be ranked in determining whether there is a CTL. If those costs are used to rank towards a CTL, then they cannot be claimed in addition as sue and labour.

Under the English conditions this is not the case, the reasoning being that if the assured has a claim for a CTL then he effectively loses his ship, for which he should receive the insured value. If he has incurred additional expenses in attempting to save the ship then he should be reimbursed in full for those in addition, otherwise he has not been fully indemnified. It is therefore beneficial to an assured where they are not insured under ITC-Hulls, in cases where costs are expected to be incurred beyond the date of NOA, to tender NOA as soon as reasonably possible.

Under the Nordic Plan (Cl. 11-3), the 'condemnation' (or CTL) calculation is made after the ship is salvaged. Salvage costs do not rank towards the costs of repair in establishing whether the vessel is condemned. Whether the vessel is a CTL (or condemned) under the Plan, is based upon a *'discretionary assessment of the future expenses that will be incurred in connection with complete repairs of the ship'*. The assessment is based upon the ship as at the place and in the condition when the assured makes his request for a condemnation. Accordingly, costs which have already been incurred are not taken into consideration. However all foreseeable future costs are taken into account (excepting salvage costs). Under the Plan, the costs have to reach only 80% of the insured value or repaired value, if this is higher, in order to demonstrate a CTL. However, only damage which is covered by the hull insurance shall be taken into account in the assessment. This was an argument raised by insurers in this case on the SCOPIC point, but which the judge considered had no basis in the context of ITC conditions or under the MIA. Interestingly under the Nordic Plan, there is also provision to take into account in calculating a CTL, all unrepaired damage which has been notified to the insurer and which they have had opportunity to survey, which occurred within 3 years preceding the date of the casualty.

The case serves as a useful reminder that an insurer's exposure can potentially amount to a maximum of the insured value

of the vessel as a CTL, plus sue and labour costs in addition (also up to the insured value).

Readers can now go to the LinkedIn page <https://www.linkedin.com/company/richards-hogg-lindley-rhl-?trk> to review this and look at other articles as well.

(Richards Hogg Lindley: Average Adjusters and Marine Claims Consultants)



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一九六八年八月廿七日，我和兩名同事：余忠銘、潘全新一起走到啟德機場，怡和公司大班山打臣先生親自送我們上飛機，並送上一盒五洋牌電蕊給我們，為一部卡式錄音機供電。這部錄音機是公司送給我們的，由於我們服務的船剛換了香港船員，接替黑人船員，所以沒有麻雀可打，這部錄音機可以給我們帶來娛樂，消除寂寞。

乘上澳洲航空公司 (QANTAS) 的航班飛赴停泊在澳洲墨爾本丹麥藉的船上工作。飛越赤道線時，機長嘰哩咕嚕的說了些話；機上的侍應人員向每位乘客派發一張渡過赤道的證書留作紀念。證書印刷得很精美，繪有海龍王拿著三叉的模樣，並有文字說明閣下已通過赤道了。

飛機在一個澳洲城市著陸，所有乘客都到入境處辦理入境手續。而我們三位，由於初來乍到，都不知道怎樣做，澳洲的入境官員給我們提供了很大的幫助，代我們填表，做這做那，一點怨言都沒有，同香港的公務員相比，真是天壤之別了。

時間到了，飛機要繼續飛，我們三位還沒有辦妥入境手續。航空公司人員四處找我們三個，幸好得到了入境官員的協助，全架飛機只在等我們三位來自香港的傻佬，然後再繼續起飛往墨爾本。

到達墨爾本機場，已是當地時間晚上九時了。一落飛機，驟然感覺氣溫下降了不少，八月份啊。啊！原來南半球的季節剛好和北半球相反哩。澳洲正是春季呢，氣溫有些寒冷。因此我們提了行李後，便匆匆走往機場的洗手間添加衣服。不要說笑，自己已獨立了，凍病了無人可憐呀。

