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LNG bunkering expansion not hindered by methane slip concerns

METHANE SLIP AND emission concerns are not holding back growth of the liquefied natural gas bunkering market.

Jerome Leprince-Ringuet, managing director of Total Marine Fuels Global Solutions, cites two indicators supporting the blossoming of this new industry as efforts are being directed to mitigate the methane footprint of LNG adoption as a marine fuel.

LNG-fuelled capable ships make up 22% of newbuildings on order in gross tonnage terms across key shipping segments, he said, citing data from shipbrokerage Clarksons.

Speaking in a SIBCON 2020 presentation, he suggested possible room for the LNG-fuelled fleet to grow, drawing inference from fuel price spread comparisons with the levels when investment decisions were made on the first LNG dual-fuel ocean-going container ships.

"Price differential between two benchmark LNG spot prices, JKM and TTF in Asia and Europe, and those of compliant conventional fuels — marine gasoil and very low sulphur fuel oil in Singapore and Rotterdam — have traded at levels similar to or higher than those in October 2017," he said.

One positive sign is the growth in the tanker segment, 20% of carriers of above 80,000 dwt are being built to run on LNG.

"This coming from a shipping asset class typically plying global trades, is a vote of confidence in the readiness of the LNG bunkering infrastructure worldwide," he said.

That was a reference to the lack of visibility, until recently, over availability of ship-to-ship LNG bunkering infrastructure being made available outside northern Europe.

Contrary to earlier expectations, LNG bunkering infrastructure investments have also picked up elsewhere, notably “rebalancing” towards Asia.

“Six bunker tankers under construction are for Asia — two in Singapore, one each in Malaysia, China, Korea and Japan,” he noted.

This matches up to the bunker tanker count to date for the Atlantic basin, with four being built designated for northern Europe, one for the Mediterranean and one for the US.

With these new additions on the horizon, global LNG bunkering fleet looks set to more than double to 33 strong.

“Global LNG bunkering capacity will expand to about 7.6 m tonnes, more than doubling today’s marine demand for the fuel.”

Total has argued for LNG’s marine use to yield immediate reduction in greenhouse gas emission of up to 21%.

Methane slip from ship engines burning LNG and emission of the potent greenhouse gas from LNG production have emerged a pertinent concern.

But Mr Leprince-Ringuet pointed out that Total is taking steps to contain methane emitted from its upstream oil and gas production at just 0.2%.

Engine makers and other gas producers are also working to tackle this concern, he said.

WHAT TO WATCH

Dishonesty in collision case evidence now increasingly harder, says QC

A HIGH-PROFILE casualty case in the UK High Court this week gave an insight into how the scope for knowing or unknowing inaccuracies is being eliminated by better technology.

The old days of the ‘he said, she said’ arguments to be sorted out by a creaking judicial system are a thing of the past, according to many in the legal profession.

It’s particularly true for seafarer evidence in collision cases, which can now easily be checked against voyage data recorder and automatic identification system evidence.

Quadrant Chambers’ James Turner was involved in this week’s case in connection with a five-vessel collision which closed the Suez Canal in 2018.

The judge, Mr Justice Teare, was particularly critical of some of the accounts provided by officers on some of the ships involved in the shunt, sometimes directly accusing them of dishonesty.

According to the publicly available transcript of the judgment, Teare J said of the master of bulker *Sakizaya Kalon*: “When presented with conflicts between his written statements and what in fact happened he was… prepared to say whatever he could to explain the discrepancy, regardless of whether it was the truth.”

There is a strong suggestion that the master was prepared to put in his report to owners what the pilot told him to say, the judge said.

Accordingly, he was unable to accept the master’s evidence.

The judge also said of the master of *Panamax Alexander*, the ship found to be wholly responsible for the casualty: “I gained the impression that he was doing his best to defend his navigation of his vessel rather than to answer the questions put to him with candour and honesty.”

Indeed, there was justification for the suggestion that evidence had been made up and was untruthful or even a fabrication, he averred.

