



SEATIMES

The Newsletter of the Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada
(Society founded in 1995 by the British Columbia Branch of The Nautical Institute)

February 2026

Some thoughts on the Standardisation of Vessel Design and Operation

THE FUTURE OF MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

There are about 105,000 Merchant vessels over 100 gross tons, that trade from port to port, country to country, carrying every conceivable product, whether it is containerised, in bulk or liquid. By and large these vessels sail without incident even considering the numerous challenges of weather, topography, or collisions. But occasionally, there is an accident and lo and behold, every Authority is up in arms, ready to blame either the Ship's Captain or a member of the crew. It is often recorded as "Human Error"

Ships have been sailing for eons; every voyage is an adventure. It is indeed a relief when a voyage is completed without incident.

To properly understand why the Marine side of transportation is so convoluted, let us compare with the airline industry.

The aviation industry was smart to limit the type and size of aircraft available. The buyer had a choice to purchase a particular type and size of aircraft. Except for internal spaces and colour choices, there were few options available. Therefore, the buyer had to adapt his requirement to suit the aircraft.

On the Marine side, with few exceptions, each vessel is custom built, with unrestricted dimensions, deadweight, and equipment. The cost of this customisation is horrendous, and the results are very severe indeed. What is missing is "Standardisation", not just within the company or country, but internationally.

Standardisation

The world fleet can be analysed by type and size. This can be narrowed down to about 100 different ship types and sizes. The ship specifications for each of the different ship type can be drawn up by a consortium of Ship builders, Ship Owners, Charterers, Naval Architects, Classification societies, Engine manufacturers, Equipment suppliers and others who might have a vested interest in the ship.

Ship builder

Once the specifications are finalised, they are then distributed to all ship builders all over the world. The Ship builder will decide which of the ship types best suits his capabilities and will sell at a price with a reasonable margin. The Ship builder has the advantage of being able to mass produce the vessels at significant savings as was done with the Liberty ships, and the Victory vessels, during the Second World War. This would be like the Airline industry, where the manufacturer designs and builds the standard airplane. Seldom do we hear of custom-built airplanes.

Improvements

Over a period, new demands will require new standards and the specification for the newer vessels will be agreed to and distributed to all the ship builders. Likewise, a particular type or size of ship may become obsolete and can be removed from the international building standards. A Ship Owner cannot modify the international specifications to suit his requirement. In such a case, he would need to custom build the vessel and the price differential may not be justifiable.

Ship Owner

The next person to benefit from this International Standardisation is the Ship Owner. He now has a choice of vessels that come close to his needs. It may not perfectly match his requirements today, but requirements do change over a period. To his advantage, he does not have to produce his own designs and specifications. The performance criteria will be known, and the availability will be much quicker as the ships are being mass produced. Finally, the price of the ship will be substantially less than if it was custom built. There may even be an opportunity to shop for a good price.

The Ship Owner now has the benefit of standardisation in his spare parts inventory, his supplies and the flexibility to dock the ship at any of the yards that build that size and type of vessel. Repairs will be less expensive as the parts are interchangeable from ship to ship.

From earnings point of view, the cargo carrying capacities of all ships within the type and size will be similar. The performance at sea will be similar for the prevailing conditions at the time.

Ship Handling

In the airline, a qualified Pilot can go on board and fly any aircraft of the type and size. He has trained for it and is assured that the performance of the aircraft is like what he trained on. In the Marine environment, no two ships are alike. Each has its own peculiarities and differences. Except for the basic Archimedes principle that the vessel will float if its weight is less than the buoyancy, that is where the similarity ends. The crew now must learn in a short time, the instruments, the handling characteristics and the equipment. No two ships are alike and there is a plethora of equipment on every ship. The crew has not been specifically trained for that type or size of vessel.

The Marine Pilot sees this on every ship that he attends. Even within the same fleet there are differences. The layout of the Bridge is different, the equipment is different, and the handling characteristics are also different. This makes the task of Piloting a ship in close quarters even more dangerous and often lead to accidents commonly referred to as "Human Error." Standardisation would eradicate a lot of this uncertainty and make for a safer environment.

Port Services

The next beneficiary is the Port administration. They can classify themselves capable to service a particular type and size of vessel. Pilots, tugs and Stevedores are familiar with the vessels specifications and can handle the ships far more efficiently. This will result in quicker turnaround times and improve profitability.

Routing

An aircraft files its flight plan and generally stays on track. He is assigned a particular altitude and separated from other aircraft. Mid air collisions are rare indeed. A merchant vessel stays in "Traffic separation lanes" when it leaves or arrives at a port. The vessels all travel in the same direction but at different speeds, so overtaking of vessels is common.

Once the ship leaves the TSL, it is free to travel in any direction at any speed they choose. Consequently, you have ships tracks crossing each other and even though there are strict Rules of the Road, collisions do occur. What if the Traffic Separation Lanes are extended across the Ocean? Modern GPS plots the vessels position with accuracy and assists the vessel to stay in the assigned traffic lane. Each lane would be separated by speed and thus reduce the dangers of overtaking vessels. All vessels in the lane would travel in the same direction so there would be

little chance for collision except at junctions where the ships could change lanes to head for different destinations.

Safety

In addition to reducing the likelihood of collision, the advantage would be that other vessels would be travelling with you and could thus come to your aid quickly if required in an emergency. Thus, improving Safety of Life at Sea.

