

SIRC SYMPOSIUM, CARDIFF, 4-5 JULY 2007

Every two years the Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) at Cardiff University in the UK opens its door to welcome friends and colleagues from the wider maritime community to share in their research findings. In 2007 the SIRC Symposium was held over two days, 4th and 5th July.

As in previous years the event proved to be highly popular with delegates from eleven countries in attendance. All aspects of the industry were represented with participants from a wide range of organizations, including maritime administrations, insurance companies, classification societies, welfare organizations, trade unions and maritime training establishments.

The significance of the work of SIRC and the importance of the occasion was reflected in the fact that Dr Stephen Ladyman MP, the UK Minister for Transport and the First Minister for Wales, the Right Honorable Rhodri Morgan AM agreed to present opening addresses.

During the course of two days delegates heard eight substantial presentations on current research undertaken within SIRC, broadly centred on the theme of seafarer health, safety and well-being. These provoked considerable discussion and appreciation. The substance of these talks was presented in the 8 papers, along with an overview of the papers and introduction to each of these two days of the Symposium by SIRC Director Professor Helen Sampson.

The Centre was set up in 1995, in order to conduct research into seafarers' health and safety. It is in essence a policy-related research centre, the success of which was in working closely with the maritime sector. In terms of the centre's achievements it is fair to say that these have been built upon the support of key stakeholders in the maritime sector, who have commissioned projects, provided „core-funding” for the centre, and importantly facilitated, and sometimes even encouraged, research access. Such on-going co-operation suggests a deep rooted desire within the sector to gain a deeper insight into some of the issues relating to the organisation and functioning of the shipping industry with particular attention to issues relating to safety and to seafarer health.

The themes of papers presented by the workers of the Centre were:

1. Welfare services for seafarers
2. Increasing shipping skills in the UK: „Bursting” the industry myth of diminishing interest
3. The „presence” of absent seafarers: Predictments of Chinese seafarer-partners
4. Chemical risk management
5. Accident and incident data
6. Maritime incidents: Ways of seeing
7. Thoughts on safety: the views of Chinese seafarers
8. Seafarers’ participation in safety management on board cargo ships

The full texts of these papers were published by SIRC in the internet
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