



International
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INTERTANKO



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2017 Tripartite

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Tripartite Shipbuilding Forum agrees on major industry goals

Carbon emissions, safety and cyber security were at the top of the agenda at the annual Tripartite Shipbuilding Forum which attracted more than 100 delegates. At the end of two days of debate it was agreed that the industry needs to design ships differently and be more technologically innovative to reach world climate goals and counter cyber security risks.

For over 16 years, Tripartite has provided an opportunity for representative associations of shipowners, classification societies and shipyards to discuss contemporary issues related to design, construction and operation of new and future ships.

This year's themes were decarbonisation of ships, safe design and digitalisation. These issues are interlinked as they are all relevant to the creation of a more efficient seaborne transport system.

At its most recent meeting in Nantong, China, hosted by China Classification Society, the forum reached several general conclusions on ship design and technology.

Working to reduce CO₂ emissions

The shipping industry urgently needs new ship designs, equipment, propulsion systems and alternative fuels to achieve the CO₂ reduction goals established by the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the specific objectives to be established for international shipping by the UN IMO as part of its GHG reduction strategy.

It was agreed that the shipping industry needs to use all available technology to a much greater extent, and increase technological innovation to reduce CO₂ emissions to the ambitious degree required by the international community.

The Tripartite forum has therefore established inter-industry working groups with the aim of developing a better understanding of current R&D efforts for the new technologies needed by the shipping sector to realise its vision for zero CO₂ emissions this century.

The Tripartite participants hope that the general understandings reached at its meeting will send an important signal to all industry stakeholders about the vital role that everyone must play to deliver the continuous improvement of shipping's environmental performance now demanded by global society.

Safety can't be compromised

The critical importance of the safety of seafarers and the ships which they operate were also part of the meeting's agenda.

There are increasing concerns that new regulations governing ship designs aimed at further reducing CO₂ emissions could potentially have adverse effects on the safe operation of ships.

One example would be any legal requirements that led to a further reduction of engine power. The concern is that ships could get into problems during bad weather if the engine is insufficiently powered, putting both the crew and the environment at serious risk.

The Tripartite meeting participants agreed that the safety of life at sea must always remain paramount.

Design cyber resilient ships

Recent cyberattacks have increased awareness of potential threats facing the industry.

When it comes to ship design and construction, it was generally agreed that the industry needs to adopt new methods and standards to create more resilient digital systems on board. A more layered approach to a ship's digital system and greater segregation can increase safety, so that a single attack cannot readily spread to IT and other systems both on board the ship and ashore.

The Tripartite forum agreed that in advance of its next meeting in 2018, the industry partners represented at Tripartite will work together to develop new design standards, which will help raise the resilience of ships' digital systems and make them more resistant to possible cyber-attacks.

Intersessional work

This year's issues will be worked on over the coming year and form input to next year's Tripartite meeting, which will be held in the Autumn of 2018 in the Republic of Korea.

The organisations present at Tripartite also re-confirmed their ongoing collaboration towards industry self-regulation as an important complement to the statutory regulations developed by IMO.

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Notes to editors

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