Conclusion

It does not take long to understand the benefits of Standardisation to all users. One has only to look at the Airline industry, to learn from their success. Being a relatively new industry, they can approach their methods in a clear and well-defined manner. Marine Transport has been around for millennia and has evolved over time. The question of standardisation was frowned upon due to the competitive nature of the business. Each Owner wanted to be better than his competitors and often resulted in cutting corners. Expenses were frowned upon and where possible, maintenance items were delayed. With standardisation, the Owner still has his competition, by being selective in his chartering and cargo freight rate activities. At the end of the day, is it not better to have a healthy return on investment in a safe and efficient manner rather than striving to be the best at all costs?

International Agreement

For this idea to be successful it is going to need the cooperation of all countries and this can only be achieved at the IMO level. IMO is working hard at small segments of the industry to get international cooperation on a variety of agreements.

Here is an opportunity to start with a clean slate and encompass all those standards and regulations into the vessel specifications from its inception.

It is time to make the necessary changes to make this Industry safe and successful in the future.

Captain Edward Monteiro, FNI egmonte@aol.com

The history of signal flags: Marine communications today is largely accomplished by high-tech means. Still, many will recognize and admire the small colourful flags sometimes seen flying from vessels. This method of communication was developed before the advent of the radio and is called flaghoist signalling (or maritime signal flags). Currently, signal flags are largely seen only on “dressed ships” hanging bow to stern on holidays and special occasions. Even though these flags are almost never used, they can still relay meaningful messages, whether hoisted individually or in small groups. Before the radio took over, signal flags were one of the best ways to communicate at sea. In fact, mariners still learn this form of communication in order to sit their exams today. The history of maritime signal flags stretches back to ancient times. It is said that Athenian Captains used flags to send messages between their ships. But it wasn’t until the 19th century that they were standardized and heavily in use. Now, any form of non-naval signalling – by light, sound radio or flags – falls under the International Code of

INTERNATIONAL FLAGS AND PENNANTS				
ALPHABET FLAGS			NUMERAL PENNANTS	
Alpha	Kilo	Uniform	1	
Bravo	Lima	Victor	2	
Charlie	Mike	Whiskey	3	
Delta	November	Xray	4	
Echo	Oscar	Yankee	5	
Foxtrot	Papa	Zulu	6	
Golf	Quebec	SUBSTITUTES		
Hotel	Romeo	1st Substitute	7	
India	Sierra	2nd Substitute	8	
Juliett	Tango	3rd Substitute	9	
		CODE (Assuming pennant or Decimal Pennant)	0	

Signals (ICS). Before that, there were various codes in existence, making communications on the open ocean potentially quite confusing.

While there is evidence that the Royal Navy used signal flags as far back as the 1500s, one of the first established codes was from Admiral Lord Howe, developed in 1790. Eventually the Royal Navy took the idea and developed its own code which is published in a book in 1799. In 1800 Captain Sir Home Popham expanded on the Navy's code by using a telegraph flag to refer to a separate dictionary of words and phrases. This allowed for more complex communications. In fact, perhaps the most famous signal of all, Lord Nelson's 1805 message at the Battle of Trafalgar, which read "England expects that every man will do his duty" was conveyed using Popham's code. By 1813 the British code communicated 6,000 phrases and 60,000 words. Shortly after, the American Navy developed its own code using a similar system.



St. Roch entering Halifax flying her call sign, 1950. Parks Canada St. Roch Photograph Collection, Farrar Collection: HSUS-50-01. Image has been colorized from the original black & white.

These systems were working quite well for the world's most powerful navies, but what about civilian ships? In the 1800s there were various commercial codes the average merchant seaman could use, including Lynn's, Squire's, Phillips', Röhde's, Raper's, Walker's, Watson's, Rogers', Reynold's and Marryatt's to name a few. The most popular of the time, however, was Marryatt's (published in 1817). Marryatt's code consisted of six parts: a list of English men-of-war, a list of foreign men-of-war, a list of English merchant vessels, a list of lighthouses, ports, headlands, rocks, shoals, reefs, etc., a selection of sentences, and the vocabulary. These words and phrases were conveyed using numerical flags only. His code was devised just for British ships and was based largely upon the Navy's code, although he added more words specifically for commercial use.

Marryatt's and the other codes were useful; nevertheless, the need for a single code to be used internationally was apparent. The first International Code was drafted in 1855 by a committee set up by the British Board of Trade. They first examined all the most popular codes in use at the time

however their code borrowed most heavily from Marryatt's. For example, Marryatt's Union Jack with a white border meant "I require a pilot," but with the new code it was changed to signal the letter "G". The International Code used 70,000 signals with 18 flags and was published in 1857. The book was very successful and was adopted by most seafaring nations. They decided against using a purely numerical system so they named each flag to ensure that each character was familiar. They also decided that the letters of the alphabet would suit this purpose best, although they originally left out the vowels. There were a few revisions over the years but the true test came with the First World War when occasions of signal failures were numerous.

In 1927 a conference a conference was held to further revise the code. At this time it was decided that it should be translated into seven languages: English, French, Italian, German, Japanese, Spanish and Norwegian. The new edition also included aviation vocabulary and medical codes. This edition was completed in 1930 and was adopted at the International Radiotelegraph Conference in 1932. Several further revisions were made until the 1969 edition, which is still largely in use today. At that time Russian and Greek were added to the translations and some flag meanings were adjusted. The most recent print edition of the code was published in 2005.

The history of using flags at sea stretches far back into human history. Many of the flag designs themselves have unique histories that constitute their own articles. Signal flags are even the origin of some popular naval phrases such as "Bravo Zulu" meaning "well done". Although they may be seen as outdated, signal flags are not only eye-catching but still meaningful in a society that, perhaps too heavily, relies on technology. Hopefully these analogue methods of communication continue to be taught and celebrated into the future, and not just decorate ships. One just never knows when our modern technology may fail. It is certainly comforting to have an alternative when the power goes out!

