Lloyd's List

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Leading maritime commerce since 1734

Storey warns of risks to UK of declining flag

London's position as a global maritime hub would be harmed if ship register loses its allure, says former Maritime and Coastguard Agency chief executive

TOP 10 UK FLAGGED VESSELS COMPANIES

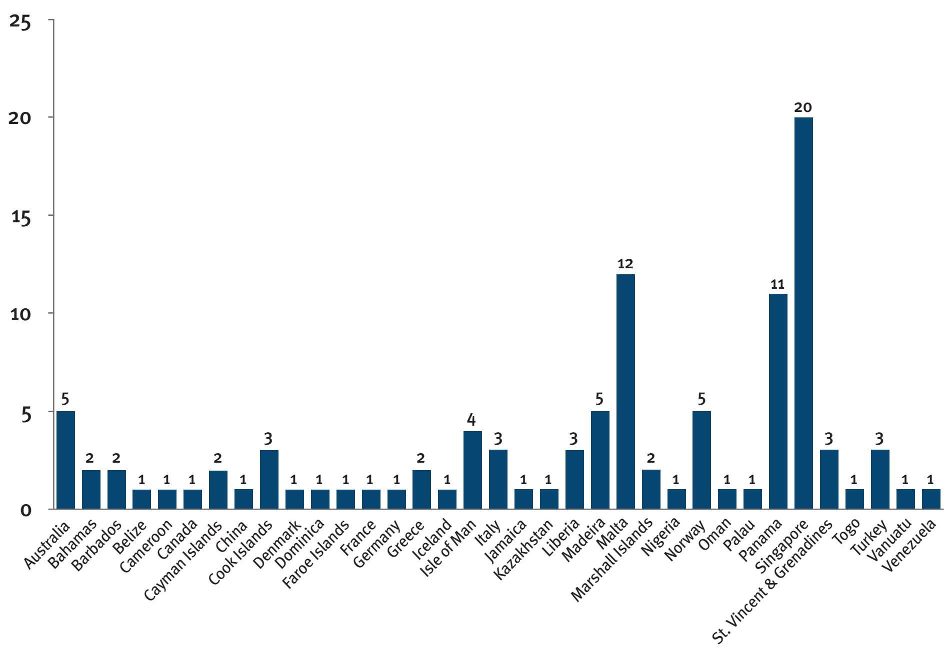
Lloyd's List | *Chart*

	Company	Vessel count	Total GT
1	CMA CGM	37	2,818,903
2	Zodiac	26	1,560,207
3	Evergreen	17	1,311,937
4	Stena	23	938,468
5	Wilh Wilhelmsen	11	670,653
6	Maersk	88	596,623
7	Knutsen OAS Shipping	11	472,223
8	Carnival Corporation	5	463,986
9	Cosco	7	458,717
10	Reederei Claus-Peter Offen	16	423,912

Source: *Lloyd's List Intelligence*

UK FLAG CHANGES PAST 12 MONTHS

Lloyd's List | *Chart*



Source: *Lloyd's List Intelligence*

LONDON'S position as a global maritime hub is being jeopardised by the decline of the UK flag, a former head of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency has warned, *writes Janet Porter.*

Maurice Storey, honorary chairman of Evergreen Marine UK and chief executive of the MCA for five years, has joined other senior industry figures in spelling out the risks to Britain's standing as a major maritime power if the size of the ship register continues to fall.

Companies that transfer their ships to other flags are likely to move related activities as well, so shrinking Britain's pool of maritime skills and expertise.

Some of the world's biggest containership owners such as Maersk, CMA CGM, Evergreen and Zodiac are among the top UK flag operators, but they could decide to register their vessels elsewhere unless the MCA improves the level of customer service, according to Mr Storey.

He was instrumental in persuading Evergreen to

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move its European headquarters from Hamburg to London and establish a Red Ensign fleet, with the first ship registered in the UK in 2002. The Taiwanese line now operates the third largest UK-flag fleet after CMA CGM and Zodiac Maritime, with group chairman Chang Yung-fa having established close ties with Britain.

Nevertheless, there have been a couple of occasions when Evergreen has felt let down by the MCA, prompting Mr Storey to indicate that the Taiwanese line would consider re-flagging and moving its European head office to another location if the UK was no longer able to offer an attractive business proposition for shipowners.

Some have already quit the UK register which is managed by the MCA.

Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows that the biggest beneficiary of re-flagging has been Singapore, which last year acquired 20 vessels formerly registered in the UK, followed by Malta and Panama.

The MCA has ceased to market the Red Ensign in the correct and proper way, says Mr Storey. *Voyagerix/ Shutterstock.com*

Alarm bells

What has set off alarm bells has been a decline of 27% in the size of the UK-registered trading fleet since 2009 at a time when deadweight tonnage of the world trading fleet has increased by 34%. In 2013 alone, 66 ships left the UK flag while only 19 joined.

"While UK shipping as a whole remains relatively strong, these statistics show that the UK flag does not appear to be as commercial, competitive or attractive to international shipowners as it should be," said UK Chamber of Shipping chief executive Guy Platten.