代理公司派人來機場接我們，向我們問好並說明注意事項。由於初次和外國人交談，自己沒法明白他在說什麼，祇好秧求他說得慢一點，才弄明白他在說什麼。當晚我們被安排下榻於 YMCA 酒店渡過了一晚，真是所謂的 YMCA 啊！(Your Most Comfortable Apartment)。晚餐就是一杯汽水加漢堡包，媽呀！浴室在公眾走廊處，見到些鬼佬包著浴巾，吹著口哨往來於浴室和房間，我們也只好如此在浴室洗白白了。翌日早上六時，代理人安排汽車送我們到 WHIRSPPOOL 港一間細小家庭式的鄉村酒店，車程足足三個小時。

WHIRSPPOOL 這個地方全是農場，附近祇有一間郵局，一間肉食店和一間五金店。看見的都是農場工人，有的騎著馬，有的正在幹活，好一派田園風光。

在這間鄉村酒店逗留了三天多。我們早餐在廚房吃，午餐在酒吧與農場工人一起進食，晚餐則在酒店的「大」餐廳，然

後到電視廳進茶。生活方式和當地的澳洲人士沒有多大分別。在這裏，飲食很便宜，看見酒吧間示出的餐牌價錢，其中一客牛扒，祇需澳洲幣 65 分錢，啤酒不用說，當地人當作水喝的了。

整間酒店的住客只有七位，除了我們三個香港人外，另外四位是澳洲探油鬼，我與其中一位探油鬼同住一房間，我叫他做阿 John。全間酒店只有四個客房，這四位鬼佬也是與我們同船工作的。歎完二日二夜的「假期」後，九月一日 1700 時，阿 John 叫我們收拾好行李，然後他用一輛有貨斗的吉普車載我們到碼頭。在碼頭上我看見船名與我們將要工作的船名不同，便有點猶豫，開始懷疑此人有沒有欺騙我們。於是詢問清楚，原來在碼頭的物料供應船將把我們接送到我們工作的船上去。

登上供應船出海了，我們在船上進了晚餐後便到船員房間。船員房間是三層床設計，我們倒頭便睡。直至九月二日凌晨四時多被叫醒，供應船已靠上我們工作的輪船。

是時海面風浪非常大，供應船顛簸搖擺，但 NYHAVNS ROSE 就穩如泰山。在此情形下，要登上 NYHAVNS ROSE 就非常困難，我們還有不少行李呢！供應船上的船員個個大隻無比，把我們的行李一一拋上大船；我們則爬上供應船的煙囪（左右孖煙囪），趁著供應船被海浪拋高時跳上大船，真是驚險萬分，分分鐘沒命。

我們登上探油船（當時的位置是澳洲南部對開的海域，乘坐物料供應船，經十小時航行，才能靠上她）的第一件工作，令我印象深刻。當時是凌晨五時左右，我依照挪威藉大副的吩咐，從起居所取出急救用的“羅拔臣”擔架床，放置在甲板上。你猜發生了什麼事情，原來在甲板上，有一具屍體擺放著。我還不清楚是什麼事情，而甲板上滿是探油用的設備、如鑽油塔、潛水人員用的減壓器和其他多種設備等。甲板上陰陰暗暗，行起來要步步為營，分分鐘中頭獎，頭破血流！

我工作完畢後，大副帶我到船艙（實則是貨艙，內面放置了五架西洋人用的旅行卡車，是石油工人的住所），指著其中一件潛水衣對我說：「這位兄弟因昨天下午往海底接駁鋼管，突遭一條巨形劍魚襲擊，氧氣管和通訊系統被割斷，因此蒙主寵召，返回祖家了。」我聞後，才恍然大悟，剛才為什麼把擔架床放到甲板上，不禁寒慄一陣子。大副哈哈笑道：「細路，不用驚慌，當他是公仔就得啦。」翌日，船長下令解纜，船駛往 WHIRSPPOOL，將屍體轉送岸上殮房去。這麼多年來，我印象仍相當深刻，「你不可能忘記你的處女下海」經歷的。