Lea Edgar, Librarian/Archivist, Vancouver Maritime Museum.
BC Shipping News. September 2015. <http://www.bcshippingnews.com/>

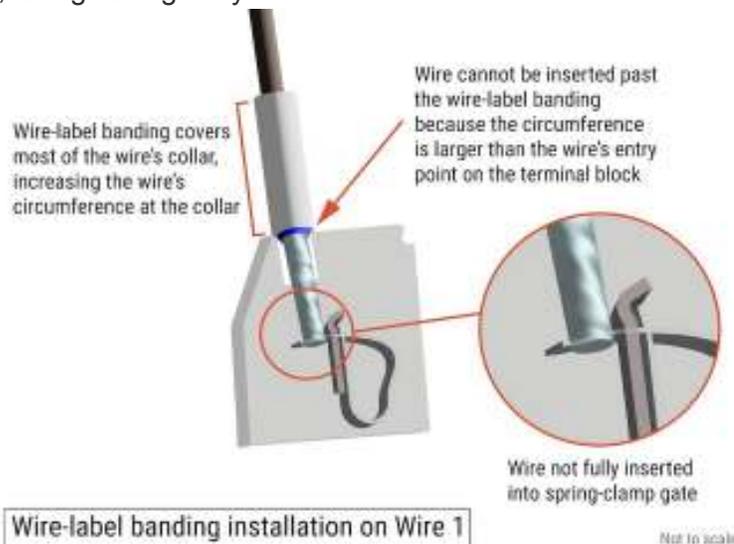


Baltimore bridge collapse traced to one loose wire: The National Transportation Safety Board in the US said Tuesday that a single loose wire on the 300 m long containership *Dali* caused an electrical blackout that led to the vessel veering and contacting the nearby Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, which then collapsed, killing six highway workers.

At Tuesday's public meeting at NTSB headquarters, investigators said the loose wire in the ship's electrical system caused a breaker to unexpectedly open — beginning a sequence of events that led to two vessel blackouts and a loss of both propulsion and steering near the Key Bridge on March 26, 2024.

Investigators found that wire-label banding prevented the wire from being fully inserted into a terminal block spring-clamp gate, causing an inadequate connection.

After the initial blackout, the *Dali's* heading began swinging to starboard toward Pier 17 of the Key Bridge. Investigators found that the pilots and the bridge team attempted to change the vessel's trajectory, but the loss of propulsion so close to the bridge rendered their actions ineffective. A substantial portion of the bridge subsequently



collapsed into the river, and portions of the pier, deck and truss spans collapsed onto the vessel's bow and forward-most container bays.

A seven-person road maintenance crew and one inspector were on the bridge when the vessel struck. Six of the highway workers died. The NTSB found that the quick actions of the Dali pilots, shoreside dispatchers and the Maryland Transportation Authority to stop bridge traffic prevented greater loss of life.

*Finding this single wire was
like hunting for a loose rivet
on the Eiffel Tower*

“Our investigators routinely accomplish the impossible, and this investigation is no different,” said NTSB chairwoman Jennifer Homendy. “The *Dali*, at almost 1,000 feet, is as long as the Eiffel Tower is high, with miles of wiring and thousands of electrical connections.

Finding this single wire was like hunting for a loose rivet on the Eiffel Tower.”

Contributing to the collapse of the Key Bridge and the loss of life was the lack of countermeasures to reduce the bridge's vulnerability to collapse due to impact by ocean-going vessels, which have only grown larger since the Key Bridge's opening in 1977. When the Japan-flagged containership *Blue Nagoya* contacted the Key Bridge after losing propulsion in 1980, the 118 m long vessel caused only minor damage. The *Dali*, however, is 10 times the size of the *Blue Nagoya*.

As part of the investigation, the NTSB in March released an initial report on the vulnerability of bridges nationwide to large vessel strikes. The report found that the Maryland Transportation Authority—and many other owners of bridges spanning navigable waterways used by ocean-going vessels—were likely unaware of the potential risk that a vessel collision could pose to their structures. This was despite longstanding guidance from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials recommending that bridge owners perform these assessments.

The NTSB sent letters to 30 bridge owners identified in the report, urging them to evaluate their bridges and, if needed, develop plans to reduce risks. All recipients have since responded, and the status of each recommendation is available on the NTSB's website.

<https://splash247.com/baltimore-bridge-collapse-traced-to-one-loose-wire/> November 19th 2025



Oil Tanker traffic surges but spills stay zero after Trans Mountain Expansion

<https://www.canadianenergycentre.ca/oil-tanker-traffic-surges-but-spills-stay-at-zero-after-trans-mountain-expansion/#:~:text=The%20Trans%20Mountain%20system%20continues,pipeline's%20expansion%20in%20May%202024.>

Breaking the Ice: Inside the Soo Locks Ice Mitigation Project

This past spring, ice caused significant delays at the Soo Locks. One vessel, Interlake's M/V *James R. Barker*, was held up for nearly 10 hours. For Great Lakes shipping, those delays ripple across the entire system. That's why the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has long sought an innovative solution to tackle the problem head-on.

