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Lloyd's List
Maritime intelligence | informa

Daily Briefing

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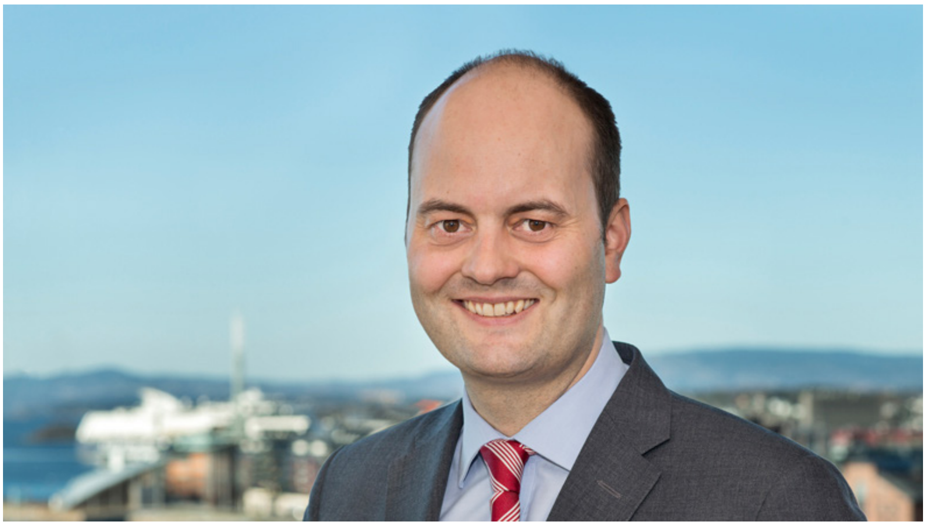
Skuld joins Gard among big winners from renewal round



SKULD HAS JOINED fellow Norwegians Gard among the winners at this year's P&I renewal round, with entered mutual tonnage growing 5.5% to 101m gt.

Market speculation suggests much of that uptick is down to the unconfirmed decision by Hong Kong's Wah Kwong Maritime Transport to switch from Standard to Skuld.

However, the numbers broadly tally with yesterday's word from Standard that it attained a renewal rate of just 95%, a figure lower than would normally be anticipated.

Given that Standard's book ran to 155m gt last year according to brokers' reports, the implication is that something like 7.5m gt did not renew.

Meanwhile, the London Club — one of the smaller International Group affiliates — has also unveiled an unspecified positive result, although it did not make clear whether the applicable yardstick was entered tonnage, premium income or both.

Of other clubs that have so far declared outcomes following the February 20 deadline, North has admitted a small but unspecified outflux.

Gard topped a renewal rate of 99.4% and added a record 17m gt over the last 12 months, the bulk of it in the renewal period. That brings its total owners' mutual tonnage to 246m gt.

Information in the public domain so far does not suggest extensive club-hopping on the part of owners, despite demands for substantial hefty rate hikes in the range of 5%-10%.

However, the full picture will only be known once more IG members publish their renewal statistics.

Justification on the part of the clubs for seeking higher premiums includes sizeable technical underwriting losses in recent years, coronavirus, rapidly rising pool exposure, uncertain investment returns and pressure from ratings agencies.

Brokers have sought to hold down general increases, and have generally been ready to argue for rises of only half what underwriters are demanding, except where penalty increases are clearly merited by loss records.

In a statement issued this morning, Skuld said that in addition to the expansion in mutuality, it had increased its market share across all other lines of business, including hull and energy and all aspects of its commercial P&I operations.

Chief executive Ståle Hansen pointed out that this had been achieved against the backdrop of not only the pandemic but a period of extreme volatility in the marine insurance market.

"Albeit working remotely and fully digitally our members and clients have coped extremely well with the situation and we owe our greatest thanks and appreciation to everyone who has contributed positively during the pandemic," he said.

"Skuld's strategic focus on growth through diversification and our careful selection of quality tonnage along with efficient processes and outstanding service lays the foundations for further growth and development in 2021 and beyond."

Ian Gooch, chief executive of London Club managers A Bilbrough & Co, said that the club had achieved an outcome is in line with its premium objectives, which included double-digit price hikes for both P&I and freight, demurrage and defence.