Mr Turner, who has more than three decades of experience in collision cases, acted in the matter for the owners of bulk carrier *Osios David*.

While that vessel was found to be at fault, in that it had failed to inform *Sakizaya Kalon* and *Panamax*

Alexander of its intention to moor, it was deemed that the fault was not causative.

Mr Turner said that in his early career, attempts to tamper with evidence were regular occurrences.

"The game used to be that people would alter their logs and alter their working charts. There was a lot of forensic effort put into unpicking all that," he said in an interview.

The bigger issue now is attempts by officers to reinvent what their thought process was at the time, with witnesses liable to shape their story in a way they think is going to be helpful to their owners.

The key to tackling the problem is the use of solicitors who are themselves former mariners to undertake marine casualty investigation.

"While the VDR data makes it easier to say what went on, whatever anybody says, it remains critical to get people on board who understand ships and navigation. Otherwise the crew will try to pull a fast one."

In terms of law relating to collisions at sea, the *Panamax Alexander* decision will not lead to major change, but instead will reinforce precedents, Mr Turner went on.

These include the principle that mariners on 'the horns of a dilemma' caused by the negligence of others are not to blame, and the demise of the so-called 'last opportunity rule' that the person who had the last opportunity to avoid an accident is liable for it.

The case has also shown the potential for cases to be heard remotely, with one witness in Greece, a second alongside in Chile, and a third giving evidence from a ship in the middle of the South Atlantic. First occasion evidence given to Admiralty Court from high seas.

"The technology is now such that one can have a fully remote hearing without risk to the process," Mr Turner noted.

Investing in shipping requires patience, say Greek owners

INVESTING in shipping does not offer short-term benefit, but instead requires patience and flexibility, according to leading Greek owners.

Danaos Corp chief financial officer Evangelos Chatzis said new investors needed to understand the cyclical nature of shipping markets.

Their patience would eventually be rewarded, he told a Marine Money panel.

Star Bulk Carriers' co-chief financial officer Christos Begleris said he preferred the word "flexibility" when it came to investors, urging them not to flee the industry when markets are in a downcycle.

In addition, companies must not dilute existing shareholders to get through weak markets.

Shipping was not appreciated by the capital markets, according to Tasos Aslidis, chief financial officer at Euroseas and EuroDry.

That view was echoed by Tsakos Energy Navigation's senior manager in corporate development Harris Kosmatos, who cited how the company's share price did not reflect the astronomical earnings in the tanker sector in the first half of the year.

"There was no investor interest [in shipping] in what was a healthy market in the US," Mr Kosmatos said, describing the investors as day traders, who wanted quick returns, rather than long-term institutional investors. "We need them [long-term investors] back."

Smaller companies do not attract private equity, said Mr Aslidis. Recently, structural equity with protection features has been an option for investors.

Mr Begleris pondered whether private investors were the "right kind" of investors for shipping as they needed to be patient. What was needed was the return of big institutional investors, he said, adding that it was good to see that Fidelity has increased its stake in Euronav.

Mr Kosmatos from tanker owner TEN said the company had looked at raising capital through Chinese leasing houses, but found more competitive rates with traditional outlets.

"We are supportive of these houses but they need to widen their scope, and be more flexible," he said.

Star Bulk's Mr Begleris said that while the Chinese were "very open for business", offering lower leverage ratios at 60% to 70% with margins closer in line with Western banks, the Japanese were "harder to crack". While the Chinese could offer hundreds of millions of dollars in one go, the Japanese preferred smaller deals, he noted.

"We are gearing up for good markets," with volatility a permanent feature in the sector, he said, adding that overall the company, which operates in the dry bulk market, was positive in fundamentals for years to come.

Mr Kosmatos was bullish for the tanker sector, seeing a healthy market for the next two years, based on historically low vessel deliveries combined with an increasingly ageing fleet.

Mr Chatzis of Danaos said for the container sector, "good days lay ahead" due to a low orderbook and a rise in demand in two to three years' time, as things normalise gradually following the coronavirus effect.