當工作間隙在房間休息時，我經歷了暈浪的滋味，大放飛劍（嘔吐，連黃膽水都嘔吐出來了）。船長給我兩顆暈浪丸，叫我馬上上甲板吹吹海風就可以了，真的收效。終於經過了三個月的時間，成為一位真正的船員，再無飛劍可放了（已經廢武功？）。

在這探油船上，我除了擔任初級水手之外，還得到船長和輪機長的器重，跟隨他倆學習，並且還擔當了舵手、「無牌」二車（因船上只有一名輪機長）。在學校受訓時，我曾學過避碰課程、船藝學、急救、機房、救生和拯溺、救火等，因此我對此類並不感到困難，祇是進一步學習而充實自己。

一九六九一月一日，船抵達悉尼入塢二個多月，回復原來乾貨輪模樣，沿途接載貨物裝卸，直至駛回丹麥腓德烈港入塢。隨後，公司在腓德烈港賣了此船，我們一班香港船員被公司安排在船塢內上了一艘待出塢的姊妹船 M.V. FRISENBORG，繼續幹下去。除了擔任水手與舵手之職外，我還曾擔當了「無牌」駕駛員（因船長酒醉了五天）。

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（林傑船長：*Master Mariner, F.I.S., MH.*）

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# Are Maritime Students Ready For The Competitive Job Market? Students' Perspective On Maritime Programs

*Yui-yip Lau and Adolf K.Y. Ng*

Currently, the maritime industry is one of the four core economic pillars of Hong Kong. According to *2013 Policy Address: Marine Department of the HKSAR Government*, The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (hereafter referred to as "HKSAR") Government highlighted the importance of education and trainings of

programmes in the maritime industry. Due to an increasing number of enrolments in maritime programs, various local tertiary institutions offer maritime programmes at different levels ranging from advanced certificates to doctoral degrees in Hong Kong. A summary of Hong Kong major maritime programmes are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Hong Kong Major Maritime Programmes**

Institution	Certificate	Diploma	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree	Master Degree	Doctoral Degree
HKPU			1	1	1	2
SCOPE		1				
CITYU					1	
HKSTLA	3					
HKSU	2					
HKUSPACE IE				2		
HKUSPACE	1					
VTC			1			
MSTI	27		1			

Keys: CITYU – City University of Hong Kong; HKPU – The Hong Kong Polytechnic University; HKSTLA – Hong Kong Sea Transport and Logistics Association; HKSU – Hong Kong Seamen's Union; MSTI – Maritime Services Training Institute; SCOPE – School of Continuing and Professional Education of the City

University of Hong Kong; HKUSPACE – School of Professional and Continuing Education of the University of Hong Kong; HKUSPACE IE - School of Professional and Continuing Education of the University of Hong Kong – International College; VTC – Vocational Training Council.