"In the face of increasing pool claims, uncertainties associated with the pandemic and diminishing premium levels, we have focused on sustainability in the rating of our P&I business which ensures the club's continuing strength going forward.

"Inevitably, our focus on rating meant that — in a small number of cases — agreement could not be reached on the required increases and in a few other instances there was a reallocation of a small number of ships to suit the strategic purposes of both the members concerned and the club."

However, the overwhelming majority of London Club members understood and backed the need for higher pricing, leading to a positive result overall.

Lloyd's List yesterday asked Standard Club to clarify the extent of its tonnage losses.

"The club has taken a proactive approach to improve the current level of rating in order to return to a breakeven underwriting position which inevitably meant not agreeing renewal terms with all members," said Mark Collins, director of underwriting.

"The club did not offer renewal terms to a small number of members based upon negative claims performance and strategically diluted its exposure to fleets where rating levels are currently insufficient to cover their own claims, contributions towards pool claims and the general costs of providing cover."

WHAT TO WATCH:

Israeli oil-spill ship shortlist narrows

AGENCIES have identified the time and location of the spill likely responsible for dumping as much as 1,000 tonnes of bunker fuel on Israel's beaches, leading to widespread closures.

Vessel-tracking shows that the authorities using Automatic Identification System data can narrow their list of some nine vessels to the four or five vessels tracked around the area at the time, some 50 km (31 miles) off the port of Ashod.

Not all ships would be captured if vessel-tracking responders were switched off, and there is no suggestion that any of those seen in the area at the time are responsible.

A Malta-based emergency response agency funded by the International Maritime Organization worked with the European Maritime Safety Agency using satellite images and wave patterns.

The co-ordinates and dates provided to Lloyd's List show that the vessel responsible was likely sailing to or from Ashod around February 11.

"There were two identified spills," Malek Smaoui, from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea, told Lloyd's List. "The potential spill is the one detected on February 11 and used by Emsa and REMPEC for respective predictions.

Israeli authorities initially had nine possible vessels to investigate based on both the first spill detected on February 5 and the second one on February 11.

Lloyd's List Intelligence data show the second spill location is regularly traversed by containerships, ro-ro vessels, bulk carriers and tankers calling at the port. At least four ships were tracked in this area some 24 hours before and after.

None of the ships are operated by a Greek-owned tankers outfit, Minerva Marine, that has been linked to the oil spill, which first affected Israel's Mediterranean coastline and has now reached southern Lebanon.

Israeli public and private media reports said the hunt for the source of the spill had allegedly focused on 17-year-old aframax *Minerva Helen* (IMO: 9276561).

Minerva Marine, a longstanding player in the sector with a current fleet including 60 tankers, said in a statement that the allegations were "unfounded and inaccurate".

It also provided a timeline for the tanker's movements, countering what appears to be information stemming from the official probe that positioned the tanker as leaving Port Said in Egypt on February 11 bound for Israel and leaking oil while more than 50 miles offshore.

More than 100 miles of beaches, including sensitive ecological areas, have been affected by the spill, according to Israeli reports.

Unions call for all seafarers to be vaccinated

UNIONS have called for the worldwide vaccination of seafarers amid concerns they will miss out on coronavirus vaccines.

The Nautilus Federation of 22 unions wants an international programme to vaccinate seafarers and inland waterway crews to ensure they do not miss out on vaccines while travelling for work.

"Maritime and shipping professionals require an international solution to ensure they can access vaccines while at sea," said federation director Mark Dickinson. "Governments and global organisations must recognise this urgent and growing need."

The unions said vaccine policies differed and some countries did not consider certain vaccines suitable.

Nautilus wants those seafarers vaccinated outside their home country to be given only vaccines authorised by their home country, with information on those vaccines in English as well as their own language.

It said seafarers must get their required doses within the World Health Organization's recommended timescales.

It also called for free travel for seafarers who had not yet been vaccinated, and an education programme for them to counter anti-vaccination propaganda.

The International Maritime Employers' Council is also lobbying governments not to impose mandatory vaccination as a condition for entry.

Francesco Gargiulo, its chief executive, told Lloyd's List seafarers from poor countries were unlikely to be vaccinated as fast as those in richer ones, and imposing rules too soon would worsen the crew change crisis.