OPINION

Shortcomings dampen impact of global issues monitor

SHIPPING stakeholders are a miserable bunch if this year's Global Maritime Issues Monitor can be believed, *writes Richard Clayton*.

When the industry's temperature was taken between April and June, during the frightening early months of a global pandemic, they forecast that the viral legacy would be a global economic crisis.

Not only was it the most likely to happen of all the many issues facing shipping, it would have the greatest impact.

Moreover, economic crises — especially when combined with increasing geopolitical tension and the likelihood of further pandemics — are far more dramatic than shipping can ever prepare for.

But if you ask a man being beaten by thugs what the world's biggest problems are, he would probably identify thuggish behaviour as the top of his list.

The survey in 2019 also regarded the impact of global economic crisis as the most serious of the issues and thought it was the one for which shipping was least prepared.

But last year maritime stakeholders did not think global economic crises were very likely — ranking 10th of 18 issues. That would probably have been the case if the survey had been conducted in February 2020 — before the coronavirus had gone global.

It is important to understand the context of a survey like this.

Although the report's authors claim global coverage, that is hard to justify when three of the six continents only muster 6% of respondents, when 54% are chief executives, when 60% are from Europe, and when there were 10 times as many male respondents as females.

Maritime stakeholders should not be heavily drawn from one sector of the industry.

While half the respondents ran shipowning companies, only 5% worked for terminal operators, charterers only represented 3%, and "shipping customers" only 2%. Casting the net wider would have brought a more diverse catch.

Having said that, the survey throws up interesting insight. Respondents placed the impact of decarbonisation of shipping between global economic crisis and pandemics. In other words, maritime stakeholders accept decarbonisation cannot be put off much longer, but they know their companies are woefully underprepared for it.

According to survey respondents, the likelihood of cyber attacks has slipped down the ranking, and the impact is thought to have been less than a year previously. If the survey had been conducted this week —following attacks on the International Maritime Organization and liner operator CMA CGM — no doubt cyber security would be higher up.

Other key issues including the shortage of skills, the risk of piracy, the threat of fuel price increases, and even the impact of a major safety incident have all become less important for an industry struggling to cope with a global epidemic. Although they all must be addressed, the industry believes — probably correctly — that it should be done internally.

The most immediate catastrophe, the humanitarian crisis of stranded seafarers described as the biggest problem shipping has faced in decades, was not an option for the Global Maritime Issues Monitor respondents. It is likely to become issue #20 in 2021.

Meanwhile, this survey suggests autonomous shipping — in its end-state: technology able to perform tasks without human interaction — is spooking ship owners.

By placing autonomous technology third in the ranking of issues for which shipping is least prepared — even though its impact is not thought to be high and with little likelihood of happening any time soon — shipping's leaders reveal a deep-seated fear of what they do not know.

Technology company executives, who do not appear to have been asked to contribute, have some explaining to do.

Surveys reflect the moment in which they are taken. This Issues Monitor attempted the equivalent of getting the views of someone being beaten over the head by thugs.

Each year will introduce a new critical issue that will go to the top of the list. A decade ago, the threat of piracy was the only issue under discussion.

Today the impact of piracy is considered minimal, its likelihood is understood, and seafarers have been trained and stand ready to repel boarders.

Ten years is a long time in shipping.

Shipping, hackers and the law

CMA CGM is one of the biggest box carriers in the world, and the International Maritime Organization is a fully-fledged United Nations agency, *writes David Osler*.

Yet in the space of a few days both fell victim to cyber crime: the first lost control of its internal IT systems to ransomware, while the latter was paralysed by what it described as a 'sophisticated cyber attack', depriving it even of email.

Numerous other big names in the industry, including Maersk, Clarksons and a number of leading ports, have also been on the receiving end of the unwanted attentions of hackers.

If it can happen to major league players, it can happen to anybody.

So what should you do if it's your company's turn?

