

**REPORT OF THE  
48<sup>th</sup> (BIENNIAL) GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Held in Faroe Islands at the Føroya Hotel  
At the invitation of Føroya Skipara Og Navigatørfelag**

The 48<sup>th</sup> (Biennial) General Assembly was held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> & Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025.

Some members attended the meeting via Zoom video conferencing.

**LIST OF DELEGATES**

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Hans Sande (Norway)	President
Willi Wittig (Germany)	Deputy President (Zoom)
Niels B Hansen (Denmark)	Vice President
Martin Björkell (Finland)	Vice President
Alexandre Ribes (France)	Vice President
Shinya Nakamura (Japan)	Vice President
Marcel van den Broek (Netherlands)	Vice president
Nils Brandberg (Sweden)	Vice President
Oleg Grygoriuk (Ukraine)	Vice President
Joe Hartnett (USA)	Vice President (Zoom)

**MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATIONS (Listed by country and alphabetically by surname)**

Marshall Dunbar	CMMC	Canada
Niels B Hansen	DMO & ExCo	Denmark
Martin Björkell	FSOU & ExCo	Finland
Annfinnur Garðalið	FSN	Faroe Islands
Elias Zachariassen	FSN	Faroe Islands
Willi Wittig	VDKS & Deputy President	Germany
Martin Björkel	FSOU & ExCo	Finland
Johan Ramsland	FSOU	Finland
Alexandre Ribes	HYDROS & ExCo	France
Shinya Nakamura	JCA & ExCo	Japan
Megumi Masuda	JCA	Japan
Gwee Bok Lee	KSMA	Korea
Marcel van den Broek	Nautilus (NL) & ExCo	Netherlands
Hans Sande	NMOA & IFSMA President	Norway
Oleg Grygoriuk	MTWTU & ExCo	Ukraine
Susana Díaz Álvarez	AVCCMM	Spain
Ainara Jauregui	AVCCMM	Spain
Nils Brandberg	MOA & ExCo	Sweden
Jesper Elfuorn	MOA	Sweden
David Appleton	Nautilus (UK)	UK
Joe Hartnett	CAMM & ExCo	USA

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

Dimitar Dimitrov	Bulgaria
Sudhir Subhedar	India
Paul Owen	UK (Ind Mem & Secretariat) (zoom)

**SPEAKERS & GUESTS**

Hans Johannes Á Brúgv	Faroe Islands, Maritime Authority
Jens Meinard Rasmussen	Faroe Islands, CEO of Smyril Line
Frida Linehagen	Sweden

**SECRETARIAT**

Commodore Jim Scorer	Secretary General
Captain Andrew Cook	Secretary General Designate
Captain Paul Owen	Assistant Secretary General (Zoom)

A list of apologies received is held at the IFSMA Office.

**AGENDA ITEM 1 – IFSMA AGM****Faroese Shipmasters and Navigators Association - President's opening address****Annfinnur Garðalíð, Union President**

Dear Delegates, gentlemen, a very good morning to you all,

It gives me true pleasure to welcome you all to the 48<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of IFSMA and we are glad, humble and honoured that it will take place here in Torshavn. The Faroese Shipmasters and Navigators Association consider this a chance in a lifetime for our association to be hosts for the assembly.

Faroe Islands has a long maritime tradition going back to the Vikings and even further back in time indicating early settlements from Ireland and Orkney. The Vikings had a saying “in order to preserve a friendship visit your friends often” I do hope that we in IFSMA will make the wise words ours.

I am indeed looking forward to the conference and the presentations on topics of our mutual interests.

I am also glad that there will be opportunities for the delegates and their spouses to come and see more of our country and our infrastructure, we are very proud of our achievements and will never forget that the fishing and maritime industry is the backbone of our economy and welfare.

We are living in a time of wars and unrest which is not good for our maritime industry and international business. Of course, human history has had many wars and not least in the Middle East, I permit myself to quote Isahia in the Holy Book stating his hope in saying:

"He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war."

Good thoughts – still valid. I will finish my address by rephrasing the words of Chamberlain

“Let there again be peace in our time”

I hereby declare the IFSMA 48<sup>th</sup> Assembly for open.

### **Reply by IFSMA President**

Dear Union President Garðalið, dear delegates, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of IFSMA, it is my great honour and privilege to thank our Faroese colleagues for their warm and heartfelt welcome to this 48th Biannual General Assembly.

We are deeply grateful to the Faroese Shipmasters and Navigators Association for hosting us here in Tórshavn, in the very heart of the North Atlantic.

The Faroe Islands represent a proud maritime nation, where seafaring traditions stretch back to the earliest settlements and the age of the Vikings. As you reminded us, history teaches us that friendship is preserved by visiting each other often. Today, we gather in that same spirit of friendship and solidarity between seafarers across borders and oceans.