Mr Gargiulo said he understood health workers getting vaccination priority, "but you can't put a stop to people travelling for work — particularly because these guys are essential to world trade".

"I don't hear too many countries thinking about doing this, but there's always going to be the outlier," he said, adding that countries like Australia and New Zealand had become almost Covid-free "by trampling all over the rights of seafarers".

ANALYSIS:

Reversing restrictive maritime trade policies would boost global economic recovery

COVID-19 may have given politicians a chance to overtly indulge their protectionist instincts, but open markets have been under attack from trade wars and tariffs in various guises for several years.

The economic damage inflicted first by the financial crash and exacerbated by the Sino-American trade war has normalised political rhetoric of "strategic autonomy" and "economic self-reliance".

In 2019, as tariffs were pumped up on both sides, America's share of Chinese imports and exports fell to its lowest in 27 years, before China's entry into the World Trade Organization.

According to the WTO — an institution itself under attack in an age of growing trade protectionism — $1.7 trillion of world imports have been affected by restrictive trade barriers since 2009.

With that context in mind the International Chamber of Shipping today launches a major new study that argues reducing trade protectionism could see GDP gains for national economies increase by up to 3.4%.

The report 'Protectionism in Maritime Economies', which is co-authored by Professor Craig Van Grasstek of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, argues that that high-income countries could see an average increase of 4.5% in their goods exports if they were to loosen tariff and non-tariff restrictions on trade. Developing economies would experience an even greater increase, of 7%, if they reduced their restrictions in a 'modest and equal' way.

"Removing tariff and non-tariff barriers are quick and easy tools available to policymakers to increase levels of GDP, making this a win-win situation in catalysing economic recovery from Covid-19," argued International Chamber of Shipping chairman Esben Poulsson.

The report lays out four scenarios for potential reform, ranging from 'highly ambitious' where countries reduce tariff and non-tariff measures by 50%, through to a 'modest and equal' scenario of a 10% reduction.

A total of 46 maritime nations, accounting for the vast majority of the global economy, were analysed and given a 'Protectionism in Maritime Economies' (PRIME) score according to how restrictive their trade policies are, based on factors such as management and licensing rules, government integrity, and tariffs.

The most restrictive nations included Egypt, Kenya, Thailand and Argentina. The best performing country was Latvia.

The report's findings have already been shared among various trade bloc secretariats, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, where there is some hope that, with the support of maritime nations, it might be enough to reignite the long-dead discussions over the liberalisation of maritime transport services.

WTO talks faltered nearly 15 years ago and, despite periodic attempts to resurrect formal dialogue, the trade body has been stymied by political inertia. With respect to maritime transport services, the shipping industry is strongly in favour of the resumption of full negotiations under the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) — or some other multilateral mechanism — which includes a focus on maritime transport.

While a full re-opening of WTO dialogue may be an overly ambitious outcome from a single report, the ICS is cautiously optimistic that it has sufficient support from governments willing to push the findings to gain at least some positive interaction on the topics raised.

While a multilateral trade agreement on maritime transport is important, the study concedes that the current absence of such an agreement is not the only factor impeding national economies from reaping the full benefits of efficient maritime transport services.

In particular, the study suggests that it is self-defeating for any country to hold its own shipping reforms hostage to any lower level of ambition of its trading partners. National economies would be best served by moving as far as they can towards facilitating open markets and fair competition in the maritime sector — even if this means doing so individually, outside of the framework provided by a multilateral agreement.

The ICS will present its report to the WTO Services Council and the B20 Taskforce on Trade & Investment, which makes direct recommendations to the G20, as well as various regional trade blocs including the European Union and African Union.

"Identifying the trade restrictive policies that countries have in place is a sensible first step towards meaningful reform," said Ralf Nagel, chairman of the ICS Shipping Policy Committee and chief executive officer of the German Shipowners' Association. "Equally important is to have a clear plan of action to significantly reduce the impact of these policies or remove them altogether," he continued.

While the ICS has long argued against protectionist trade policies, the report marks a significant step up in the ambition of lobbying potential. The value of global maritime trade was estimated at $14 trillion in 2019 and ICS officials have long argued that the shipping industry requires a louder voice when it comes to trade issues.