Interlake's Vice President of Operations, Paul Christensen, and Captains Brad Newland and Mike King recently traveled to Massachusetts with a team of stakeholders, including Mollie Mahoney,

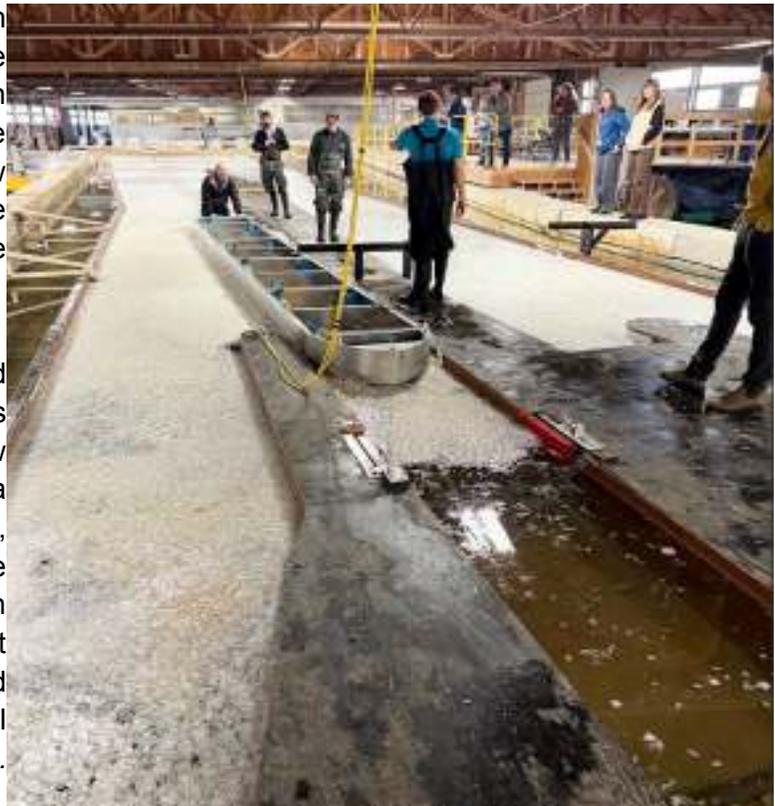
who leads the New Lock Project, and several USACE engineers, to offer their navigation expertise and observe this groundbreaking research in action.

The Challenge: Every spring, brackish ice flows into the lock chambers, slowing vessel traffic and increasing strain on the system. While it doesn't damage ships, it forces the locks to cycle more often, adding wear and tear and creating costly delays.

"We've all spent more than our fair share of time stuck in ice—either waiting for someone to get through the lock or being the one trying to make it through," says Captain Brad Newland. "Anything we can do to save time is a win, not just for Interlake but for the entire industry." This comprehensive study includes the entire Soo Locks facility, and the resulting recommendations will benefit both the Poe Lock and the New Lock at the Soo. According to Mahoney, "including the entire facility in the study allows for implementation of the most efficient and effective ice mitigation solutions. Our focus is on reducing the volume of ice entering the Poe and New Lock, preventing ice from forming in the chambers, and effectively flushing ice that does end up in the chambers."

Model of the Paul R Tregurtha was built to run tests for the Soo Locks Ice Mitigation Project

Building The Solution: To find answers, USACE partnered with Arcadis Bergman, working with Verdantas Flow Labs, an engineering firm, and a specialized lab in Holden, Massachusetts, to build a 1:32 scale model of the Soo Locks—complete with 10,000 pounds of synthetic ice that mimics real ice's buoyancy and movement. They even used a model freighter based on the M/V *Paul R. Tregurtha* to run tests.



Captain Mike King was impressed by the scope of the project. "The amount of thought and detail put into this project exceeded anyone's expectations. Having all these people in one room, striving for the same goal, meant everyone's input mattered. It was an honour to be involved and exchange information with such a great group of people."

Over 40 days of testing, engineers will trial various mitigation strategies, including ice booms and barriers to prevent ice from entering the lock chambers. Before testing began, Great Lakes Captains helped verify vessel approach angles and course lines to ensure accuracy.

Why It Matters: This project is about efficiency and collaboration. By reducing ice-related delays, commerce will continue flowing through the Locks, and critical infrastructure will be protected. The USACE's willingness to involve industry stakeholders such as Interlake demonstrates its commitment to practical, industry-focused solutions that benefit the entire Great Lakes shipping network.

“It is always a privilege to work with the Army Corps of Engineers and be a part of making the Soo locks even safer, more reliable, and efficient,” Christensen says. Captain Newland adds: “Over the years, some of our suggestions have saved millions of dollars and made meaningful changes that will improve efficiency.”

He even found a moment of humour during testing: “I got a kick out of watching operators try to maneuver a model of a thousand-foot ship into the lock by hand. The guy was struggling, and I couldn’t resist saying, ‘Now you know what I feel like!’ They were thrilled to see the model behave just like the real ships.” [Interlake Steamship Co.] <https://boatnerd.com/boatnerd-news-december-10-2025/>



AIS

Perhaps it is a chore, but surely it does not take too long to enter the correct information. Not only is Aberdeen (UK) wrong but the course suggests the last port is probably Aberdeen, Washington and the destination Nanaimo.

The Grain Code has been revised – are you ready?

The revision of the International Grain Code was adopted at the IMO Maritime Safety Committee in 2024 and came into effect on 1 January 2026. The main purpose of the amendment is to formally incorporate into the code the cargo handling method of “specially suitable compartment, partly filled in way of the hatch opening, with ends untrimmed”. This article highlights the key changes and discusses potential practical and legal implications.



Read the article at: -

<https://gard.no/insights/the-grain-code-is-being-revised-are-you-ready/>

Read “theSea” Issue 4 - 2025 at: - <https://www.missiontoseafarers.org/wp-content/uploads/theSea-issue-4-2025.pdf>



This is the *Algosolis* in the Kahnawake sector the St Lawrence Seaway on January 4th. Such scenes impress me and remind me of the organization in the Seaway System that is necessary when winter arrives.