Source: Various universities and institutions

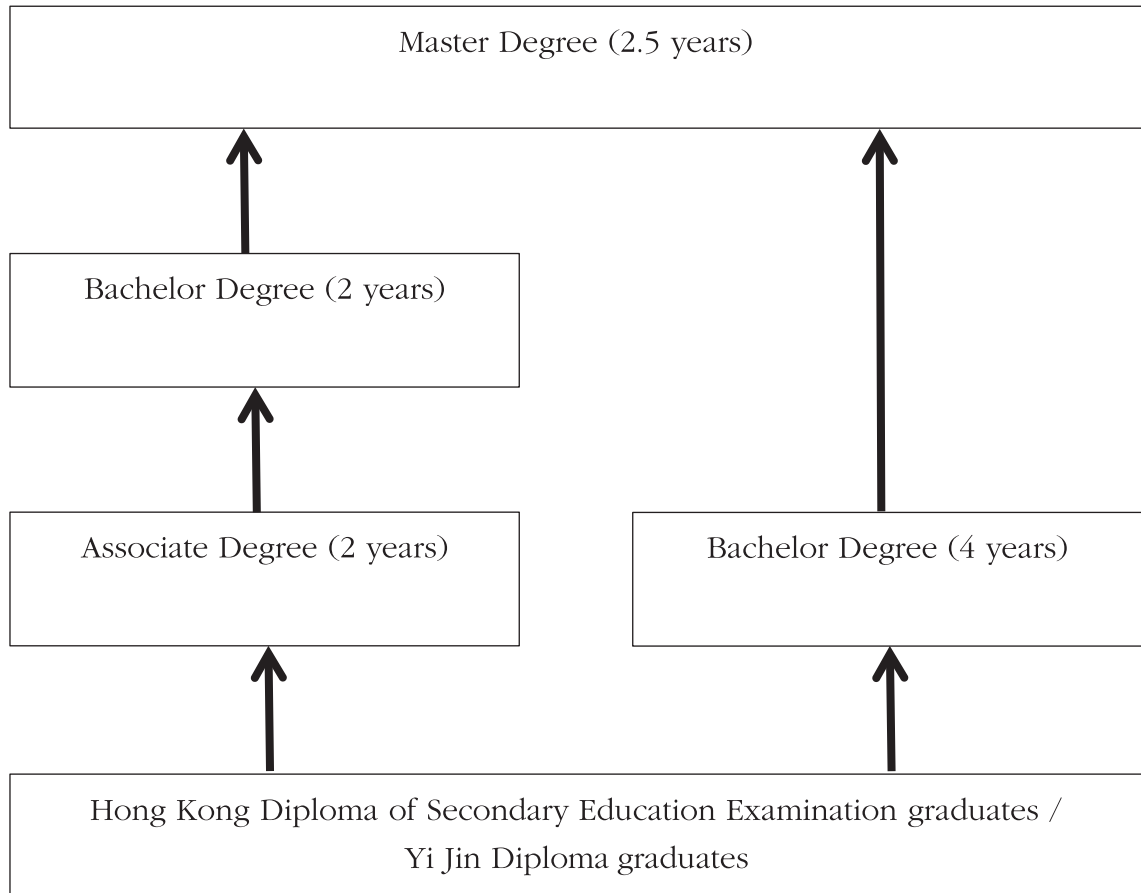
However, most of them appear to have a lack of depth and width in terms of course design and scope of area. On the one hand, existing maritime education programs mostly focus on concepts and theories. A few programmes are of a more practical nature, notably in dangerous cargo handling, shipping operations, terminal and port operations, intermodal transport operations, chartering practice, import/export trading practices, marine navigation and meteorology, etc. It is crucial to have a balance between practical and theoretical knowledge in designing new maritime programmes. On the other hand, most of the education programs and training courses are dominated by supply chain management and logistics operations. In this sense, maritime management and operations are seriously ignored in the programme scope of area.

The dynamic global environment leads to a rise in research and professional knowledge. It is unavoidable that the maritime industry is required to transform from a traditionally largely unskilled, labour intensive industry to a capital-intensive, sophisticated one. In turn, an increasing number of tertiary institutions offering under- and postgraduate maritime programs have fundamentally shifted from a highly practical, hands-on approach to draw attention to business and analytical skills. In

order to advance our understanding of this issue, we carried out a questionnaire survey using Likert scale to collect data from 148 undergraduate and 43 postgraduate students who have pursued maritime programs in several universities and institutions in Hong Kong. The objectives were to comprehend the students' profiles, expectations, and motivations of maritime programs, search for the process of professionalization within the maritime industry and offer various strategies and constructive recommendations to improve existing maritime programs. The findings also provide useful insight to anywhere around the world that are offering/plan to offer maritime courses and programs.