According to ICS secretary general Guy Platten, the Chamber's membership, made up of national shipowner associations, is fully supportive of the expanded remit and more prominent voice that the ICS is seeking.

"Getting into the corridors of power beyond the International Maritime Organization and International Labor Organization is extremely important — shipping needs to be considered," said Mr Platten.

"We are fundamental to the supply chain and this is about shipping's voice being heard at the start, not waiting until it's filtered down to IMO level. The shipping industry is fundamental to world trade and we have a right and an obligation to bang the drum for free trade".

India's ship recycling can help reduce carbon footprint of steel

THE carbon footprint from steel retrieved from ship recycling in India is nearly four times less than the carbon footprint of the world's best steel production from iron ore, a new study reveals.

Increased levels of greenhouse gas emissions pose a great threat to the environment through global climate change and global warming.

For developing countries like India, steel is essential for growth and infrastructure development and ship recycling can be one of the sustainable ways to get steel without exploiting natural resources, according to Anand Hiremath, lead co-ordinator for cash buyer GMS's sustainable ship and offshore recycling programme.

Ships typically contain more than 90% steel content and it has been recognised that sheet metal and metal scrap as well as engines, power generators, winches, workshop equipment can all be recycled.

The synergy between ship recycling yards and steel re-rolling mills in Alang in India and the benefit to the sector on account of their geographical proximity is corroborated by the low estimates of GHG emissions for transportation-related activities.

The study says that between April 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, the period when the highest number of ships was recycled in India, total GHG emissions were estimated at 1,287,141 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This is the carbon footprint of ship recycling, starting from the beaching of the ship to recycling of steel and other objects obtained from the obsolete ship.

The 415 ships recycled this financial year, which added up to a total of 3,847,000 lightweight displacement, generated around 2.5m tonnes of steel bars and 379,199 tonnes of steel ingots.

The GHG emissions per tonne of steel retrieved are estimated to be less than 0.44 tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent, while the carbon footprint of steel production worldwide was reportedly estimated to be in the range of 1.6-2.8 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per tonne of steel produced.

This carbon footprint happens to be nearly four times smaller than the carbon footprint of the world's best steel production from iron ore, Mr Hiremath estimates.

Therefore, the effort to double the capacity of ship recycling by the Indian government by the year 2024 not only provide more employment and economic advantages, but it also helps the country to fight against climate change and to achieve global warming mitigation and prevention targets, the research finds.

‘There is no longer piracy in Southeast Asia,' says analyst

PIRACY has dwindled in Southeast Asia with no recent kidnappings from merchant ships, a security consultant says.

“There is no longer piracy in Southeast Asia,” said Risk Intelligence analyst Thomas Timlen, citing the UN Convention on Law of the Sea definition for piracy as relating specifically to crime in international waters.

“We no longer see hijackings taking place and few of the incidents that we do have today take place in international waters.”

About half of incidents were simple thefts from vessels at anchor or underway, with items like smartphones, watches or cash stolen. There were some armed robberies, but few injuries and no recent deaths, Mr Timlen told a webinar.

Robbers often carried knives but tended not to use them, he added.

There were also more failed attempts at boardings, suggesting crew were more alert and better prepared. Risk Intelligence saw a decrease in reporting-related vessel delays, which meant companies should be more willing to report incidents.

“We’ve also seen in recent times that when incidents are reported, there is a very quick response time,” Mr Timlen said.

Southeast Asia piracy watchdog ReCAAP ISC reported most of the 95 piracy and armed robbery incidents last year were of the less severe Category 3 and 4 type. Category 1 incidents were at a 14-year low, its 2020 annual report said, with just one kidnapping, from a fishing trawler, last year.

Mr Timlen said the Islamist militant Abu Sayyaf Group, which has kidnapped seafarers around the Philippines for years, had seen its membership dwindle from 300-400 in 2017 to fewer than 100 now after the archipelago nation cracked down on the group. ASG is still active on land but its threat to shipping has been suppressed.

Mr Timlen said many ASG members were killed or captured fighting the Philippines armed forces, while others had surrendered and undergone deradicalisation programmes. The last kidnapping from a merchant ship was in 2017.

He said the last time the group attempted a kidnap at sea “they were blown out of the water” with the militants killed and their craft “cut in half and sank”.