While the first anxious phone call will almost certainly be to your IT team, the second may well be to your law firm, because the legal implications are considerable.

We sought advice from HFW's head of shipping Paul Dean, his associate colleague Henry Flack, and Stephenson Harwood's marine director Rod Johnson, a former UK chief coastguard.

So, you log on one morning and find yourself frozen out, and facing an onscreen demand for a pay-off. Should you just hand over the bitcoin – which is untraceable, of course - and hope that things rapidly return to normal?

The obvious first point is that once you have parted with the virtual currency, there is no guarantee you get the data back.

Several entities that met the demands of whoever was behind the WannaCry virus in 2017 were sucker punched like this, losing out twice over.

You will also need to be aware of the law in your country. Under English law, payment of ransom to criminals is legal; payment of ransom to terrorists is prohibited, and there are criminal penalties.

The Catch-22 here is that companies have no way of knowing the identity of their anonymous extortionists.

"Attributing cyber attacks to a particular entity is an incredibly difficult enterprise," pointed out Mr Clack.

"If you were able to trace an attack to the suburb of a Russian city, you wouldn't know whether that's a bored 15-year-old or a state-sponsored attack."

The position varies from country to country. In Italy, for example, with its long history of protection rackets on the part of organised crime, the payment of any ransom is illegal.

The advice here is to approach your police, and any relevant state antifraud bodies. In the UK, the appropriate entity is Action Fraud, a reporting service under the aegis of the National Fraud Authority. It runs a 24/7 hotline on 0300 123 2040.

You may also wish to retain lawyers in an advisory capacity. Also available are firms of what are euphemistically known as response consultants, who should be able to take matters discretely further. You lawyers will furnish the introductions.

Another aspect you will need to take on board is whether there has been a breach of data protection. The general framework here in European Union countries is the General Data Protection Regulation.

In the UK, GDPR forms the basis of the Data Protection Act 2018. There has been speculation that the UK government will soften it after expiry of the Brexit transition period, to the commercial advantage of British-based companies. But for now, there it is.

Examples of personal data include the information you probably have on hand to meet your payroll, such as national insurance numbers or equivalent, and banking details.

Data protection issue will be especially salient where a shipping company has hundreds or thousands of sea staff. For cruise companies, which may have tens or hundreds of thousands of passengers each year, the headache is potentially enormous.

Fines for data breaches can run as high as €20m ($23.2m) or 4% of annual turnover, whichever is greater. So it was that British Airways was last year whacked with a £183m ($233m) penalty for a 2018 data protection incident.

If you capture sensitive data, make sure you can demonstrate you are storing it in a safe way. That necessitates the use of secure systems.

The cyber security guidelines produced by Britain's Government Communications Headquarters are simple, straightforward and worth adopting to reduce risk.

If you still end up with a data breach, engage with regulators rather than try to cover things up. They may be more inclined to go easy if you can demonstrate best efforts.

One potential vulnerability for shipping companies is business partners such as freight forwarders in the developing world, whose IT systems may not have defences as sophisticated as the norm in the first world.

"If I were a big player and had a procurement team, I would want to satisfy myself they were observing good IT hygiene, because vulnerability could come to me through them," said Mr Johnson.

Where possible, negotiate contractual rights to audit the IT systems of key partners from an information security perspective.

Virus or malware on ships can cause problems from a seaworthiness perspective. This already happening out there, as version three of the BIMCO cyber security guidelines makes clear.

Case law remains scant. But if a ship were knowingly to set out on a voyage infected with malware, it would almost certainly be deemed unseaworthy, in contravention of the Marine Insurance Act.

Unseaworthiness, of course, is grounds for hull and machinery insurers and P&I clubs to avoid payment, and a complete defence for cargo interests if general average is declared.

Once again, due diligence is key. Owners should have explicit shipboard IT security policies in place, it should be made plain to external contractors that they must comply, and onboard notices should clearly be posted covering such areas as unauthorised use of USB sticks.