Newly-elected UK Chamber president Tom Boardley also raised concerns about the MCA in his inaugural speech a few days ago, while the association is calling for a thorough review of the agency, along with an analysis of competitor ship registers, in its submission to the Maritime Growth Study launched by the government late last year. The association has made it clear that retaining the status quo is not an option.

"A key part of the Maritime Growth Study is to look critically at the UK Ship Register and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to see what reforms are necessary to halt and reverse these declining trends," said Mr Platten.

The UK flag enjoyed a revival during Mr Storey's time at the MCA between 1998 and 2003, but he is concerned that many of the innovations introduced then have been forgotten. "The MCA has ceased to market the flag in the correct and proper way," he told Lloyd's List.

Mr Storey started to actively promote the UK register at big international events such as Posidonia, something that had not been done before. He also switched the focus customer service, rather than just regulation.

"We tried to convince shipowners that this was not just a good flag, but a good country to invest in," said Mr Storey. That is why he is concerned that if ships are moved to other registers, the UK would also lose inward investment as well.

The register itself does not earn a huge amount of money, with the UK flag one of the cheaper ones, but related economic activity generated by shipowners with a UK-run fleet is considerable.

Mr Storey has no complaints about the ship registration process which is quick and efficient

"The problem is with the service side," he said. "Surveyors themselves do not have enough flexibility and freedom to do what needs to be done."

They need to be more aware of the commercial considerations of the shipowner, Mr Storey argues.

"When I joined the MCA, the attitude of the surveyors was that they were the policemen … which was crazy. I changed that," said Mr Storey who made sure he built up personal relationships with shipowners as part of the far greater emphasis on customer service.

Hull and machinery surveys

The registers that offer the sort of service that shipowners are after include Singapore, Liberia, the Marshall Islands and several of the Red Ensign group such as the Isle of Man, Bermuda and Gibraltar.

One solution for an over-stretched MCA would be to delegate hull and machinery surveys to class society surveyors, said Mr Storey.

He does not think the MCA should be split up, separating management of the UK register from its coastguard duties, but would like to see the Red Ensign brand given more attention.

Some of the ship defections, such as Rio Tinto's re-flagging of 17 bulkers of 1.3m gt in 2013, have been for commercial considerations unrelated to the UK register. Zodiac moved ships to Singapore as part of a restructuring of the owning family's assets.

The register also faces other challenges such as compliance with the Equality Act, but underlying problems still persist that are discouraging owners from flagging in the UK and could eventually drive others away.

A stable tonnage tax regime remains a plus as far as the UK is concerned.

"But if the MCA does not look at things commercially and does not respond to shipowners' needs, that's a disadvantage," said Mr Storey.

Should the situation worsen and more ships were switched to other registers, then the influence of London and the UK in the maritime world would be diminished, Mr Storey warned.

"If there was not a strong flag, it would reduce the ability of London to host all the service industries that form the maritime hub," he said.

"We need to fight for a strong flag, [in order to] keep a shipping hub and the International Maritime Organization in London."

Stopford wins Onassis prize for shipping

Stopford: co-winner of this year's Onassis Prize for Shipping.

Maritime economist shares 2015 award with Trevor Heaver of Saunder School of Business

RENOWNED shipping economist Martin Stopford has been announced as the co-winner of the 2015 Onassis Prize for Shipping, *writes James Baker.*

Dr Stopford, the non-executive president of Clarksons Research Services, is the author of the bible of shipping finance, Maritime Economics, and was awarded the prestigious Lloyd's List Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010.

He shared the prize with Prof Trevor Heaver, who spent many years as the director of the Centre for Transportation Studies at the Saunder School of Business at the University of British Columbia and was a founding member of the World Conference on Transport Research.

The winners of the 2015 Onassis Prizes, awarded to the world's foremost academics in the fields of finance, international trade and shipping, were announced by the Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Alan Yarrow at Mansion House in London this evening.

The prestigious prizes, each worth $200,000, are sponsored by the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation and awarded every three years by Cass Business School, part of City University London, jointly with the Onassis Foundation.

Nobel Laureates

Judged by a panel of distinguished academics, including two Nobel Laureates, the prizes recognise the contribution of world leading academics to the fields of finance, international trade and shipping.

Two academics — Prof Stewart Myers and Prof Richard Roll — shared the 2015 Onassis Prize for Finance. This year's winners have made foundational contributions to finance since the beginning of its transformation to a rigorous science-based discipline, nearly a half century ago: Stewart Myers in corporate finance and Richard Roll in capital markets.

The Onassis Prize for International Trade was awarded to Professor Gene Grossman of Princeton University, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to strategic trade policy, environmental economics and the economics of offshoring.

Commenting on the winners, Prof Costas Grammenos, the founder of Cass Business School's International Centre for Shipping, Trade and Finance and instrumental in launching the prizes, said: "The Onassis Prizes recognise the lifetime contribution of some of the world's most highly respected academics in finance, international trade and shipping. I warmly congratulate the winners whose distinguished achievements have profoundly influenced their disciplines and continue to have an impact on academic thinking and business conduct worldwide."