See the notice below and other examples at: -

<https://greatlakes-seaway.com/en/news-and-information/notices/radio-messages/>



The Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Seaway System
Le réseau Grands Lacs - Voie maritime du Saint Laurent

Re : SEAWAY RADIO MESSAGE NO. 24 – 2025

Mariners are advised that the Montreal-Lake Ontario (MLO) and Welland Canal drafts are as outlined in Seaway Notice No. 15 of 2025. A new draft restriction has been in effect since December 23 in the Montreal-Lake Ontario Section.

It is important for mariners to note that any vessel which enters the Seaway upbound at CIP2 shall be designated a wintering vessel in accordance with all the terms outlined in Seaway Notice No. 14 of 2025.

The removal of navigation aids in the Montreal-Lake Ontario section is in progress, more detailed information may be obtained from the respective Traffic Control Centre.

Ice conditions in the MLO section are widespread throughout the system, including the lakes, canals, and anchorage areas. More detailed information on ice conditions may be obtained from the respective Traffic Control Centre.

In the MLO section, Mariners are advised that one-way convoys are in effect on the lakes and in all canals, and anchorage availability is limited. Pointe-Fortier and Saint-Zotique anchorages are limited to a maximum of three (3) vessels each.

It is extremely important that vessels transiting through all ice-covered areas proceed at the slowest safe speed in order not to disturb the ice fields. Mariners are advised to exercise particular caution when transiting the Beauharnois Canal.

Lockages in the South Shore Canal are now being conducted using traditional tie-up. Mariners will be required to deploy their mooring lines at the St. Lambert and Côte Ste. Catherine Locks. In the Welland Canal and at the remainder of the MLO Locks, vessels must be prepared to deploy mooring lines, as ice accumulation on hulls may limit the use of HFM.

Water temperature at St. Lambert on January 3, is 0 degree Celsius. Last year's temperature was 0 degree Celsius. The five year average is 0.4 degree Celsius.

At 23:59 January 2, the number of ocean vessels above St. Lambert was 15 as compared to 7 in 2024. Above Port Weller the number was 0 as compared to 0 in 2024.

The A ice boom (Prescott/Ogdensburg) opening has been reduced to 600m and is indicated by quick flashing green and red buoys.

The installation of Ice Boom G is complete up to the ends of the navigation channel.

All closing procedures outlined in Seaway Notice No. 14 of 2025 remain in effect.

The next radio message will be issued Sunday, January 4, 2026.

The Seaway Control centre will only broadcast critical information on the air.

January 3, 2026

<p>The St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation Corporation de Gestion de la Voie Maritime du Saint-Laurent 202 Pitt St. Cornwall, Ontario K6J 3P7 Tel: 613-932-5170</p>	<p>Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation 180 Andrews Street Massena, New York 13662-0520 Tel: 315-764-5200</p>
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A FRENCH LESSON –

ÊTRE DANS LE CREUX DE LA VAGUE: “I worked so hard yesterday that I have woken up this morning at the bottom of the wave, with little strength to do anything.”

“Être dans le creux de la vague” is a French expression meaning that someone or something is in a bad situation or has reached a lowest point. In English, the expression loosely translates into “hitting the bottom of the wave” or, sometimes, “bottoming out,” which more specifically refers to reaching a lowest or worst point usually before beginning to rise or improve.

In the nautical world, a wave is a moving ridge or swell on the surface of the sea. The high point of the wave is the crest. In popular imagination,

the crest represents dynamism and energy. At the other end of the scale, in between two crests, is the trough of the wave, or the low point. The bottom of the wave makes us think of a collapse or a fall – or that we have reached a low point. As such, the expression is often used to describe an adverse personal or financial situation.

<https://www.port-montreal.com/en/creux-de-la-vague-en-june2017.html>



China Issues First Penalty for Starlink Use in Territorial Waters

Landmark enforcement at Ningbo signals zero-tolerance approach to unauthorized satellite comms

In a watershed moment for maritime telecommunications regulation, Chinese authorities have penalized a foreign vessel for illegally operating SpaceX’s Starlink internet service within territorial waters — the first enforcement action of its kind that signals Beijing’s determination to control satellite communications in its maritime jurisdiction.

Maritime law enforcement officers at Ningbo port in Zhejiang province discovered the violation during a routine inspection when they spotted a distinctive “micro rectangular antenna” mounted on the vessel’s top deck. The Ningbo Maritime Safety Administration confirmed the device was a low-Earth orbit satellite terminal that had continued transmitting data after the ship entered Chinese waters, directly violating national telecommunications regulations.

Stock Photo: Postmodern Studio / Shutterstock.com

While authorities did not disclose the vessel’s identity or the exact penalty amount, the case represents a significant escalation in China’s enforcement of satellite communication restrictions at sea. Ma Yanchao, director of the command centre at the Ningbo Maritime Safety Administration, made the



government’s intentions clear: “We will take this landmark first case as an opportunity to continue to intensify enforcement against illegal radio communication activities in our jurisdiction.”

Starlink crosses the imaginary line because it has never been licensed to operate in China, where foreign telecommunications services face stringent controls. Chinese law requires all network traffic within the country to pass through state-managed gateways, but Starlink transmits data directly to foreign satellites, bypassing domestic infrastructure entirely. Beijing views this as a fundamental threat to national communication security and data sovereignty.

The prohibition isn’t merely theoretical. Under Chinese regulations, any radio device or frequency usage requires official approval, and Starlink terminals — functioning as radio transceivers — have never received this permission. A direct-to-device satellite services regulation that took effect in June 2025 further strengthened these controls, closing potential loopholes.

For vessels, the rules are unambiguous: Starlink terminals must be deactivated before entering Chinese territorial waters, typically defined as within 12 nautical miles of the coast. However, enforcement has historically been challenging due to difficulties in tracking and identifying satellite transmissions at sea.