Hull cover policies typically rely on Institute cyber attack exclusion clause 380. It is not mandatory, but it is widely placed.

This provides that, except in a limited range of circumstances, "in no case shall this insurance cover loss, damage, liability or expense directly or indirectly caused by or contributed to or arising from the use or operation, as a means for inflicting harm, of any computer, computer system, computer software programme, malicious code, computer virus or process or any other electronic system".

If the wording sounds anachronistic, that is because it dates back to 2003, when cyber risk was conceptualised in terms of the Y2K bug and 9/11, and the main fear was the potential for an unmanageable aggregation of loss.

On P&I side, everything comes down to club rules, which vary from club to club, typically handing discretion to the management board.

The market has responded with so called 'clause 380 buybacks', and specialist cyber policies, templated on business interruption policies, which cover costs relating to recovery of data, such as breach investigations.

Well-known reputable providers of bespoke marine cyber cover products include Beazley, Astaara and Shoreline, as well as others.

ANALYSIS

Global container volumes jump on unlikely peak season

MONTHLY global container volumes climbed above last year's level for the first time in August as carriers reaped the rewards of an unlikely peak season on the trunk trades.

Container Trades Statistics data show that while volumes fell back slightly on July traffic, which was the busiest since the corresponding month of last year, figures of 14.8m teu in August represented a 1.5% on the 2019 monthly tally.

Figures in July were up for the third consecutive month following a decline in April attributed to the impact of the coronavirus outbreak, CTS said in its monthly commentary.

It said numbers for the month narrowly missed matching last year's total.

Even so, the heathy traffic numbers raised expectations for a sustained volume rebound and hope for a peak season that had seemed highly unlikely at one stage.

CMA CGM recently noted that it expects volumes in the second half of 2020 to come in above last year.

This optimism will be lifted further by August's official numbers, buoyed most notably by positive sentiment and a surge in traffic on the transpacific trade.

Container lines carried 2m teu from the Far East to North America, up 4% on July but 16% on year, according to CTS. This reflects too the record increasing throughput volumes reported at US west coast ports in August, including Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland.

On the Far East to Europe trade, the latest official volume figures show that growth was much more moderate, rising 2% on July and 1.6% over last year at just under 1.5m teu.

"Year to date totals of 12.1m teu and 10.1m teu respectively on these two key trades [transpacific and Far East-Europe] are -2% and -10% down on last year so, while there's some catching up to do, it looks like there is a peak season to speak of this year," it said.

Shipping sees off-spec fuel as a major concern

THE past nine months have seen an increasing number of off-specification low sulphur fuels emerging and a resultant rise in fuel contamination cases, according to a BIMCO survey.

Meanwhile, other concerns so far raised by the shipping industry about meeting ISO 8217 standards relate to issues around total sediments, aluminium plus silicon, pour point, ash, flash point, acid number and viscosity.

"I am sure this will continue, especially in the bunker fuels that are blended," BIMCO's chief shipping analyst Peter Sand said during the Singapore International Bunkering Conference and Exhibition.

He said another recent development was the widespread use of jetfuel kerosene for blending owing to the coronavirus backdrop, with surplus supply building up amid low aviation fuel demand.

"That is a fine oil product... but it is also giving problems due to its new and unknown characteristics."

The ISO8217 standard for bunkering operations sets the limit on sediment content at 0.1% mass by mass.

However, competitive and cost pressures in the bunker supply sector have led suppliers to use poor quality, low-cost cutter stocks, which are not tested for their chemical content.

Meanwhile, the oil industry has been particularly hit by trade sanctions and Mr Sand highlighted that its effects are being felt in the bunkering business too.

"Staying clear of sanctions and avoiding being in breach is paramount to all, as your licence to trade may otherwise be revoked," he said. "You simply cannot afford to non-comply."

But it is also increasingly difficult to stay clear — and the oil business includes many players that seek to find ways around sanctions, he noted.

"It all adds up to my wish for the industry: be a trustworthy supplier, reduce the hassle and other issues, and make a positive difference to the pack."