Mr Timlen said the causes of piracy would remain, with more people unemployed because of coronavirus. Criminals crossing the Malacca and Singapore straits could easily prey on ships to supplement their income, he said.

Smuggling was still common, but there were no stowaway boardings. Increases to war-risk insurance premiums were unlikely.

Mr Timlen urged shipping companies to remain cautious and for crews not to confront boarders.

“It’s not worth being injured simply to avoid a can of paint or a breathing apparatus being stolen,” he said.

ReCAAP has said that the risk of crew abduction in the Philippines’ Sulu-Celebes Seas, and waters off Eastern Sabah, Malaysia, remained high and masters should be extra vigilant in the area. It publishes weekly incident reports here.

MARKETS:

BIMCO expects a tough year for dry bulk

BULKERS could be facing a tough year despite an unusually strong start, according to shipping association BIMCO.

China’s aim of moving towards a more consumer-oriented economy will threaten the continuation of 2020’s high growth in imports of dry bulk commodities, which were spurred by infrastructure-supporting stimulus measures, said chief shipping analyst Peter Sand.

“Stimulus packages in the rest of the world have focused more on securing the demand side of the economy — policies that benefit container shipping more than dry bulk," he said, adding that as the pandemic continues and governments try to support individuals, infrastructure-heavy stimulus projects appear a long way off.

There is no guarantee, either, that these projects will materialise, and therefore "cannot be counted on to provide the fuel for a dry bulk recovery".

"Instead, any recovery will be slow and will vary by sector," he added. "Overcapacity could once again hamper shipowners' and operators' ability to make a profit, especially as currently low bunker prices, which supported profits in 2020, are rising again."

BIMCO expects fleet growth at 2% this year, the lowest in several years, mainly arising from fewer deliveries. That compares with 3.8% last year.

It anticipates about 27m dwt to be delivered this year, compared with 48.9m dwt in 2020, reflecting the lower orderbook which stands at 51.4m dwt, almost half that at the start of 2019.

However, it estimates 9m dwt to be demolished in 2021, compared with 15m dwt scrapped last year.

India's gas consumption set to drive Asian LNG growth

EXPANSION in India's liquefied natural gas demand will underpin growth in shipments sent to South Asia and Southeast Asia, the combined imports of which will overtake Europe by 2030, according to research.

Rystad Energy, the energy research group, forecasts the regions will account for 14% of the world's LNG demand by 2030, surpassing Europe's 9% share in the next decade.

India, the largest economy in the area, expanded its LNG imports by 40% to 25m tonnes last year despite the pandemic.

The world's second most populated nation after China is expected to further raise its LNG imports to meet growing domestic gas demand.

Rystad Energy's projection showed LNG would meet 57% of India's 105bn cu m gas requirement by 2030, compared with 53% of 64bn cu m in 2020.

Kaushal Ramesh, the consultancy's gas and power markets analyst, flagged the likelihood of India's buyers committing to new term offtake from Qatar's LNG expansion project.

Rystad's estimate showed over half of India's LNG demand would be uncontracted when the existing offtake with Qatar expires by 2028.

"We expect India's buyers will need to sign new long-term contracts or expose themselves to the volatility of spot trades," Mr Ramesh said.

While India has sought to reduce its dependence on Qatar, LNG imports from the Middle East country remain among the most price competitive.

That would continue to interest price sensitive buyers in India, he added.

India's regasification capacity is also on track for expansion, with over $3bn of such projects equipped to handle 29m tonnes of LNG per annum now under construction.

Some 13.5m tonnes in annual regasification capacity is further planned for 2024 and beyond, according to Rystad.

India's H-Energy is due to take delivery next month of a leased floating regasification and storage unit.

The FSRU on hire from Höegh LNG will be mobilised to the Jaigarth terminal situated between Mumbai and Goa.

IN OTHER NEWS:

Grimaldi orders $500m con-ro ships at Hyundai Mipo
NAPLES-BASED Grimaldi Group has announced a deal worth more than $500m to build six con-ro vessels at South Korea's Hyundai Mipo Dockyard.

These so-called G5-class hybrid vessels will have a capacity of 4,700 linear metres of rolling freight, being able to carry up to 2,500 car equivalent units and 2,000 teu of containers.