CMA 2015: US shipping seems more important than ever

Energy shipping, bunker and technology to dominate the agenda of the largest North American shipping event this year

THE premier maritime event in North America — the annual CMA Shipping conference held by Connecticut Maritime Association —is set to once again dispel the myth that US shipping has disproportionately small influence when compared with the country's economic prowess, *writes Max Tingyao Lin*.

True, the US-flagged fleet is small, for which many blame the Jones Act. But the CMA 2015 conference agenda, focused on energy shipping, bunkers and technology, shows that the US is often the ultimate driving force behind shipping.

Most shipping stories today arguably begin with the US shale revolution. The development of hydraulic fracturing technique to extract oil and gas has resulted in a dramatic reduction in US energy imports and increase in exports, bringing fundamental changes to tanker trading.

The overall US oil imports from members of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries was at its lowest level last year since the Energy Information Administration started to compile data in 1993 — meaning those African, Latin American and Middle Eastern producers now need to push more barrels to Asia.

On the other hand, US petroleum products exports reached fresh highs in 2014, with increased flows to Europe, South America and even China.

All these have created more

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tonne-mile demand and supported freight rates of crude and product carriers, some of the few shining sectors in shipping at this moment.

However, as always, the market dynamics are multi-faceted. Opec has opted to maintain production to counter shale producers, resulting in a collapse in the oil price. This has added downwards pressure on the price of gas, which acts as replacement for oil sometimes. Exports of US gas, which are set to show significant increases due to the shale revolution, might be hit as a result.

Invited by Lloyd's List to reflect on this topic, International Chamber of Shipping chairman Masamichi Morooka — who will participate in the CMA conference — said: "The US shale gas revolution has brought the shipping industry new opportunities to transport liquefied natural gas from the US to customers worldwide.

"However, the revolution has also created price competition between oil and gas; it is well known that the oil price has dropped sharply but nobody can predict the future price level."

Mr Morooka pointed out that very large crude carrier rates are supported by a lower oil price, yet some LNG projects could fall through due to weak gas price — which would have negative impact on the LNG shipping markets at a later stage.

Visit our website's dedicated CMA 2015 page at http://lloydslist.com/ll/sector/cma/

Morooka: VLCC rates are supported by a lower oil price, yet some LNG projects could fall through due to a weak gas price.

Bunker availability

Another major effect of the lower oil price is falling bunker costs. Obviously, this has eased the pain of switching to more expensive ultra-low sulphur marine fuel in North American and European emission control areas, where regulators require vessels to use 0.1%-sulphur grade from January.

Overall, bunker availability has not been a major issue in the US. According to the US Coast Guard, there were 13 bunker non-availability reports as of mid-March this year, fewer than the year-ago level. This is mainly because marine gasoil, which meets regulatory requirements, has been readily supplied in North American ports — 0.1%-sulphur fuel oil, however, is a different story.

Based on the observations of World Fuel Services' international sales vice-president Ian Workman, ship operators have not been keen on the ultra-low sulphur fuel oil due to operational concerns, despite its price being cheaper than marine gasoil by $30-$50 per tonne. This is because sometimes this type of bunker fuel can be off-specification or vessels do not have the required tanks.

Consequently, refiners are unwilling to provide regular supply due to lack of demand.

"Most are taking a wait-and-see attitude... it's still a work in progress," Mr Workman said.

Moreover, the US has been known for its more robust enforcement of ECA rules compared with its European counterparts. This has drawn more praise than criticism, but also has raised concern over possible uneven playing fields.

A top expert in enforcement set to give the keynote speech during CMA 2015, USCG's assistant commandant for prevention policy Paul Thomas, has been calling for more transparency on the ship operators' side. More industry data on bunker usage will contribute to equal enforcement, according to Adm Thomas. In his own words, "the industry can improve transparency, so a guy like me can ensure a level playing field".

Of course, the use of big data is not only related to bunkers. Information technology providers will have exhibitions during the conference and participants should not be surprised to see a lead session named What Would Shipping Look Like If Google Were In Charge? The conference is, after all, held in the country renowned for being the home of Silicon Valley.

Sound application of IT on board and on shore would enhance efficiency, which leads to better profitability, as the earnings reports of Maersk Line, arguably the industry's keenest data user, can tell us. But that's not the whole story.

Data mining

InterManager president Gerardo Borromeo, who will join the CMA 2015 opening session, pointed out that data mining can also help with navigation, monitoring and maintaining equipment, handling cargoes and even crew care.

"As the cost of bandwidth comes down and the availability of broadband globally is ensured... connectivity will not only benefit management and operating processes, but having cost effective communication systems on board will bring crew and their families closer together," Mr Borromeo told Lloyd's List.

Those discussions over technology are to bring more human aspects to shipping's business side. Mr Workman, who also serves as CMA president, hopes that during the conference "the human factor is celebrated as well as the way forward".

It's always interesting to debate on how the industry will fare in terms of profitability, but fundamentally, as he suggested, human power is indeed behind the figures.

Tsakos sees next two years as 'looking good' for tankers

Shuttle tankers and VLCCs among sectors in TEN's sights

TSAKOS Energy Navigation sees better days for tankers lasting at least into next year, underpinning its target of higher profits in 2015, *writes Nigel Lowry.*

"I hope this will be the start of a much more exciting period for the tanker market," said TEN's chief executive Nikolas Tsakos, on a call with analysts to discuss the company's results last year.