Mr Sand believes trust is the key to industry-wide compliance.

Benefits of green retrofits for older ships being 'overlooked'

GREEN retrofits of older ships could make a "substantial" contribution to reducing emissions and help the industry bridge the gap until new technologies and fuels arrive, but are being "overlooked", a leading shipping advisory has said.

"Why is this not happening today on a large scale?" asked Hauke Kite-Powell, senior analyst for liquid gas shipping at Marsoft.

Shipowners demurred from retrofitting vintage vessels because, with the potential exception of high-consuming types such as large containerships or very large crude carriers, the returns "don't justify the investment," said Mr Kite-Powell.

"While we wait for new technologies to shake out there is potential for significant savings if we retrofit older ships that have been mostly designed for a different operating environment. They can be adapted to the new environment."

Speaking at the Virtual Marine Money Greek Ship Finance Forum, he said that the answer was "to find a way to change the economics of retrofitting and make them more attractive."

Marsoft believes that 30% reductions in "effective retrofit costs" are feasible if actual capital costs are brought down by a combination of scale, repeat business and standardisation.

Gains would be helped by greater clarity of the results of retrofitting and enhanced revenues, including carbon credits, Mr Kite-Powell said.

Meanwhile, Marsoft estimated that retrofitting could reduce main engine fuel consumption by six to 12%.

Options included tuning engines for lower consumption, adding ducts or skaters to improve water flow, optimisation of propellers for lower speeds and potentially bulbous bow refits.

Savings varied over different ship types. There was very little difference between a retrofitted VLCC and a modern eco vessel in terms of consumption, while for smaller vessels such as supramax bulkers or medium-range tankers, retrofits did not cancel all of the gap between older vessels and modern eco units.

Another benefit for owners would be potentially to make such vessels eligible for financing again.

Banks, that have been increasingly adopting green criteria for lending, saw retrofitting as an "attractive prospect," said Mr Kite-Powell.

MARKETS

Changing Lanes: Container trade faces challenges beyond pandemic

THE pandemic is undeniably the single most important event to have affected global containerised trade this year, making 2020 the most challenging for international in many years, *writes Antonella Teodoro, a senior analyst at MDS Transmodal*.

Without the health crisis other major events would have registered bigger headlines around the globe; be it Brexit, the decision on the aircraft dispute by the World Trade Organisation, WTO leadership, the US presidential elections or progress on how to harmonise global tax legislation for digital corporations.

Regardless of whether the UK and the rest of the European trading partners will reach an agreement on their future trading relationship by the end of this year, trade barriers of some kind will be introduced from January 2021.

Should negotiations on a tariff-free and quota-free agreement fail, trade between the two parties will fall under the rules set by the WTO with each party entitled to set tariffs — or taxes — on imports from either party.

So, cars from the UK to the European Union could be charged at 10% of their value, with some agricultural goods being exposed to much higher tariffs (for instance the tariffs on dairy products could average more than 35% of their value).

The UK has the right to choose not to apply tariffs on goods imported from the EU, in which case this would also mean no tariffs on goods imported from every WTO member.

Last October, the WTO ruled that the US could target $7.5bn of imports from the EU over illegal subsidies to Airbus.

The EU has asked the WTO to be authorised to impose tariffs on $11.2bn products from the US for their illegal subsidies to Boeing Co.

At the end of September, Reuters reported that the WTO had authorised the EU to impose tariffs on US goods worth $4bn to retaliate against subsidies to Boeing Co BA.N.

Settlement of the 15-year dispute would bring an enormous relief to European exporters, currently under threat of US 'tit-for-tat' tariffs. The settlement would also be welcomed by the industries at the receiving end of the WTO-authorised tariffs.

Another reason for the world to keep its eyes on the WTO will be the race for its leadership, expected to be highly competitive on both an individual land national level.

The organisation, currently operating without a chief following Roberto Azevedo's resignation in August, is under enormous pressure to reform, which is crucial to its survival.