Our key findings can be summarized as follows. First, the motivation of both under- and postgraduate students in enrolling their respective maritime programs is primarily driven by occupational/practical considerations. The under- and postgraduate students have aspirations to work in the maritime sector. Hence, the design of maritime programs does not only require alignment with the initial expectations of both under- and postgraduate students, but also needs to establish a smooth study pathway from maritime undergraduate to postgraduate programmes. We have illustrated multiple study pathways for maritime programme students in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Multiple Study Pathways for Maritime Programme Students**



For the degree choice considerations, a ‘good program’ is defined as a program that can (1) increase students’ professional competence and skills; (2) provide updated information on the maritime industry; and (3) have well-qualified teachers to deliver courses to students effectively. For family background, few family members of the under- and postgraduate students work in the shipping or other sectors within the maritime industry. We can conclude that, in Hong Kong, family members are not a key factor in providing most updated or the first hand relevant maritime program information. Compared with undergraduate students, more postgraduate students are now working in the maritime industry. Their prime contact parties, including

supervisors, former teachers, logistics associations and colleagues can provide them with past valuable experience and share precious maritime program information with them in pursuing such maritime programs. Apart from this, peer group influence is a driving force to motivate postgraduate students to pursue the maritime programs. Furthermore, the emergence of information technology is a ‘must’ for students to access real time maritime program information in the digital era. For annual family income, many students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, originate from low-income families. Because of financial necessities, they require to take up employment, mainly part time, during their studies. Well

below 40% of the postgraduate students have been awarded scholarships from external parties or universities or tertiary institutions. To deal with this situation, the logistics associations and the government should take the initiatives to open up scholarships and studentships to motivate qualified students to pursue maritime programs.

Furthermore, most under-graduate students and postgraduate students prefer to work in the maritime industry after graduation. Since most of the world's commodities (i.e., by value and tonnages) are carried by container shipping, and unsurprisingly, the container sector poses awareness of both maritime programs and media. It is not surprising that postgraduate students mention that the container sector is their ideal work in the maritime industry. To fulfill the demands of the maritime industry, tertiary institutions should consider allocating more container shipping subjects to the maritime programs, say, liner trade, logistics and multimodal transportation, shipping law and shipping practice. For Hong Kong, given its immediate geographical proximity to China, as well as the close economic ties between them, maritime logistics development in Hong Kong and China will significantly affect each other. Nevertheless, our survey results indicate that half of the undergraduate students do not possess fundamental knowledge about the Chinese maritime industry. In the near future, tertiary institutions should think about including subjects relevant to 'Greater Chinese elements' into both under- and postgraduate curricula of maritime programs, and what is more, tertiary

institutions can invite guest speakers to deliver a series of workshops, public lectures, seminars and presentations about the Chinese maritime industry. It definitely enhances students to obtain more updated and comprehensive information about the Chinese maritime industry and current and future development.

Finally, under- and postgraduate students express that their maritime programs are too academic or theoretically-oriented, for example, putting too much focus on theoretical operations management. From the students' perspective, well-qualified instructors should focus on enhancing students' understanding of the maritime industry and demonstrate the diversity in innovative teaching approaches so as to convey relevant academic knowledge, professional, and practical skills to students. This is something that, according to our survey findings, some maritime programs struggle to achieve. To address this, we suggest that institutions and instructors should put more attention on building up or expanding their networks with the maritime industry. In return, the maritime industry can offer different levels of benefit to both institutions and students, pertaining to scholarships, training opportunities, mentorship, summer placements, internship programs, site visits, and knowledge-exchange seminars. Additionally, the tertiary institutions should invite more diversified stakeholders from the maritime industry, including current employers, potential employers, logistics associations, alumni to advise on the maritime programs. Moreover, they should provide more detailed guidance on the design of maritime programs which can



equip students with the necessary skills to become competitive in the job market. Also, the tertiary institutions should invite academic scholars and academic advisors to conduct program reviews covering the program structure, appropriate assessment methods and the contents of maritime subjects. Besides, a majority of students who pursue maritime programs stem from the appropriate study workload. In this sense, students are able to graduate smoothly and acquire good academic results.

For full details on the study, readers should refer to: Lau, Y.Y. and Ng, A.K.Y. (2015). "The motivations and expectations of students pursuing maritime education" *WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs*, Vol.14, pp.313-331.