Last Thursday TEN reported solid profits for fourth-quarter and full-year 2014, bouncing back from losses the year before.

"The current oil price and the sale, supply and demand dynamic looks [as if] we are in for at least a couple of good years, hopefully long years," said Mr Tsakos, who is also current president of Intertanko, the international tanker owners' association.

He said that as long as most owners avoided newbuildings, and especially refrained from speculative new ordering, the industry should be able to maintain a healthy market. "We are looking for significantly more profitability for the year we're in, for 2015," he said. "The market has started in the right direction."

In January, TEN hiked its dividend by 20% to $0.06 per share on the strength of the stronger earnings in the tanker market, and it maintained this for the latest quarter.

"We are a dividend-paying company and we pay dividends through thick and thin," said Mr Tsakos, who did not rule out further dividend increases in future.

The company is signalling that it will seek to sell some of its tankers built in the early 2000s to take advantages of increased secondhand prices, but is also looking to reinvest in newer vessels. Mr Tsakos mentioned shuttle tankers and very large crude carriers as sectors that the company may invest in.

The sole VLCC in the fleet, *Millennium*, was currently earning $55,000 daily on a six-month storage contract, compared with a breakeven cost of $12,000 per day.

Tsakos: "We are looking for significantly more profitability for the year we're in, for 2015."

TEN has four DP 2 suezmax shuttle tankers, including one on order and counting an option, but could order more against longer period charters as shuttle tankers do not overburden regular tanker spot markets.

Shuttle tankers and other long-term chartered vessels in the fleet are among the candidates for a master limited partnership that TEN has been planning.

Mr Tsakos said that the MLP was "still on" but would need to be accretive to the main company.

Currently TEN has a greater exposure to the bullish spot market than for many years, with 73% of ship days this year for spot or spot-related contracts.

Could the allure of suezmaxes be fatal?

They are seen as a good investment; the problem is, everyone else thinks so too

ASKED at a tanker industry event this week which tanker type he would invest in, Braemar ACM Shipbroking head of research Henry Curra said he would normally say suezmaxes, *writes Hal Brown*.

However, it was clear from his hesitation that now he is not so sure.

His hesitation was simply down to the fact that the suezmax orderbook is growing ominously.

If it continues to grow, the hard-won balance between

ships and cargoes could be obliterated.

Too many new ships will lead to an unbalanced market, an excess of ships chasing cargoes.

The suezmax orderbook is not at the bloated stage yet.

But orders have been creeping up — owners evidently thinking alike, pinpointing suezmaxes as the segment in which to invest.

Some 15 new suezmaxes have been ordered already this year, on top of the 44 ordered last year, Clarksons' data shows.

These orders were spurred by the fact that hardly any were ordered in 2013 and 2012 — just eight in total in those two years.

The suezmax freight market is robust this year — a further enticement to order new vessels.

Average suezmax spot earnings are $53,246 per day on the Baltic Exchange's index, offering owners a fair chunk of change in their pockets.

Companies such as New York-listed Nordic American Tankers are benefitting, and paying out higher dividends.

Nordic American Tankers sent a letter to shareholders this week, chief executive Herbjorn Hansson saying there is much more to the current upswing than the reduced oil price.

"The balance between the fundamentals of our industry, supply and demand of transportation services, have been improving for some time," he said.

The trick is not to upset that balance by an influx of too many newbuildings ordered over the coming quarters.

It's a trick that shipping has yet to master.

Hafnia Tankers in position as tide turns for product tankers

New product tanker player, with old hands at the helm, wants to grab the opportunities while they exist

Skov: 'We're focusing on any size. Handies, MRs, LRs — it's really all about price and quality of vessel.'

HAFNIA Tankers, one of the newest product tanker companies in the industry, is putting the brakes on fleet expansion for the time being as it prepares to receive as many as 10 newbuilding product tankers this year and four in 2016, *writes Hal Brown*.

The heavy delivery schedule will expand the Copenhagen-based company's fleet to more than 40 vessels, putting it up among the biggest product tanker fleets out there — not bad going for a company formed only in 2013.

As a fleet size comparison, Scorpio leads the pack with around 70 vessels, Torm has about 60, and Maersk controls about 50.

Hafnia, which is said to be interested in an initial public offering this year, will see its fleet expand just as the tide appears to be turning for product tankers.

In demand

New refinery capacity in the Middle East is generating extra demand for product tankers to carry cargoes, and cheaper oil is adding a further buzz as refineries ramp up production of oil products.

"That's a very positive story for products," Hafnia Tankers chief executive Mikael Skov told Lloyd's List, speaking from the company's Copenhagen head office.

According to shipping analysts, Abu Dhabi's new Ruwais West refinery is planning to run at close to 100% utilisation by the second half of 2015, from 60% now.

In addition, Saudi Arabia's 400,000 barrels per day Yasref plant recently shipped its first cargo and is also expected to run at full capacity this year, say analysts.