In the past few years, various proposals have been put forward to the WTO, including stronger punitive measures against repetitive or intentional non-compliance by member states, and updates to the rules on self-classification for developing countries.

Should reform proposals fail to address member state requirements, one or more major economies could decide to leave the WTO, as President Donald Trump has already threatened.

Another event with the potential to affect global trade and that could exacerbate the impact of the pandemic on the global economy is the foreign taxation on US technology corporations such as Facebook and Google.

Countries around the world, mainly European, are aiming to reach a consensus on new tax rules for international digital firms that generate vast revenues in their territories. By contrast, Mr Trump and his administration consider this move as discrimination against US companies and has threatened retaliatory tariffs.

Discussions on finding a solution were underway, however, the US withdrew from talks in June reducing the likelihood of an early resolution.

The size of the impact of any or all the above events on global trade will also be influenced by the outcome of next month's US Presidential election.

Should Mr Trump win a second term there is the potential for an escalation in the geopolitical fight between the US and China for global leadership, which will likely lead to an increase in US tariffs on foreign trade.

Based on the data available at the beginning of October, we observe that, after a contraction of circa 3% in the capacity offered on the deepsea market in the first half of 2020 (compared with the same period of 2019), in the third quarter carriers have increased their offer with deployed capacity now marginally higher than the capacity offered this time last year.

Looking at ships on order, lines are showing a willingness to put more capacity into the container shipping market. We estimate an increase of more than 6% in the total fleet capacity in teu terms by the end of 2021 and a further increase of circa 2% in 2022; unsurprisingly, we expect the percentage of ships of 15,000 teu or more to increase the most (21.8% by 2021).

IN OTHER NEWS

Evergreen Marine appoints new chairman

EVERGREEN Marine has appointed a new chairman, industry veteran Chang Yen-I. Aged 64, he joined Evergreen as a seafarer in 1987 and worked his way up to master.

Caot Chang replaces Anchor Chang, who had been chairman since 2013 and is believed to be younger than his successor. The two are not thought to be related, and neither are they members of the Chang family, who own the Taiwanese group.

News of the change followed a board meeting on Wednesday. The new appointment took immediate effect, Taipei-listed Evergreen Marine said. No reason for the management change was disclosed.

BPA welcomes more inclusive freeport plan

THE British Ports Association has welcomed the suggestion that the UK government is considering increasing the number of sites that will be eligible for freeport status when it opens bidding later this year.

Speaking following publication of the response its consultation on freeports, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said that sea, air and rail ports in England would be invited to bid for freeport status before the end of the year, with the government aiming for the first of the new sites to be open for business in 2021.

Freeports will benefit from streamlined planning processes to aid brownfield redevelopment, tax reliefs, and simplified customs procedures and duty suspensions on goods, the government said.

IMO urges 'strict adherence' to pandemic rules

THE International Maritime Organization has emphasised the need for seafarers follow testing and isolation rules in updates to its crew change guidance.

The updated protocols are meant to help governments and companies manage crew movements between their homes, ports, airports and hotels without spreading coronavirus.

The IMO said the updates were mainly to emphasise "the need for compliance and strict adherence with testing and quarantine requirements, reflecting that these are now a reality in many national jurisdictions".

Charterers to report shipping emissions in green initiative

LEADING cargo owners and charterers have committed to reporting shipping's greenhouse gas emissions and assessing their alignment with decarbonisation targets.

The Sea Cargo Charter is the latest global effort by first movers with interests in the shipping industry to put pressure on the rest of the sector to both be more transparent and collectively reduce its emissions in line with its commitments.

It has the backing of 17 companies, including energy majors such as Shell, Occidental and Total, commodity traders Cargill and Trafigura, and shipping companies including Norden and Klaveness Combination Carriers.

Lloyd's Register sells energy business to UK private equity

CLASSIFICATION Society Lloyd's Register has agreed to offload its energy business to UK private equity firm Inspirit Capital.