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3. No politics.

【前言：參觀船廠對於一個做海運傳媒生涯的我來說，已不算什麼一回事嘞。然而，當我知道香港特區政府的《海運周》計劃中，列出由香港工業總會運輸與物流委員會舉辦，招待會員參觀位於青衣的香港船廠時，個人仍然有一種躍躍欲試的期待。原因是香港的小型船廠能夠生存至今，都是「抗日中堅份子」，以其經營特色，市場定位和善打持久戰而迄立不倒。

得到香港小輪總經理何志盛博士安排之下，2016年11月25日我跟隨一批志同道合參觀者前去，總算領略了香港小型船廠的風采，並或多或少知道了他們的經營之道。】

【※※※※】香港船廠是上市公司香港小輪集團的附屬公司之一（亦屬於恆基集團），獨立經營，自負盈虧。由於母公司經營港內客運多條航線，使用的一支渡輪船隊必須定期進行維修保養，以符合海事處的規定。基於種種原因，很自然，小輪維修保養工作，均交由船廠負責檢測修理保養工程。

這種自設船廠，最低限度能保障船隊在維港保持高效、具品質的良好服務，基本上是本地經營短途客運航線服務渡輪公司的必要條件。因此，船廠的主要生意及業務訂單，來自母公司的船隊，也就順理成章成為主要業務之一。

我們乘坐的中型小巴甫到船廠門口，我的視線已被穩妥安放在船排架上，拔地而起的豪華郵艇、雙體客船所吸引。

一艘70米長的豪華遊艇擱在船排上，由船底仰望到駕駛艙頂的天線，少說也有七層住宅樓的高度。船廠人員介紹，該艘遊艇主要是翻新船殼的油漆工程。

另一艘是信德中旅的雙體客船，工人正在安裝調校船尾噴水泵咀，而旁邊的安全主任則金睛火眼的吼住，監督操作安全，看是否符合安全標準。

反而自家的小輪，暫時未有上排檢修。

而另一艘意大利遊艇，其船體高大流線型，乳白色船殼輪廊、設有衛星導航，以其豪華外貌，顯示其身價，但全身被半透明白色化纖布罩住，只留下一個狹小的進出門口。

問為何會如此？原來船東嫌新遊艇船殼漆油光潔度未符理想和心水，於是，物色本地船廠就地重新加工，要漆油優化效果如同名貴房車車身焗漆的光亮閃爍。這就是香港富豪的「率真」！

香港小型船廠的服務是「客戶至上」，說到做到，盡管重做價錢不菲，但船東二話不說，要船體盡善盡美，船廠亦做足本份。誰說香港小船廠沒有可為？活生生就有鮮明的例子。

香港船廠成立於1948年，最初位於九龍大角咀瀨海，後因政府發展土地其他用途，遷移至位於青衣北的牛角灣，即青山公路汀九段七咪半海浴場對面，佔地面

積 2 萬平方米。該船廠已有 60 年修船的經驗，設有九個船排，擁有全港唯一一個 20 米寬 90 米長的同步升降船台，完全由電腦操控，是香港最先進小型船舶上落船排的必要設備。

一位林姓的主管介紹，升降台系統由美國引進，每 5 分鐘升降一米，船舶上排後，再由縱橫滑輪承重系統移位，去其他船排等候修理。可處理 3400 總噸船隻。竣工後，以逆向操作程序，讓船下水離去。

據政府安排設計，五千噸以下的船舶檢查修理，基本上是由青衣西臨港一列的多家船廠負責修理，每家公司都有自己的「拿手好戲」和「絕招」，市場定位清晰，各勝善長，互不干擾。

香港船廠辦公大樓與船排可以說是「一巷之隔」，但整體結構是「麻雀雖小，五臟俱全」，擁有一整套修船的知識、經驗、技術和人才，另設有充足零配件庫存。即使昂貴而精細零部件一時不備，也可以訂購托空運寄貨，堪稱方便。