The timing couldn't be more significant for the maritime industry. Ningbo-Zhoushan ranks as the world's busiest port by cargo tonnage, handling millions of vessels annually. Many international ships have adopted Starlink for its superior speeds compared to traditional maritime satellite systems, using it for navigation support, crew welfare, operational communications, and logistics coordination.

The Ningbo Daily report acknowledged that enforcing restrictions on foreign satellite equipment has been difficult, and many international vessels may have continued using Starlink within Chinese waters, with relevant violations long remaining unaddressed. This first penalty suggests those days are over.

Maritime operators now face a stark choice: switch to approved alternatives like China's Beidou navigation system or local cellular networks when approaching Chinese waters, or risk substantial fines, equipment confiscation, potential vessel detention, and costly operational delays. For an industry operating on tight margins and precise schedules, compliance adds yet another layer of complexity to Chinese port calls.

China's aggressive stance on Starlink extends beyond simple regulatory compliance. Beijing has intensified concerns about the constellation since witnessing its effectiveness in providing battlefield communications during the Ukraine conflict. Chinese military researchers have published numerous papers on potential countermeasures against Starlink, including methods to track and potentially neutralize the satellites.

Meanwhile, China is developing competing domestic satellite internet systems. State-owned China SatNet has launched 60 satellites for its planned 13,000-satellite Guowang constellation, while the Shanghai-backed Qianfan project has deployed 90 satellites toward a 15,000-satellite target. These initiatives underscore Beijing's determination to maintain autonomous control over critical communication technologies.

The enforcement action also reflects broader tensions over global digital infrastructure. Starlink operates in over 140 countries and has become essential for maritime connectivity worldwide. But in China, along with Russia, Iran, and North Korea, it remains firmly blocked.

Looking ahead, the message for maritime operators from Ningbo is unambiguous: satellite connectivity must bow to sovereignty. With Chinese authorities pledging intensified inspections and enforcement, ship operators calling at Chinese ports should audit their communications equipment now, establish clear protocols for deactivating prohibited systems, and train crews on compliance requirements.

The broader implications extend beyond individual vessels. As satellite internet becomes increasingly integral to maritime operations globally, this enforcement action highlights a fundamental tension between borderless technology and territorial jurisdiction. With trade volumes between China and the rest of the world continuing to surge, expect more vessels to face the choice between connectivity and compliance.

For now, when approaching the world's busiest ports, going dark isn't just advisable — it's the law.

https://gcaptain.com/china-issues-first-penalty-for-starlink-use-in-territorial-waters/?subscriber=true&goal=0_f50174ef03-889d021eab-169937937&mc_cid=889d021eab&mc_eid=35ccf165ad

By Paul Morgan (gCaptain) Dec 22nd 2025

Mystery as a Cargo of Shoes Likely Lost 150 Years Ago Washes Up in Wales

A charitable organization dedicated to marine and environmental education has sparked a bit of mystery after reporting it has found a large quantity of 19th-century shoes stuck among the rocks in Wales. The Beach Academy put out a request for information and was surprised to hear this is not the first reported sighting of the mystery shoes.

It began in early December when volunteers were working on a beach cleanup at Ogmores-by-Sea, a small town west of Cardiff. Located on the Bristol Channel, a busy shipping seaway, and near the historic seaports, they reported volunteers had retrieved leather shoes/boots from the rock pool zone. In one week, they retrieved over 200 shoes. Later counts said they were up to 400 boots.

On examination, experts said they look like 19th-century Victorian-style hobnailed shoes. Some appear to be men's sizes, and others were children's or women's shoes. Some were in very good condition.

Hundreds of Victorian-era shoes, likely a ship's cargo, were found onshore in Wales (Beach Academy)

Emma Lamport of Beach Academy speculates they have found the cargo of a long-lost vessel. Possibly an Italian ship that struck a rock some two miles offshore approximately 150 years ago.

The group notes they have no idea how long the shoes have been trapped in the rock pool. They have been excavating the footwear from the sediment and the rocks, and they asked for more information.

Some residents responded, saying it is not the first time that shoes have been found on the beach. The BBC reported that photos online showed a similar discovery about three years ago, although of a smaller quantity. Some people speculated the shoes had been cast off by makers as imperfections.

A maritime academic told the BBC they were not aware of a particular shipwreck, but speculated because of the quantity of shoes and the similarity of design, they were likely cargo from a missing vessel. They said the mystery ship might have been degrading and starting to fall apart, releasing its cargo.

Beach Academy reports it set off a bit of a frenzy with radio, TV, and press coverage. The consensus is that the shoes found as part of the rockpool restoration project are Victorian-era boots. They further agree it is likely they are from a wreck that sank 150 years ago off Tusker Rock, a rock outcropping about two miles offshore. **January 2nd 2025**



The Maritime Executive

SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

Risk assessments and mitigation measures for a navigation bridge visibility blocked by cargo

https://tc.canada.ca/sites/default/files/2026-01/SSB_20_2025_E.pdf

Prepared for the worst: 8 tips for ensuring safe lifeboat drills



Incidents involving **lifeboats** and their launching systems remain a significant safety concern in the maritime industry. A 2014 UK study found that such accidents accounted for nearly 16% of merchant mariner fatalities over ten years, with many survivors suffering serious injuries.

In 2017, the UK Chamber of Shipping reported 60 deaths during lifeboat testing and encouraged greater use of simulation training. InterManager continued to raise concerns in

2022, noting 419 fatalities and hundreds of injuries since 1981. **In 2023, the Container Ship Safety**

Forum stressed the need to redesign lifeboats and launching equipment, highlighting that industry efforts have focused too much on compliance rather than improving safety.