Hafnia is poised to take full advantage of these opportunities with its new-look fleet.

"There's plenty of activity for us this year," said Mr Skov, referring to the company's wave of newbuildings being delivered from the shipyards, for which Hafnia signed a $236.8m credit facility in December 2014.

Asked whether further orders could be in the pipeline he said, "we've already done quite a lot".

Alongside the newbuildings, the company bought four 2010-built long range one product tankers in February, which have joined the Straits Tankers LR1 Pool.

Mr Skov believes it is prudent to keep an open mind when it comes to tanker size, rather than putting all your eggs in one basket.

"We're focusing on any size," he says. "Handies, MRs, LRs — it's really all about price and quality of vessel."

Crude tankers, however, are not on the agenda, despite the improvements being seen in the crude tanker freight market, very large crude carrier spot earnings averaging as high as $64,000 per day so far this year.

"We're dedicated to product tankers," says Mr Skov when asked if he might be tempted to dip his toe in crude with, perhaps, a couple of aframax or suezmax purchases.

Hardly surprising it's a no, given that Mr Skov has spent most of his working life in product tankers, having been with Torm previously. Cut him and he probably bleeds gasoline.

A crucial factor boosting both crude and product tankers is the lower oil price.

Both crude and product tankers are in higher demand to ship greater volumes of cheaper oil and oil products.

"It's helped with the cost of bunkers and it's encouraged a lot of trading of oil products, generating more activity for our business," says Mr Skov.

Braemar ACM Shipbroking head of research Henry Curra said this week that cheaper oil has fundamentally changed the dynamics of the product tanker industry, as refineries' margins improve and they run flat out to produce more cargoes.

New start

All very well — but why was Hafnia's 2014 profit down to $2.3m from $8.6m in 2013?

Last year was the first real year of the company, so cannot accurately be compared with 2013, towards the end of which the company was created in its present form, explains Mr Skov.

The company was formed by the current shareholders and the management team of Tankers Inc, merging with the Hafnia Tanker pools.

As Hafnia gears up to receive its 14 newbuildings this year and next, it is clearly poised to build on that $2.3m profit as opportunities to bolster balance sheets in the product tanker industry start to open up in 2015 and 2016.

Estimates from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees suggest that more than 2,500 people have died

More tankers news online
Pluto LNG export plant restarts production
http://www.lloydslist.com/ll/sector/tankers/article459078.ece

Diana Containerships to buy two panamaxes

Greek owner to splash $43m on duo chartered to Yang Ming

The 4,920 teu *YM New Jersey:* Diana Containerships is paying $21.5m for the ship. *Dietmar Hasenpusch*

GREECE-based shipowner Diana Containerships has signed a deal to purchase two panamax boxships from Japanese owner Shoei Kisen, *writes Nigel Lowry.*

The Nasdaq-listed owner, a spin-off from Simeon Palios-led Diana Shipping, is buying the 2006-built pair *YM Los Angeles* and *YM New Jersey*, both of about 5,000 teu capacity, for a price of $21.5m each.

The vessels are both expected to be delivered in April and have well over a year's charter to Taiwanese operator Yang Ming remaining, each at a gross daily rate of $21,000 less $350 in commission.

Yang Ming (UK) has the option to redeliver the YM Los Angeles between October 2016 and February 2017.

The YM New Jersey charter is due to end between September 2016 and January 2017, again at the charterer's option.

Additionally the charterer has an option to employ the vessels for a further 22 to 26 months at the same rate starting in December and November 2016 respectively.

Fleet of 13 ships

The two vessels will bring the Diana Containerships fleet to a total 13 ships, including nine panamaxes and four post-panamaxes.

The move was not unexpected. Last month the company said it was inspecting two vessels of this size and Mr Palios, as chief executive, said that he felt confident the company would be "buying something soon".

Freight rates down again

Asia-Europe freight rates at their lowest level since June 2013

CONTAINER freight rates on the transpacific and Asia-Europe trade lanes have continued to decline and are still tracking below the levels recorded for the same period over the last two years, *writes Damian Brett*.

The latest figures from the Shanghai Containerised Freight Index show that freight rates on services from Shanghai to northern Europe slipped $88 during the last week to $620 per teu.

This is the lowest level freight rates on the trade lane have seen since June 2013 and the average weekly rate so far this year of $1,080 is below the $1,679 per teu recorded over the first 12 weeks of 2014.

The news was no better on the Asia to Mediterranean trade lane, where prices dropped $148 on last week to $808 per teu.

It is the lowest freight rates on the trade lane have been since November 2013. The average weekly rate for the year so far stands at $1,394 per teu, compared with $1,710 last year.

There was a similar story to be reported on services from Shanghai to the US west coast, where prices declined $87 during the last week to $1,748 per feu. The average price for the year so far stands at $1,394 per feu, against $1,976 last year.

Other trade lanes also continue to suffer, in particular the trade lane from Asia to South America, where larger tonnage continues to be cascaded and overcapacity is rife.

Prices now stand at just $580 per teu, a level not seen since 2009.

It should be remembered. though. that while prices are declining, this is mirrored by lower fuel costs.

So while the declines will be worrying for shipping lines, they may not have had as much impact on profitability levels as it may initially appear.