The divestment is the first major announcement to have resulted from a comprehensive strategic review of the Lloyd's Register Group businesses. It also comes midway through a transition in leadership that will see current Marine and Offshore director Nick Brown take over from Alastair Marsh as group chief executive at the end of the year.

LR's energy division was founded in the 1930s following the class society's initial diversification from marine assets into the oil and gas industry, but the business has struggled in recent years.

Frontline chief Robert Macleod steps down

FRONTLINE chief executive Robert Macleod is stepping down after six years, the company said.

The New York-listed tanker company said it has appointed commercial director Lars H Barstad as interim chief executive.

Mr Macleod became chief executive in 2014 and will remain "available" into next year to assist with the handover.

ICTSI starts operations at Cameroon port terminal

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services, Inc has moved quickly to start commercial operations at the multi-purpose terminal of the port of Kribi in Cameroon barely two months after sealing a 25-year concession.

ICTSI's Cameroon unit Kribi Multipurpose Terminal said when it won the concession at the end of July that it planned to begin full operations in a few months.

KMT operates the purpose-built

terminal that was designed to handle various shipping line services including ro-ro, project and heavy lift cargo, forestry products, dry bulk and other general cargoes, and to offer support services to the oil and gas industry.

Charterers urged to follow IMO on emissions reporting

THE International Chamber of Shipping has said that a new emissions reporting initiative by charterers should follow global rules set out by governments.

A group consisting of some of the biggest charterers in the world, have published the Sea Cargo Charter, an initiative that commits to disclose annually the greenhouse gas emissions of the ships they charter and to assess whether they align with the International Maritime Organization's decarbonisation targets.

It is aimed at boosting the transparency of emissions in shipping and establishing a standardised and credible reporting method that can ultimately be applied throughout the industry.

US short-term energy outlook remains uncertain

THE US Energy Information Administration said its October Short-Term Energy Outlook remains subject to "heightened levels of uncertainty" due to the continued evolution of mitigation and reopening efforts related to the health crisis.

"Reduced economic activity related to the pandemic has caused changes in energy demand and supply patterns in 2020 and will continue to affect these patterns in the future," it said.

It estimates the rate of global oil demand growth slowed in August and September compared with the initial recovery in June and July when global oil demand increased by 6m barrels per day and 3.1m bpd, respectively.

Gulf of Mexico battening down ahead of Hurricane Delta

A RAPIDLY strengthening Hurricane Delta was taking aim at Mexico's northeastern Yucatan Peninsula on Tuesday before targeting the US Gulf coast later this week, the US National Hurricane Centre reported, while almost a third of current gulf crude oil production has been shut in ahead of the storm.

Late on Tuesday, the NHC said that a mid-level ridge over Florida and the northeastern Gulf of Mexico is expected to continue steering Delta west-northwestward during the next 36-48 hours.

After that time, a developing trough over the south-central US should cause Delta to turn northward, and by Friday the hurricane is forecast to begin accelerating northward or north-northeastward ahead of the trough.

Classified notices follow

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ma 09u-13 en 16u-18u – di tot vr 09u-13u

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COURT-ORDERED PUBLIC AUCTION

OF THE SEAGOING VESSEL "BASEL EXPRESS"

online via the website:
https://www.vhauctions.com

from **10:00 a.m. on Monday 26 October 2020**
until **10:00 a.m. on Tuesday 3 November 2020**

Overall length:	126.42 M
Overall width:	19.40 M
Draught:	9.50 M
Gross tonnage:	7,111.00 mT
Net tonnage:	3,482.00 mT
Type of vessel:	Cargo vessel
Propulsion system:	MAN B&W, 5S42MC
Total power:	4,975kW
Classification:	Registro Italiano Navale (RINA)
Flag:	Panama
Home port:	Panama
Year built:	2000
Place built:	China
Shipyard:	Jingjiang Shipyard
Current berth:	Port of Antwerp, Quay 315
IMO number:	9210701
Call sign:	3EMK5
Hull:	Steel

More information and conditions of sale via info@relias.be