Delivery is scheduled from the first half of 2023 to the end of 2024.

Two thirds of UK seafarer certificates held by foreigners

JUST over one third of holders of Maritime and Coastguard Agency seafarer certification are UK nationals, with the overall number broadly stable at 42,920, according to the latest annual statistics from the Department for Transport.

UK nationals accounted for 19% of the 86,140 seafarers active at sea working for companies within the membership of the UK Chamber of Shipping, the figures also showed.

The development sparked condemnation from ratings union RMT, which argued that this proportion is declining even as the number of jobs in the industry is increasing overall.

Inmarsat appoints new chief executive

INMARSAT, the maritime satellite communications operator, has appointed former Nokia chief executive Rajeev Suri as chief executive to replace Rupert Pearce.

Mr Suri has a strong background in telecoms both as president and chief executive of Nokia for six years until he left the company last August.

He was previously chief executive of Nokia Siemens Networks, the joint venture between the two companies that focused on networking infrastructure.

Samsung Heavy settles Petrobras bribery case

SAMSUNG Heavy Industries said it had signed a leniency deal with Brazilian authorities to settle allegations in relation to a graft probe involving state-owned oil company Petrobras.

The South Korean shipbuilder has agreed with the country's attorney-general and comptroller-general to fork out R$812m ($149m) in order to be shielded from prosecution.

As part of the bribery and money-laundering investigation at Petrobras launched by federal prosecutors in 2014, a deal broker was alleged to have paid the company's officials with commissions from SHI to enable a shipbuilding contract involving three drillships placed with the builder in 2006-2007.

Swiber wins creditors support for $200m deal

BELEAGUERED Swiber Holdings has won support from creditors for a $200m investment deal anchored on a liquefied natural gas project in Vietnam almost four years after it entered insolvency proceedings.

The Singapore-listed group, once touted as a fast-rising star in the offshore and marine industry, said it had secured majority votes of over 90% from creditors present and voting at a meeting in favour of the $200m deal with Saudi Arabia-based Rawabi Holdings.

Singapore's leading banking group DBS, as the single largest lender to Swiber, is said to have approved the deal on the table, which is subject to the restructuring of billions of dollars in debt on the books of the O&M firm.

Singapore backs ammonia-fuelled tanker project

PROGRESS towards developing the first ammonia-fuelled tanker received a boost with the addition of heavyweight partners the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore and leading fertiliser company Yara International to the Joint Development Project, which has been renamed The Castor Initiative.

The project to develop ammonia propulsion ships to support the maritime industry's drive towards decarbonisation was initiated in January 2020 by MISC, Lloyd's Register, Samsung Heavy Industries and MAN Energy Solutions.

MISC president and group chief executive officer Yee Yang Chien said: "We are honoured to have MPA and Yara join us as partners on this journey to develop deep-sea zero-carbon vessels."

Classified notices follow

SEAGREEN WIND ENERGY LIMITED - THE ENERGY ACT 2004
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR SAFETY ZONE SCHEME DURING CONSTRUCTION AND MAJOR MAINTENANCE OF THE SEAGREEN OFFSHORE WIND FARM
THE ELECTRICITY (OFFSHORE GENERATING STATIONS) (SAFETY ZONES) (APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND CONTROL OF ACCESS) REGULATIONS 2007 – STATUTORY INSTRUMENT 2007 NO 1948

Notice is hereby given that Seagreen Wind Energy Limited (Seagreen) on behalf of Seagreen Alpha Wind Energy Limited (Company Number 07185533) and Seagreen Bravo Wind Energy Limited (Company Number 07185543), both having registered office at No. 1 Forbury Place, 43 Forbury Road, Reading has applied for consent from Marine Scotland as set out in the Energy Act 2004 and the Electricity (Offshore Generating Stations) (Safety Zones) (Application Procedures and Control of Access) Regulations 2007 (SI No 2007/1948) for safety zones as follows, for the previously consented Offshore Renewable Energy Installation known as the Seagreen Offshore Wind Farm, during the construction and major maintenance phases. The following safety zones are being applied for:

- 500 metre (m) 'rolling' safety zones at each substation and/or its substructures and foundations whenever construction is ongoing (as indicated by the presence of a construction vessel stationed at the structure).
- 50 m pre-commissioning safety zones at each partial or complete substation and/or its substructures and foundations, where construction is not ongoing up until the point of commissioning of the wind farm.
- 500 m safety zone around any substation and/or its substructures where major maintenance is being undertaken during the operational phase (as indicated by the presence of a major maintenance vessel stationed at the structure, where "major maintenance" is as defined in the Electricity Regulations 2007 (SI No 2007/1948) – further details are available in the application document as per the below).