There are also some brighter notes. For instance, while prices on services from Asia to the US east coast declined $214 last week to $4,355 per feu as concerns regarding the west coast docker contract negotiations eased, the average for the year of $4,715 per feu is ahead of last year's level for the period of $3,303 per feu.

Also, Asia-Europe carriers have announced a general rate increase of of around $800-$1,000 per teu. The increases were initially due to come into force in mid-March but were postponed until April 1.

The Transpacific Stabilization Agreement has recommended a rate increase of $600 per feu to come into force on Asia-US services on April 9.

When rates are at a particularly low level, a carrier general rate increase seems to have more chance of success.

Containers analysis online
Data Hub: World Fleet Update
http://www.lloydslist.com/ll/sector/containers/article458938.ece

On the hook

Seafarers out beyond the breakwater have faced challenging conditions while waiting for ships to berth at LA-Long Beach. © *2015 Nick Ut/AP*

Nobody really thinks about the seafarers whose voyages have been interrupted by the US west coast congestion. Trust me, they have not been having much fun

MANY years ago, I spent an unexpected 10 days anchored off the Bar Light Vessel at the mouth of the Mersey, after some sort of labour dispute had closed the port, *writes Michael Grey*.

We had signed on for what we anticipated was a two day "run" job from London and in those days, we were all heavy smokers. It was revealing to see the cheerful morale of the ship deteriorating as everything that could be smoked vanished into ash and our nicotine craving increased to the point of madness.

It was only the civility of those on board the pilot cutter, who diverted to throw us a few cartons, which saved the ship from bloodshed.

Readers will all be aware, that since October, the ports of the US west coast have been in a rare old state of congestion as the unions and management have wrestled over the next four-year contracts for the longshoremen. Bigger containerships have been arriving with heavier loads from the other side of the Pacific, a good indicator of America's recovering prosperity, which hasn't exactly helped, although the particularly angry contract negotiations have led to go-slows and lockouts.

Thus, people looking out to sea from Long Beach and Los Angeles, for instance, have been able to see the anchorages crowded with a great fleet of 30 or more containerships, along with some bulkers and general cargoships, all waiting for a berth.

My colleague Janet Porter, who has been reporting from California for the past couple of weeks, will have kept you well informed.

But she also told me that while customers rage about their empty shelves and consignees wave their "just in time" contracts, while the goods are rocking gently in the roadsteads, nobody really thinks about the seafarers whose voyages have been interrupted by the congestion. And while you might think that they might welcome a respite from their frenetic schedule-keeping, enjoying a bit of fishing, life is not exactly this cheerful.

Here is Guy Fox, who is chairman emeritus of the District Export Council of Southern California, but more importantly, in this context, president of the board of directors of the International Seafarers Center, whose team of volunteers work hard, with very limited resources, to provide a welcome to those who come to their ports.

"The seafarers out and beyond the breakwater", he tells me, "do not have it so good, being on an island of steel with no place to go". While this might be the lot of seafarers pretty well anywhere from time to time, those off the Southern California port complex have additional problems in that the ships are yet to be cleared by the authorities, and as a result cannot take fresh water, provisions and all the things that they were expecting to embark once they were alongside.

Moreover, such are the strict environmental laws prevailing over these coastal waters that they are not permitted to flush out their sewage tanks or even pump "grey water" into the sea. This is causing real problems on some ships with limited provisions for water-making, and grey water retention, with people unable to take showers and water

