



Captain John Lloyd FNI Chief Executive

Focus

Opportunities, change – and challenges



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We are delighted that the IMO is recognising the role of women in the maritime sector with the introduction of the International Day of Women in Maritime, on 18 May 2022, to recognise the contribution and to highlight the opportunities for women in important roles in the sector. It is a great credit to people like our own President, Jillian Carson-Jackson FNI that the contribution made by women is being more fully recognised by everyone in the sector. In the slot usually taken by the Captain's Column on p 4, this month three current officers – and potential Captains, all members of our Younger Members' Council, write about their experience at sea and in the maritime industry today.

The road to equality of opportunity is a long one, as we have seen, and continue to see in many parts of the world. Social media has recently highlighted two key steps on this journey including the recruitment of the first female cadet in Pakistan and the first female Israeli Captain of a merchant ship. We wish them both well in their professional careers in the maritime sector whether at sea or on shore.

Difficult times

While we look forward to celebrating ongoing change and growth in the maritime sector, we cannot turn away from the darker side of what is going on in the world. Events in and around Ukraine continue to dominate world and maritime media. The significance of the sinking of the *Moskva* will not be lost on any of our readers. As the leading professional body for those in control of ships whether civilian or military we understand some of the maritime challenges being faced in the region. But, as professional mariners, we deplore the attacks on innocent merchant shipping. The vessels being attacked and crews taken against their will are not part of the 'war effort' and their treatment is shameful.

While on the subject of shipping casualties, it has been fascinating to see the grounding of another huge container ship – this time the *Ever Forward*. There seems little doubt that these large container vessels present great challenges from a shiphandling perspective requiring the Master, crew and Pilots to be at the top of their game throughout every passage.

There are so many aspects of seamanship that come under the spotlight in these circumstances. Of course the cargo and stability will affect the handling of the vessel; passage planning and preparations as well as bridge teamwork and shiphandling skills are central to the events.

Following the grounding, actions to prevent pollution and to mitigate further damage will fall to the ship's crew supplemented later by experts in marine salvage. The challenges are immense. We look forward

to learning what we can from this incident in due course so repetitions can perhaps be avoided. And we salute the dedicated professionalism of the salvage crews who often have to address novel challenges in the most difficult of circumstances.

I have received a significant amount of correspondence relating to the Master/Pilot relationship in recent weeks. It seems to me this is an extremely important part of effective ship operations in which the Master is usually heavily dependent on the pilot for local knowledge and regular shiphandling experience within the home domain. At the same time the Pilot depends upon the Master and crew to effectively support and monitor the passage and to ensure specific information relating to the vessel is known to all of those charged with its safe passage.

There is no place for 'point scoring'. Each professional is fully responsible for the effective delivery of their designated duties and tasks. Tasks made easier and safer with mutual respect and effective communication.

NI events

The date of IMO's International Women in Maritime Day coincides with the opening day of our 50th Anniversary Conference event in San Francisco and we look forward to ensuring the role of women is considered fully as the seminar explores questions around the future of the Merchant Marine in the USA. Our thanks to all in our USA branches who have worked together to host this important discussion in both a national and international context.

A week before, this we will be in Victoria, British Columbia, exploring issues focused on the changes and opportunities in the Arctic environment. I know the Branch team there have worked tirelessly to attract key speakers and delegates from across the maritime community. One of our sessions will be hosted by one of our own 'Women in Maritime', Bridget Hogan, recognised as one of the most influential women in the maritime sector.

Following this, our next 50th Anniversary presence in Europe will be at Posidonia and I hope to see some of our members and other key stakeholders and friends there.

In closing let me extend a message of thanks and appreciation to our colleagues in the London Branch of The Nautical Institute for hosting the inaugural 50th Anniversary conference in April. With a room full of delegates and expert speakers we were delighted with the programme, the technical content and valuable discussions held throughout the day.

I wish you all the very best for the year ahead.

John