It is noted that this application is being made for the two substations only. Safety zones for the Wind Turbine Generators will be applied for separately. Further details are available in the safety zone application which is available for download direct from Seagreen at https://www.seagreenwindenergy.com, or alternatively from the Marine Scotland website at http://marine.gov.scot/ml/seagreen-alpha-and-bravo-off-shore-wind-farms. Alternatively, a request to receive a hard copy may be made in writing to 1 Waterloo Street, Glasgow, G2 6AY. Any person wishing to make representations to the Secretary of State about the application should do so in writing to the Scottish Ministers, c/o Marine Scotland – Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, PO Box 101, Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB or MS.MarineRenewables@gov.scot, stating the name of the proposal and nature of their representations, not later than 28 days from the date, or latest date of this notice.

Fair Processing Notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team ("MS-LOT") determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, the Marine and Coastal Act 2009 and section 36 consents under The Electricity Act 1989 (as amended). During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make a representation to MS-LOT. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application, the Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals should the Scottish Ministers call a PLI and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.

A full privacy notice can be found at: https://www.gov.scot/policies/marine-and-fisheries-licensing/marine-licensing-operations-team-privacy-notice. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: ms.marinerenewables@gov.scot or **Marine Scotland - Licensing Operations Team, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB**.

SECTION 56 PLANNING ACT 2008

REGULATION 9 OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009 (AS AMENDED)

REGULATION 16 OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)

NOTICE OF ACCEPTANCE OF AN APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

PROPOSED LONDON RESORT DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

(PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE: BC080001)

Notice is hereby given that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has accepted an application made by London Resort Company Holdings Ltd ("LRCH") of 20 Berkeley Square, London W1J 6EQ under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the "Application") for a Development Consent Order ("DCO"). The Application was submitted by LRCH to the Secretary of State c/o the Planning Inspectorate ("the Inspectorate") on 31 December 2020 and was accepted on 28 January 2021. The reference number applied to the Application by the Inspectorate is BC080001.

Summary of the project

The DCO application is a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008 and would create a leisure and entertainment resort which will be located on land in and around the Swanscombe Peninsula and Tilbury which falls partly within the administrative boundaries of Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council and Thurrock Council ("the Development").

The Development would create a leisure and entertainment resort ("the Resort") with themed rides, shows and attractions inspired by globally recognised brands to create a unique, world-class entertainment destination.

The Resort will include the Leisure Core, comprising a range of events spaces, themed rides and attractions, entertainment venues, theatres and cinemas, developed in landscaped settings in two phases known as Gate One and Gate Two. The Gates will include visitor entrance areas, ancillary retail, dining and entertainment facilities, guest facilities, and pedestrian, cycle and emergency service access routes, and associated facilities.

The Development would also include the following principal elements—

- four hotels providing a range of accommodation totalling up to 3,550 suites or 'keys'. One or more of these hotels might be located within the leisure core. One hotel will incorporate a water park;
- a 'Conferention' Centre (i.e. combined conference and convention) with a floor area of up to 11,000 m², capable of hosting a wide range of entertainment, sporting, exhibition and business events;
- a linked building hosting a range of eSports, video and computer gaming events, with a total floorspace of up to 16,500 m²;
- a 'Back of House' area accommodating many of the necessary supporting technical and logistical operations to enable the Resort to function, including security command and crisis centre, maintenance facilities, costuming, employee administration, employee welfare, medical facilities, offices and storage;
- car parks with a capacity of up to 10,750 spaces;
- the A2 Highways Works comprising a signalised at-grade gyratory junction to replace two existing roundabouts at the A2(T) / B259 junction;
- land remediation works;
- terrain remodelling, landscape works and planting;
- a people mover and transport interchanges;
- a Resort access road of up to four lanes (i.e. up to two lanes in each direction);
- local transport links;
- river transport infrastructure on both sides of the Thames, including floating jetty and ferry terminals and the repair or replacement of White's Jetty;
- utility compounds, plant and service infrastructure;
- flood defence and drainage works;
- habitat creation and enhancement and public access;
- security and safety provisions;
- data centres to support the Resort requirement; and
- up to 500 dwellings as Resort staff accommodation, typically consisting of 4-6 bedrooms and shared kitchen and lounge facilities.