據廠長陳志明在為嘉賓簡報時介紹，目前全廠編制員工 120 人，技術人才佔 70 人，外判人手約佔整體編制的三至四成，在市場定位是修理千噸以下的船舶，除了母公司的小輪業務外，外接其他船舶修理。每年修理二百多艘船，遊艇修理佔總量超過五成。客輪維修業務在減少，遊艇修理、翻新訂單在增加。

值得一提的是去年一度哄動全球的荷蘭藝術家弗洛倫泰創作的充氣小黃鴨觀賞物，在港的十天夜宿地究竟在哪裡？從船廠人員介紹得知，原來荷蘭物主提前與香港船廠聯繫，安排在船廠的船排上暫時住宿。該鴨原物高 14 米，重 2 噸，充氣膨脹，再用拖輪拖去維港在水上飄遊展覽，供人參觀。豈料第一隻因外殼損壞而報廢，第 2 隻補充使用，滿足所有愛好者的需求。

有參觀者問船廠如何收費？

何博士以幽默口脛說：「肯定平過住酒店。」

一如其他製造業所碰到相同問題。香港的小型船廠同樣面對缺乏年青人入行，招聘困難，勞動資源嚴重不足，青黃不接，有年齡斷層的難題。香港船廠用了種種方法去吸引青年人入行，能堅持留下來的比例仍然偏低。

就這方面問題及情況，香港造船機電鋼鐵業總工會副主席賴永明，在接受筆者訪問時談到了問題的嚴重性，情況相當令行業擔憂。他表示，估計到今年底，小船廠工人就業與兩年前相比，全行只剩二千至三千人之間，同比下跌超過兩成。

他說工會對上一次就行業工人進行問卷調查時，錄得工人約三千至四千人之間。工人流失原因，佔九成是退休，一成因船廠業務收縮而轉行。流失最嚴重的是鐵工（包括鉚工），佔總流失量七至八成，其中鉚工佔鐵工比例高達七成。其次是機械修理、機械加工。

調查又顯示，目前一線工人平均年齡在 50---55 歲，二線後勤工人在 40---50 歲，行政級人員在 40---50 歲。至於 30---40 歲壯年一層完全空白，早已斷層，出現鴻溝。而工資水平也遠低於一般機電工人。

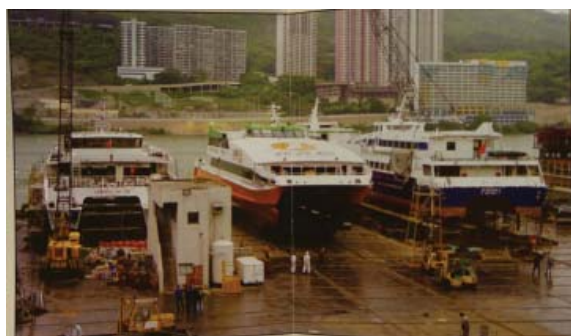
他還稱，職訓局 (VTC) 在 14/15 年間，曾就人力資源培訓需求做過一份行業現況調查報告，出現造修船工人人數，十多年來已無法獨立單列成一工種，掩埋在機電項目統稱大行業內，一般人很難找到他們的資料。



另外，教統局也根據資歷架構認證的層面出發，把製造業工種分成十大類，而修船工人被納入認證的範疇內，屬於其中一類。奇怪的是，目前修船行業根本無人入行，認證資歷架構一關，真的如此重要嗎？會不會尾大不掉。

從參觀一家船廠再發掘整個行業的情況，光從一些大概念性項目睇一些講法及數字，已完全可以看到香港重工業式微到何種程度。

再過 10 年，香港修船業還存在嗎？留給人們的，只有好好去思考囉！【完】



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( 陸元華先生：前大公報「航運與物流」版主編 )

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集團總部位於香港，業務分佈於香港、中國內地、東南亞等極具活力和潛力的新興市場，被列為香港『四大中資企業』之一，在國際工商界有著廣泛影響。





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