Our Assembly is a unique opportunity. It allows us to come together not only to discuss technical and professional matters, but also to strengthen our international fellowship.

### **We share many challenges:**

- The forces of digitalization, the green transition, and shifting geopolitical realities are fundamentally reshaping the way we work – both at sea and ashore.
- Defending the rights and professional standing of masters and officers remains a core responsibility.
- Ensuring the highest standards of navigational safety is critical to protecting lives, cargo, and coastal communities.
- Safeguarding the marine environment is not only an obligation but a shared moral duty.
- And above all, securing fair and decent working conditions for all who serve at sea is essential to sustaining a strong and resilient maritime workforce.

These challenges cannot be solved in isolation. They demand cooperation – between nations, between unions, and between people.

Annfinnur quoted from the prophet Isaiah and reminded us of a universal truth: that peace is not only a hope but a duty. For seafarers, who sail in troubled waters and connect nations in both times of prosperity and crisis, peace and stability are the very foundation of our work. May our deliberations here in Tórshavn contribute, in a small but meaningful way, to building such peace.

I would also like to thank our Faroese hosts for the opportunity to experience your islands, culture, and hospitality. It is indeed a privilege for us, and we will carry these memories home with gratitude.

Finally, let me assure you that IFSMA stands committed to its mission: to be the independent voice of the shipmaster, to safeguard professional standards, and to promote safety at sea and fair treatment for all who navigate the world’s oceans.

With that, I wish us all fruitful discussions, and I extend my warmest thanks once again to our Faroese colleagues for making this Assembly possible.

Thank you.

Captain Hans Sande, IFSMA President

**Captain Shinja Nakamura** was then invited to address the meeting where, on behalf of **Captain Koichi Akatsuka**, he presented **Commodore Jim Scorer** with a gift of an engraved blue and gold pen made by the Japanese firm "Pilot" and a Certificate of Appreciation for his long standing and excellent work as Secretary General for IFSMA. Koichi sent his apologies for being unable to attend.

### **Report by Secretary General**

See the Annex 1 for the Secretary General's Report

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Assistant Secretary General, acting as Honorary Treasurer, introduced the annual financial reports for 2024.

He referred to End of Year 2024 statement and the 2024 Balance Sheet contained in the back of the Part A which had been approved by the Executive Council.

He introduced the End of Year 2024 figures first by drawing attention to the blue column which showed the actual figures, the red column showed the approved budget and the right column the budget for 2025 approved by the Executive Council. He noted that expenditure was low due to a General Assembly not being held in that year and the income was high due to the proceeds from the sale of our publication The Master's Practical Guide to Maritime Law which gave an income of £32,151. This produced a contribution of £53,492 for the year which was added to our reserves. He then reported on the Balance Sheet for 31 December 2024, this showed a balance of assets of £294,884 at the end of 2024.

He then referred to the Auditor's Report to be found at the last page of the Part A booklet, carried out by Captain Rodger MacDonald, our Honorary Auditor and a former IFSMA Secretary General, who confirmed the figures for the income and expenditure were correct.

The accounts were approved.

He then introduced the proposed budget for 2026, this showed an income on £116,000 and an expenditure, which needs to be adjusted with the addition of £7,000 for the Social Media Project, to produce a total expenditure of £114,823. The budget for 2026 was approved.

### **Appointment of Honorary Auditor for 2023 and 2024.**

The current Honorary Auditor, Captain Rodger MacDonald, has agreed to continue in this role for 2025 and 2026. Members agreed to this appointment.

### **Confirmation of future venues for Biennial General Assemblies**

**Secretary General** confirmed that the proposed venue for *2027 is Odesa in Ukraine*. **Oleg Grygoriuk** briefed the General Assembly on the situation in Ukraine. He confirmed the hosting

of the 2027 BGA but stated that the actual venue will be decided later and, depending on the circumstances at the time, may be held outside of Ukraine.

**Secretary General** then announced that an invitation from the Korea Shipmasters Association to hold the **2029 Biennial General Assembly in Seoul, Republic of Korea**, had been accepted by the Executive Council.

### **Any Other Business**

**Sudhir Subhedar** Asked about the status of the IMO Resolution on seafarers. **Secretary General** replied that he expects the subject to be raised at the next IMO Legal Committee. **Sudhir** then asked about the reason why so many Indian Seafarers are abandoned on their ships. **Secretary General** answered that the reason was linked to market forces and the need for Indian Seafarers to find work, often at the disreputable end of the market. He added that it is important for all seafaring nations to take on their responsibilities including for flag States to control the insurance guarantee required to be made by companies for Seafarers to ensure the insurance guarantee is not cancelled as soon as certification is issued.

