

## IMPROVING SEAFARER WELL-BEING: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE DIVERSITY@SEA PILOT PROJECT

**The report**, produced by one of the **Global Maritime Forum's** initiatives (and within the **All Aboard Alliance**), urges the global shipping industry to improve working conditions, better seafarer well-being, make life at sea safe and inclusive, and future-proof against the changing needs of the maritime labour market to attract future generations of seafarers. These conclusions come from a 10-month global collaboration involving 400 seafarers from 12 ships (each belonging to a different shipping company) that generated over 50 thousand data points. "It is our hope that these preliminary findings and learnings will be embraced by stakeholders across the maritime industry who are looking to make working at sea more attractive and considered by policymakers as valid input for a discussion on minimum standards to ensure that rules and regulations not only keeps pace with the evolving nature of maritime work but also increases inclusivity and safety at sea," underscored the report's authors.



## COUNTERING SHIP FIRE PROLIFERATION

Prompted by the recent spate of container ship fires – two in port (including an explosion in the Port of Ningbo-Zhoushan) and two at sea within the last couple of months – the international freight and logistics insurance provider **TT Club** stresses the greater need for all players in the global supply chain to recognise their responsibility for accurate and effective communication between all parties for the transport of dangerous goods. "The causes remain under investigation," says **Peregrine Storrs-Fox**, Risk Management Director at TT Club, about the four incidents, furthering that, "However, there are strong indications that potentially explosive chemicals and fire accelerators, such as lithium-ion batteries, may be involved in at least two of the cases. As with historical incidents, it is likely that various errors occurred as the shipments were initiated and the exact nature of the cargoes was communicated to supply chain counterparties, giving rise again to 'perfect storms.' Every participant in the process needs to act in the best interests of safety at every point in these cargoes' journeys." According to

TT Club, the exact number of containers carrying dangerous goods that are shipped annually is difficult to estimate due to mis- and non-declaration. Partly in response to the issues around inaccurate declaration, the **International Maritime Organization** amended in 2022 the **Guidelines for the Implementation of the Inspection of Cargo Transport Units** to urge governments to inspect all unit types, regardless of the declared cargo. The recently released consolidated results for 2023, from just eight countries (or 5% of the signatory states), evidence continuing safety concerns. Among others, TT Club points to a rapidly worsening trend in stowage and securing (within units) over the last five years and the worst position since these reports began in 2001. The insurer also notes the five-year worsening trend relating to errors found in documentation. "This spike in serious container ship fires is reminiscent of the spate in 2019, although the 30-year average frequency may remain one every 60 days – but any life-threatening event is one too many," TT Club warns.

## THE INNOVATION IN SAFETY AWARD – OPEN FOR ENTRIES

The **TT Club**-sponsored and the **International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA)**-organised Award – established for those making a significant difference in safety in cargo transport – is ready to welcome candidates for the latest prize distribution (applications are accepted till 15 November 2024). "Now, more than ever, the challenge to everyone in the global freight industry is to drive safety forward," TT Club highlighted in a press release. The international freight and logistics insurance provider continued, "Developing technologies combined with knowledge and experience at all levels can significantly enhance how we manage very real risks to our people, cargoes and services. Risks such as explosion, fire, fall, crush, run over and moving objects require ongoing control in ports and on board ships. The better industry gets at this, the better the results for life, limb, cargo and infrastructure, the better the work for workforces and the more sustainable and successful the organisations that we depend on. The opportunity exists not just to prevent headline-grabbing events, but also day-to-day incidents that may be less in the media spotlight but can affect both shore-side workers and ships' crew." **Mike Yarwood**, TT Club's Managing Director of Loss Prevention, commented, "The good news is that cargo handlers, carriers and the developers of technological devices and systems of all shapes and sizes are diligently producing innovations to

improve risk control. I am pleased to say that working with ICHCA, our efforts in encouraging such innovation are having a positive effect. This Award plays a significant role in those efforts." **Richard Steele**, CEO of ICHCA, added, "Our list of previous innovative ideas to increase the safe working of our industry is impressive. We are pleased to have had the opportunity to spotlight their passion and creativity for not just doing the right things right but doing them better. Every year, we speak to people who have genuinely innovated but just see it as part of their job. We urge all those who have made positive changes to the way they do safety, either for themselves or for others through their products or services, to enter this year's Award. The most exciting part of the Award is the resultant sharing of knowledge and forward-looking thought that can deliver valuable advancements in safety. They will make a difference now!" The safety solutions up-to-date competing for the Award included a netting system to prevent fatal falls in cargo holds, a device for enhancing mooring safety, a standardised digital platform for terminals to carry out vessel inspections, improvements in the safety and stability of containers on board ships, a digital temperature alerting system for tank containers, an effective way of fighting onboard container fires, and a video analytics solution that helps prevent in-terminal collisions of heavy cargo handling equipment.