



When the bell tolls.....

It tolls for me, for you, for him.

When the bell tolls it's for everybody to hear. (E. Hemingway)

The issue of human error and what the remedy might be, is persistently raised in the maritime Press, and this is a strong bell to be heard.

“ **The rising cost of human failures** ” – seen in “Trade Winds” (7th inst.) is an article to be taken seriously. The writer of this article refers to ships involved in incidents and says:

“Below is a list of over 100 ships of all types from fleets big and small with just one thing in common — they have all been involved in navigational incidents involving groundings or collisions since the start of 2007. Not all collisions or groundings are the result of human failure but it is tempting to surmise that many of these too-frequent incidents are a result of navigational error rather than equipment failure”.

In the same article we read that, at this year's International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) conference **crew error** will be the main focus.

Based on my experience as a former Hellenic Coast Guard Officer, who dealt with accident investigations and ISM Code implementation as flag Administration Leading Auditor since 1995 and now as a Training Manager of Piraeus Maritime Training Centre (PMTTC), I infer that:

What went wrong in each of these hundreds of cases and other similar cases, which have not been investigated yet, is that humans aboard made a series of errors in a sequence that allowed vessels to come to grief. In other words, **human failing led these ships into trouble.**

We have a triangle of navigation resources available on any ship or boat: *equipment, information, and humans*. We can link the pieces of equipment together for the ship's use: autopilots direct a ship's movement by connecting gyrocompass and steering gear; modern navigation plotters can put both radar and geographic depictions on a single screen. The humans directing a ship also can give information to and get information from the equipment: putting desired courses into the autopilot; taking positions from the plotter and relating them to the world around the vessel. However, **it always takes a human being, or human beings, to make those gadgets work.**

Even though advancing technology has given seamen better tools for navigation, communication, and general safety, ships continue to collide, ground, and sink resulting in lives lost, millions of dollars in damages and tremendous environmental harm. In most cases, these losses are caused by human factors. Studies vary, but human factors are found to be a significant contributing cause, if not the main cause, in 75 to 80% of ship catastrophes. In other



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words, bad things happen to ships because the sailors aboard them fail to work effectively with their equipment and with each other. It does not matter if the ship is military or civilian; manned by a crew of two or two hundred; all of a single nationality or an ethnic mix. **When people fail, ships fail.**

For remedying these human errors and stop them before they happen, “the Company” (as defined in SOLAS 74 Regulation IX/1.2 as amended) must have a training budget, as required in Part A/3.3 and A/6.5 of ISM Code, for the effective implementation of its Safety Management System and provide periodical training to the Deck officers in Bridge Resource Management (BRM)/Ship Handling and to the Engine officers in Engine Room Resource Management (each of them is, the manner in which people work together with their equipment, available information, and each other).

Piraeus Maritime Training Centre, as a prime maritime training institute in Greece, it's equipped with all relevant equipment of advance technology for either Navigation Bridge or Engine Room Management (Bridge Simulator, GMDSS Simulator, and Engine Room Simulator) with experienced instructors in this field of training and approved by many Flag Administrations.

The cost for attending the BRM/Ship Handling course varies according to the number of trainees.

For any information please don't hesitate to come in contact with PMTC in telephone number +302104525301, fax number +302104181748, e-mail pmtcrani@otenet.gr.

You may also visit our web site <http://www.sranis.gr>

Best Regards

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