PILOTS AND SHIPOWNERS ON PILOT LADDER SAFETY

With its base in HQS Wellington on the Thames the International Maritime Pilots’ Association (IMPA) is a professional, non-profit making body, primarily concerned with promoting professional standards of pilotage worldwide in the interests of pilots’ safety. It has some 8,000 members in over 40 countries. IMPA seeks to achieve its principal objective, the promotion of professionally sound and safe pilotage.

Another London-based organisation is the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the principal international trade association for shipowners, with a membership comprising national shipowners’ associations from 36 countries, representing over 80% of the world merchant fleet, in all sectors and trades.

It was reported on 26th July that IMPA and the ICS have joined forces to update a brochure aimed at shipping companies and seafarers, reminding them of the vital need to ensure that ladders used for pilot transfers are safe and always rigged correctly.

The revised brochure entitled *Shipping Industry Guidance on Pilot Transfer Arrangements* is supported by a wide range of other international shipping bodies. It takes account of the latest amendments to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) concerning pilot ladders, which came into effect on 1st July 2012.

IMPA Secretary General, Nick Cutmore, explained, “Sadly, pilots continue to lose their lives as a result of accidents while boarding or disembarking from ships, and many more have been seriously injured. We are therefore very pleased by the support we have received from ICS, as well as from other industry organisations and unions, in helping to promote the message to seafarers and to shipping company management about the vital need to rig pilot ladders safely in accordance with SOLAS.”

ICS Secretary General, Peter Hinchliffe, added, “When pilots come aboard ships it is to help seafarers during critical and demanding phases of a voyage. It is incumbent on ship operators and their crews to do everything possible to ensure safety during pilot transfer operations, which always involve a degree of risk, even when conditions are good. Some common causes of accidents still appear to be defects in the structure of the ladder treads or ropes, or a lack of a proper securing of the ladder to the ship.”

This updated guidance (copy of the front cover shown) is being distributed throughout the industry by the national shipowners’ and pilots’ associations that make up the memberships of ICS and IMPA. The brochure is also supported by the International Group of P&I Clubs, BIMCO, CLIA, Intercargo, IPTA, Intertanko, OCIMF, SIGTTO, ITF, IFSMA and the Nautical Institute.
By this news item readers will find the latest edition of the poster *Required Boarding Arrangements for Pilot* issued by IMPA in accordance with SOLAS Regulation V/23 and IMO Resolution A.1045(27).