Reducing these risks requires all crew members to understand lifeboat systems and communicate clearly during drills. Complex systems demand consistent training in operation, maintenance and repair. Ongoing training and solid risk assessments help crews understand the purpose behind procedures, not just memorize them. Drills must prioritize safe launching, proper handling and minimal risk for participants.

Recent SOLAS amendments support safer practices by improving drill conditions and allowing exercises without crew inside the lifeboat.

8 practical tips for safe lifeboat drills

1. **Plan the drill** – Define objectives and procedures
2. **Sound the alarm & brief crew** – Ensure PPE is worn, and everyone knows their role
3. **Assess risks** – Identify hazards and implement control measures
4. **Embark crew** – Safely board all personnel
5. **Lower lifeboat** – Follow launch procedures carefully
6. **Maneuver near ship** – Maintain safe operations and continuous communication
7. **Recover lifeboat** – Bring the boat safely back on board
8. **Restore & debrief** – Secure equipment and review lessons learned

SAFETY4SEA

<https://safety4sea.com/cm-prepared-for-the-worst-8-tips-for-ensuring-safe-lifeboat-drills/>

Dec 9th 2025

ONE Henry Hudson Cargo Operations Resume at Port of Los Angeles After Fire

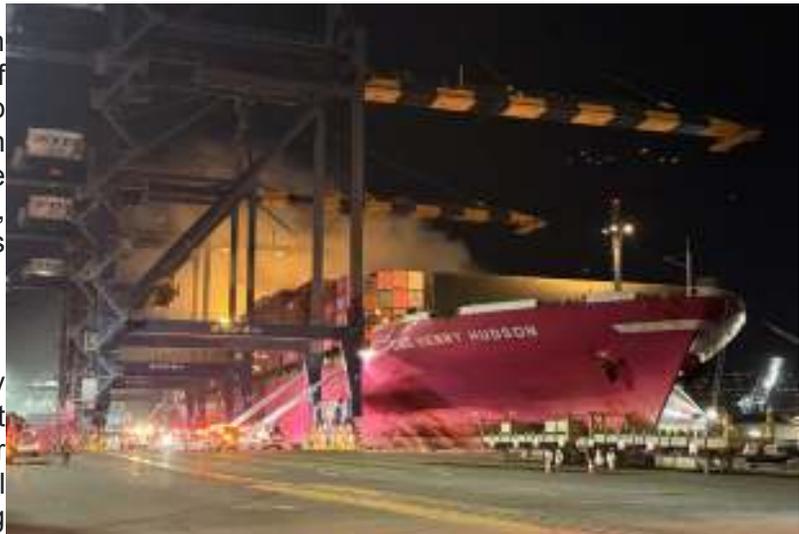
Ocean Network Express has begun discharging the remaining containers from the fire-damaged M/V ONE Henry Hudson at the Port of Los Angeles, marking a critical new phase in what the U.S. Coast Guard has described as the most technically complex salvage operation in recent port history.

The vessel remains berthed at Yusen Terminal following the completion of water removal and distressed-cargo extraction from affected bays on January 12. According to the company's latest customer advisory, full container discharge operations are scheduled to begin mid-week.

A fire burns on the M/V One Henry Hudson berthed at the Port of Los Angeles.

Photo courtesy Los Angeles Fire Department

U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Stacey Crecy, the federal on-scene incident commander, said the response so far has required exceptional coordination. "The initial firefighting response, relocation of the vessel to



a remote anchorage, and recent movement back to the pier were all critical operations that required careful coordination and execution," Crecy said. "Now, a new phase begins where damaged cargo and firefighting water will be properly removed and disposed of. I'm confident the team will accomplish the work ahead safely and efficiently."

The emergency began in late November when a fire broke out in lower-deck compartments while the ship was moored. All 23 crew members were safely evacuated as nearly 200 Los Angeles City firefighters responded. A mid-ship explosion knocked out the vessel's power, forcing crews to withdraw and battle the blaze from the pier.

General Average surveyor Ken Shortall has begun arranging cargo surveys, which are expected to start January 14. The vessel's owner, Fukujin Kisen, has declared General Average*, the maritime principle that shares extraordinary losses among ship and cargo interests when property is sacrificed to save a voyage.



Richards Hogg Lindley has been appointed as average adjuster to collect required securities and documentation.

Under the General Average declaration, cargo will not be released until arrangements are finalized with the adjuster, who will work directly with cargo owners and insurers.

Flooded No.3 Hold

The operation has been complex. Cargo hold 03 was estimated to have been flooded up to 80 percent during firefighting. Salvage

firm DONJON-SMIT mobilized specialists from around the world, while all waste — including contaminated firefighting water — were disposed of under an approved waste-management plan and transported to licensed treatment facilities.

The fire temporarily shut down four of the port's seven container terminals and forced closures along State Route 47 due to heavy smoke, though operations resumed within days. The Coast Guard and National Transportation Safety Board are conducting a joint investigation into the cause of the incident.

Once containers clear General Average and salvage-security requirements, Los Angeles-bound imports will be released at Yusen Terminal for local pickup or inland delivery. Oakland-bound cargo may be collected in Los Angeles following customs clearance or railed north by ONE. Export cargo will continue to be forwarded to destination unless customers request changes.

Mike Schuler. January 14th 2026

https://gcaptain.com/one-henry-hudson-cargo-operations-resume-at-port-of-los-angeles-after-fire/?subscriber=true&goal=0_f50174ef03-ca24c776e4-169937937&mc_cid=ca24c776e4&mc_eid=35ccf165ad

*** What is "General Average"? Take a look at:**

<https://comitemaritime.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/CMI-GA-Guidelines-short-form.pdf>

Vancouver Transportation Foundation

The recipients of the 2025 NPESC/VTF Scholarships had all received their cheques, except one. On Friday January 16th, Richard Smith (NPESC Treasurer) and Stan Bowles (Chairman) attended the BCIT Marine Campus to present the cheque to Marine Engineering Cadet, Dillon Plouffe.