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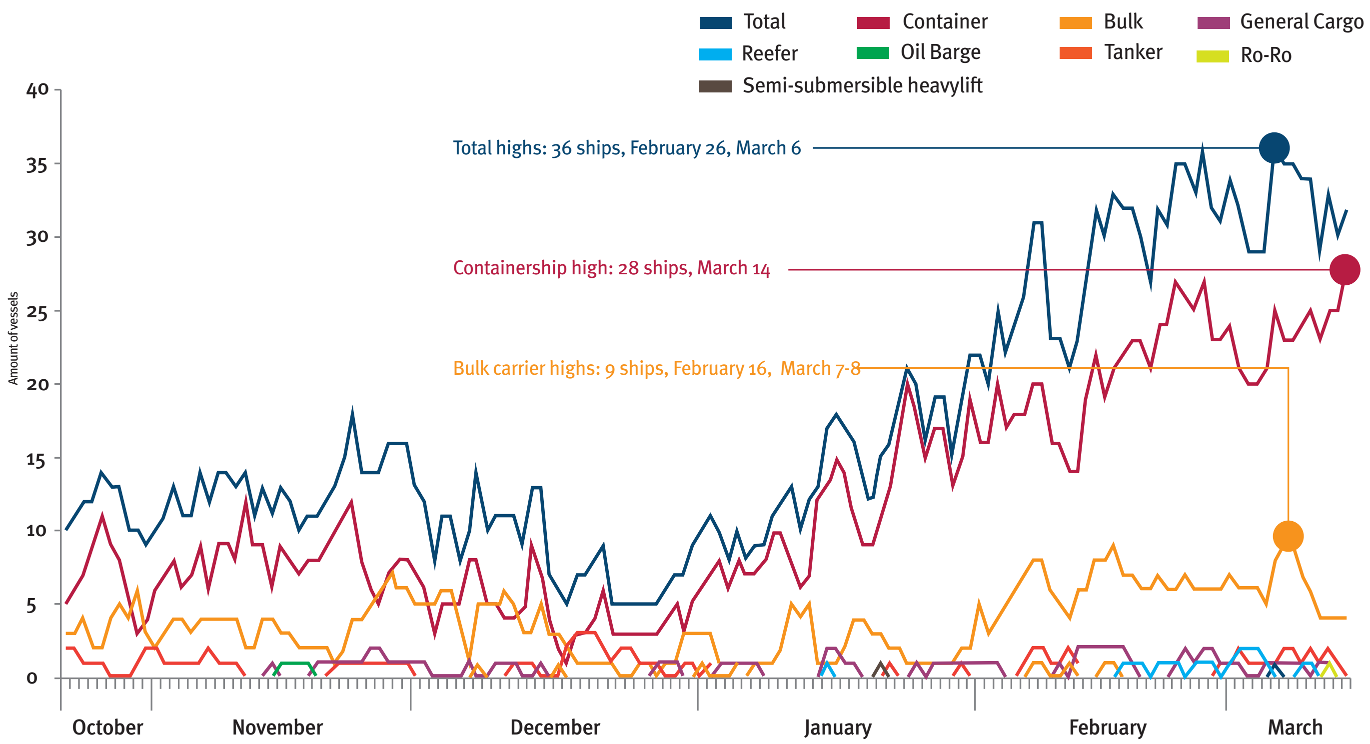
LOS ANGELES AND LONG BEACH CONGESTION OCTOBER 22, 2014 - MARCH 14, 2015



***Source:** Marine Exchange of Southern California, Vessel Traffic Service of Los Angeles and Long Beach*

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rationed like it used to be on board mid-20th century tramp ships.

While big modern containerships are not too badly off, the tramps and bulk carriers, points out Guy Fox, "do not have the luxury". They could, he admits, weigh anchor and head out to sea to flush their tanks in an area beyond the limits, "but that costs a lot of money and the owners are not willing to do that!"

I guess they would risk, by their short absence, losing their place in the queue. Some ships have been at anchor for upwards of three weeks.

It might be thought an unfair comparison between longshoremen snug ashore, earning upwards of $100,000 a year with full medical cover and decent pensions, and seafarers earning an awful lot less, but maybe we need to be reminded of these realities being suffered by 600-700 seafarers on board the immobile ships, who nobody ever remembers.

Another little wrinkle told me by Guy Fox is that the ISC, which is housed in an old building generously contributed by the Port of Long Beach, is trying very hard to modernise its facilities, with its antiquated phone system under attack from the rats and a fleet of old vans "held together with bailing wire".

The ISC is presently funded by a voluntary tariff of $35 per vessel, which doesn't seem a great deal, but only 23% of the steamship companies using the ports will actually permit the disbursement.

The ISC would like a mandatory $100 per ship, which would help it renew its facilities and vehicles and ease their "hand to mouth" existence, which depends hugely on donations and an annual Maritime Industry Salute. There are high hopes that the senior officers of the port, who are fully aware of the plight of seafarers, will add their considerable authority to support the ISC in more tangible ways.

We jolly well need these reminders from time to time, of the human beings in our "over the horizon" industry that keeps us fed and fuelled and supplied with all we need. It is worth remembering that the new Maritime Labour Convention 2006; Guideline B4.4.4, in case you ask, includes "levies or other special duties from shipping sources" as one of the means of providing financial support for port welfare facilities.

Guy Fox and his colleagues don't need the reminder, but others, who grudge the present voluntary tariff, might find the reference useful!
rjmgrey@dircon.co.uk

Lloyd's List

Editor Richard Meade *+44 (0)20 7017 4636*

Deputy Editor Craig Eason *+46 858 766 232*

Digital Content Manager Helen Kelly *+44 (0)20 7017 4651*

Digital Publishing Manager Nicola Good *+44 (0)20 7017 4840*

Editor-in-Chief, Containers Janet Porter *+44 (0)20 7017 4617*

Finance Editor David Osler *+44 (0)20 7017 4628*

Senior Markets Reporter Hal Brown *+44 (0)20 3377 3956*

Editor-in-Chief, Asia Tom Leander *+852 3757 9701*

Senior Reporter, Asia Max Tingyao Lin *+852 3757 9706*

Markets Reporter, Dry Bulk David Sexton

US Reporter Alexander MacInnes *+1 212 520 2780*

Containerisation International
Editor Damian Brett *+44 (0)20 7017 5754*

Markets Reporter, Containers Linton Nightingale *+44 (0)20 7551 9964*

Correspondents
Australia Jim Wilson *+61 403 455 371*
jim.wilson@informa.com.au

Greece Nigel Lowry *+30 210 621 2340*
lowry@otenet.gr

Sweden/Baltic Craig Eason *+46 858 766 232*
craig.eason@informa.com

Shipping Movements *+44 (0)20 7017 5280*

Casualties *+44 (0)20 7017 5205*

Subscriptions *+44 (0)20 3377 3792*

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Editoral and commercial inquiries
Lloyd's List, Christchurch Court, 10-15 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AZ
Tel: +44 (0)20 7017 5000
Fax: +44 (0)20 7017 4782
Email: editorial@lloydslist.com
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REPUBLIQUE ALGERIENNE DEMOCRATIQUE ET POPULAIRE

algérie - ferries

ENTREPRISE NATIONALE DE TRANSPORT MARITIME DE VOYAGEURS

(National Maritime Passenger Shipping Company)
NIF : 0000 16001500489
INTERNATIONAL INVITATION TO TENDER
N° 02/2015