The DCO would authorise the compulsory acquisition of land, interests in land and rights over land, and the powers to use land permanently and temporarily for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Development.

Environmental Impact Assessment

Due to its nature and size, the Development is "EIA development" within the meaning of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This means that the Development constitutes development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") is required. The Application is therefore accompanied by an Environmental Statement ("ES") documenting the findings of the EIA undertaken.

Copies of Application Documents

The application form and its accompanying documents, plans and maps, including the Environmental Statement and draft DCO, are available to view electronically and download, free of charge, on the Inspectorate's project website being a website maintained by or on behalf of the Secretary of State:

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/the-london-resort/?ipcsection=docs

The documents will be available on the website until at least 31 March 2021.

On request one USB stick per party containing the documents can be provided free of charge by contacting LRCH via email at info@londonresortcompany.co.uk or by telephone 0800 470 0043.

Alternatively you can request a free loan of a tablet containing the Application Documents, limited to one tablet loan per party. Subject to availability, a loaned electronic tablet can be delivered to your chosen address by courier arranged by LRCH and collected after 31 March 2021. Reasonable charges may apply to cover the cost of delivery. To make a request, please use the Applicant's contact details above.

LRCH would normally make available at least one location for viewing a hard copy of the application documents in the vicinity of the application site. However, due to the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and the UK Government's advice relating to health and safety, we are unable to do so. LRCH notes that the Government has issued guidance that a website is a "place" for the purposes of inspecting documents across all planning regimes and we therefore strongly encourage you to take advantage of the electronic methods of viewing the application documents set out above.

If you require alternative methods for inspection of the application documents, please telephone LRCH on: 0800 470 0043 or email: info@londonresortcompany.co.uk. Your request will be considered and we will endeavour to accommodate it if possible and within reason. Anyone can use these details to receive guidance on using the project website, a USB stick containing the application documents free of charge, and/or a loan of the application documents on an electronic document reader during the period for making Representations.

Making representations about the proposed DCO

Any person may make representations on the Application to the Secretary of State (i.e. giving notice of any interest in or objection to the Application). Any representation relating to the Application must be submitted on the Inspectorate's Registration and Relevant Representation Form and give the grounds on which it is made. The Inspectorate have issued detailed advice on registering as an interested party and making a relevant representation, to which you are advised to have regard. This Advice Note (8.2 – How to Register to Participate in an Examination) is published on the National Infrastructure Planning website under 'Legislation and Advice' and can be found at:

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-8-2v3.pdf.

The Registration and Relevant Representation form will be made available by the Inspectorate once the registration/representation period has opened on the relevant page for the Application via the National Infrastructure Planning website:

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/the-london-resort/?ipcsection=docs:

If you are unable to complete a registration form online and would like to register your interest, please call the Inspectorate's helpline on: 0303 444 5000, quoting the name of the Application and the Inspectorate's reference number BC080001.

Please ensure that you quote reference number BC080001 in all correspondence with the Inspectorate about the Application.

The period during which you can submit a Relevant Representation to the Inspectorate begins on 19 February 2021, being the calendar day after the date this Section 56 Notice is first published, and will end on 31 March 2021. **Representations must be received by the Planning Inspectorate by 23:59 on 31 March 2021.**

Please note that any submitted representations to the Inspectorate will be published on the National Infrastructure Planning website for the Application and will be subject to their privacy policy which can be viewed at:

https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/help/privacy-and-cookie/.

Further information about the Application is available on the LRCH website www.londonresort.info or may be obtained from LRCH as follows:

Email: info@londonresortcompany.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 470 0043.

Any details you provide to LRCH via the telephone or e-mail will be subject to our privacy policy, which is available to view at: https://londonresort.info/privacy-policy/

18 February 2021