Read the 2025/6 Winter Edition of Maritime Magazine

https://maritimemag.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/MM119_WEB-v5.pdf

See Pages 13 & 14 re Proposed Maritime Academy

Maersk's Record-Setting Dual-Fuel Containership Goes LEGO



The Danish toy giant LEGO is set to launch a new collector's set celebrating Maersk's methanol-powered flagship, *Ane Maersk*. The Maersk Dual-Fuel Container Vessel (40955) hits shelves on March 1, bringing the world's first large methanol-fueled containership to the brick-built world.

The 1,513-piece set lands a little over two years after the real vessel was [christened in January 2024](#), at HD Hyundai Heavy Industries' shipyard in Ulsan, South Korea. With a capacity of 16,000 TEU, *Ane Maersk* marks a major milestone in shipping's push toward lower-carbon operations as the world's first large methanol-powered containership. The ship is named for Ane Mærsk Mc-Kinney Uggle, chair of the

A.P. Moller Foundation.

LEGO's replica faithfully captures the ship's distinctive forward bridge—an eye-catching design Maersk says boosts container capacity and improves port efficiency. Builders get an opening bridge section with crew quarters, transparent engine-room windows, slide-out gangways, buildable containers, and a display plaque that makes it equally at home on a desk or bookshelf.

The real *Ane Maersk* began its maiden voyage on green methanol in early 2024, sailing the AE7 service between Asia and Europe. It was the first of 18 large methanol-enabled ships [Maersk](#) planned to introduce, part of a broader orderbook of dual-fuel vessels designed to operate on green methanol and LNG.

For LEGO and Maersk, the release is a nostalgic callback. The companies last teamed up in 2014 on the now-retired [Maersk Triple-E set](#) (10241), a fan favourite that commemorated what were then the largest container ships afloat.

The new set, aimed at builders aged 12 and up, measures more than 7 inches high, 23.5 inches long, and 4.5 inches wide on its display stand. Part model, part maritime milestone, it's a tidy crossover between shipping's decarbonization push and the enduring appeal of LEGO bricks.

[Mike Schuler](#). February 12, 2026

<https://gcaptain.com/maersks-record-setting-dual-fuel-containership-goes-lego/>



Read "The Navigator" – a Free Publication by The Nautical Institute
in association with the Royal Institute of Navigation.

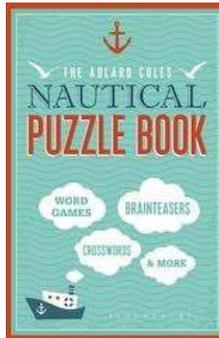


Issue No. 41 (Managing workload) and earlier editions can be seen at: -

<https://www.nautinst.org/technical-resources/navigator.html>

Many seafaring phrases, particularly from the days of sail, have been adopted into everyday use.

For example: Filibuster - Buccaneers were sometimes known in England as filibusters. From the Dutch for vrybuitter (freebooter) translated into French as flibustier. It is now used as a political term meaning to delay or obstruct the passage of legislation (as opposed to sailing vessels) by non-stop speech making.



From the Adlard Coles
Nautical Puzzle Book

<http://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/the-adlard-coles-nautical-puzzle-book-9781472909121/>

Puzzle time

Windy Wordsearch:

Can you find the Beaufort scale wind descriptions?

E	O	S	G	D	E	G	R	S	G	O	L	Y	E	V	CALM
G	L	A	T	P	Q	I	Q	T	I	C	Z	N	I		FRESH BREEZE
E	L	A	X	R	A	K	L	R	G	O	E	K	A	O	GALE
E	I	S	G	T	O	V	Y	H	U	E	R	L	C	L	GENTLE BREEZE
Q	U	I	H	E	H	N	T	I	R	C	Y	M	I	E	HURRICANE
L	T	G	S	R	R	B	G	B	V	A	H	D	R	N	LIGHT AIR
E	I	B	N	B	R	E	E	B	Z	L	G	H	R	T	LIGHT BREEZE
L	Z	I	J	E	G	T	V	Z	R	M	H	T	U	S	MODERATE BREEZE
G	N	E	E	X	A	R	V	E	T	E	R	A	H	T	NEAR GALE
E	Y	Z	T	R	H	G	C	F	S	D	E	B	W	O	SEVERE GALE
Q	E	G	E	N	T	L	E	B	R	E	E	Z	E	R	STORM
B	X	D	Y	B	B	N	E	A	R	G	A	L	E	M	STRONG BREEZE
N	O	E	Z	E	E	R	B	H	S	E	R	F	N	J	VIOLENT STORM
M	L	U	N	Z	Y	L	K	V	Y	A	E	I	E	D	
L	X	N	B	Z	O	A	M	K	U	G	K	C	S	X	

Your Society. Do you wish to make a financial contribution to the NPESC? Is it time for you to renew your membership? The Annual Membership Fee remains at \$40.00 but any amount that you can donate will be greatly appreciated.

The Society is able to accept Membership Fees or Donations via e-transfer by using the email address treasurer@npesc.ca, or you may send a cheque payable to: -

NPESC, c/o 1004 - 110 Brew Street, Port Moody, BC V3H 0E4

Tax Receipts will be issued promptly in return by the Treasurer.

Thank you.

Contributions to the NPESC are tax deductible. Charitable Registration # 891775447 RR0001



Articles or comments for inclusion in future editions of *Seatimes* can be sent to me at whitknit@telus.net
David Whitaker FNI