The Entreprise Nationale de Transport Maritime de Voyageurs (ENTMV) is issuing an international invitation to tender for the purchase of two monohull ferries less than five (05) years old, of capacity 200 to 300 passengers.

This notice of invitation to tender only applies to ship-owners, ship-brokers and shipyards.

Tenderers interested in this invitation to tender may collect, or instruct someone to collect, the specifications from the following three (03) addresses:

For collection in Algeria
ENTMV 5 et 6 rue J.NEHRU Alger
Direction des Affaires Juridiques Bureau N° 63
Tel/Fax : + (213) 21 42 41 03

For collection abroad
1) REPRESENTATION GENERALE ENTMV MARSEILLE
58 Bd des DAMES
13001 Marseille – France
Tel/ 04 91 90 79 07
Fax/ 04 91 91 59 58

2) AGENT ROMEU
JORGE JUAN , 6 - 03002 Alicante (Spain)
Tel/ + 34965141509
Fax/ + 34965208290

Against presentation of a bank transfer payment slip for the following amount :

- Thirty thousand (30,000) Algerian Dinars to the following bank account :
IBAN/ N° 002000101000602976/05 opened at the Banque Extérieure d'Algérie, 6 Boulevard ERNESTO CHE-GUEVARA for collection in Algeria,

- Three hundred (300) Euros to the following bank accounts :
opened at BNP PARIBAS, 5 BLD DUNKERQUE 13002 - Marseille IBAN n° FR76 3000 4007 2100 0152 0115 427 for collection from Marseilles.

- BBVA to bank account N° ES92 0182 2364 52 02 000 13999 :
Rambla de Mendez Nunez 42 – 03002 Alicante for collection from Alicante

The offers with all the required information are to be accompanied by documentation that is valid on the date of opening of bids, and are to be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated in the specifications in two separate envelopes:

The first envelope containing the technical bid

The second envelope containing the financial bid

The two envelopes are to be put in a single anonymous sealed envelope, marked only with the following obligatory wording:

« A NE PAS OUVRIR »
AVIS D'APPEL D'OFFRES INTERNATIONAL
N° 02/2015
PORTANT ACQUISITION DE DEUX (02) FERRIES MONOCOQUES

The final date for lodging bids is ………….. 2015 at twelve hundred hours (12.00), i.e. 30 days with effect from the initial publicationof this notice in a national daily newspaper or in the Bulletin des Annonces légales (BOMOP - Legal Gazette).

Offers must be lodged by bidders or their representatives at the following address:

ENTMV 5 et 6 rue J.NEHRU, Alger - SECRETARIAT DE LA COMMISSION D'OUVERTURE DES PLIS
(ENTMV 5 & 6 rue J. NEHRU, Algiers - Secretariat of the bid opening committee)

Tenderers are invited to attend the technical and financial bid opening procedure in a public session, which will take place on the same day as the date for submission of offers on ………………. 2015 at thirteen hundred hours (13.00).

Anyone (tenderer's representative) wishing to attend the bid opening session must be in possession of a letter of authorization duly signed by the tenderer.

Tenderers will remain bound by their offers for a period of 90 days with effect from the date of opening of the bids.

HARBOUR MASTER & MARINE MANAGER

HARWICH HAVEN AUTHORITY

£80,000 plus package

Harwich Haven Authority has the vitally important task of ensuring the safety of navigation for some of the world's largest container vessels and cruise liners accessing the Haven Ports, while simultaneously safeguarding the sizeable leisure vessel community sharing the same waters.

Managing this diversity of traffic is a complex and demanding task and we are now seeking a Harbour Master and Marine Manager to lead our team of highly experienced marine professionals in the delivery of a safe and efficient customer focussed service to all our stakeholders.

In addition to undertaking the statutory role of Harbour Master and deputising for the CEO, the successful candidate will be pivotal to the development of medium and long term strategies that both further develop the service offered to our customers and reinforce our profile within the local community.

In filling this challenging role we are seeking candidates with a relevant maritime qualification and senior management experience within a ports or shipping environment. In addition candidates will have a proven track record in change management and possess excellent leadership and communication skills.

In recognising the importance of this position, we are offering a highly competitive salary together with an excellent benefits package.

If you feel you have the required qualifications, skills and experience to undertake this key role, please download an application pack, available at http://www.hha.co.uk/

Go to 'library', then 'vacancies' select HMMM1-2015.

The closing date for the receipt of your application is 1200hrs Friday 17 April 2015.