**Dimitar Dimitrov** – conveyed greetings and best regards from President Emeritus, Christer Lindvall, and also thanked Secretary General for attending the CESMA AGA recently. He hoped that we will maintain our cooperation in the future as we work on similar subjects. He then raised the subject of IMO Maritime Ambassadors, saying that the scheme will end soon but IMO have not said why. He added that we still need to promote the Maritime Profession. **Secretary General** replied that the IMO SG was asked about this in a recent meeting and he answered that no decision has been taken so far as to what to do in the future.

## **AGENDA 2**

### ***Working Environment, Health and Safety in the Maritime Industry***

#### **Presented by Morten Kviem of Norwegian Maritime Officers' Association**

The most advanced research project on seafarers' health ever conducted. *Over the next four years, the groundbreaking research project "Maritime Research – Seafarers' Working Life and Health" will provide valuable insight into how working environment conditions affect the wellbeing of Norwegian seafarers.*

**This document has been translated from Norwegian to English using AI.**

#### **Project Description**

This research project is initiated by the **Norwegian Maritime Officers Association (NMOA)** and is being carried out by the **National Institute of Occupational Health (STAMI)**.

The aim of the project is to conduct a comprehensive interdisciplinary survey of the working environment in the maritime industry and to investigate how working conditions affect health, accident risk, sick leave, and turnover.

The maritime industry is exposed to human errors, incidents, and accidents, and nearly two out of three employees report that life and health are at risk due to mistakes. The risk of fatal accidents in the maritime sector is higher than in other (land-based) industries. Although the number of fatalities in the sector has decreased in recent decades, the number of accidents and near misses has increased since 2016. Human behaviour is influenced by, among other factors, fatigue, which is a significant contributing factor in accidents. Fatigue is thus an important

safety challenge that is largely influenced by the working environment. In addition to increased safety risks at sea, seafarers may experience psychological and physical health issues and illnesses. Our knowledge of such health problems and illnesses is mostly based on international research and survey data, but we know little about the health challenges experienced by seafarers in Norway. Furthermore, we lack sufficient knowledge about working conditions onboard ships in the North Sea, even though the work environment is clearly linked to health issues and disease.

In the future, it is important that the Norwegian maritime sector attracts labour, especially due to the green and digital transitions it is undergoing. The sector is male-dominated but seeks to be attractive to women as well. In the new maritime gender equality strategy, the working environment is a key factor in recruiting more women.

The project will be carried out in the operational areas of "ferry and local routes" and "offshore service" and will include seafarers from all occupational categories. Our goal is to engage in dialogue with various employers in order to survey all employees in the maritime sector within these operational areas. We will use both subjective measurement methods (questionnaires) and objective methods (technical measurements, observations) for a selected group of employees. For the objective measurements, employees will wear small sensors on their bodies, allowing us to accurately measure activity levels, work postures, step counts, and cardiovascular load. With stationary measurements of chemical exposures, we will develop job exposure matrices for different onboard areas and vessel types. We will examine the relationships between psychosocial, physical, organizational, and chemical work environment factors and relevant health-related outcomes, as well as accident risk and turnover over a two-year period. Additionally, we will study interaction effects between the various exposure categories.

The results of the project will provide a complete overview of relevant working environment factors in the maritime industry, particularly within the operational areas of "ferry and local routes" and "offshore service." The goal is to produce new and relevant knowledge that can be used to prevent work-related health issues, sick leave, and attrition, as well as improve training in risk management. All of this can contribute to making the maritime industry even more attractive for both current and future employees.

As a research institute, we will analyse the data and present the results in a completely neutral manner. For the project to succeed, it is essential that we find enough employees willing to participate in the study and that shipping companies support the project. Good dialogue among all parties involved will help us achieve the project's goals. For shipping companies, STAMI can provide anonymous unit reports that HR departments can use in their ongoing health efforts onboard.

See Annex 2 to this report for the PowerPoint slides presented.

### Q&A

**Marcel van den Broek** commented that the Project Horizon in 2012 covered similar subjects and was sponsored by several countries including from Scandinavia. He added that working in a 24 hours business can result in fatigue and have an impact on health. Working at sea can result in irregular sleep patterns you can only monitor fatigue if you follow a person for a number of days. **Morten Kviem** replied that also the crew need to be monitored for irregular sleep patterns to check for fatigue. The new thing is the link to find fatigue. **Marcel van den Broek** As an example asked why the first shift of the day always started at midnight and stated

that if it started at 02:00 this would achieve a much better outcome for crew wellbeing and health, these were some of the results from Project Horizon. **Hans Sande** added – the current study is different from Horizon as it involves physical testing. **Marcel van den Broek** stated that something needs to be changed, we should not continue as we are. People get ill for several reasons; it is often from a slow build up of problems.

### **AGENDA 3**

#### ***Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) and the Master***

***Presented by David Appleton Nautilus International (UK)***

See Annex 3 to this report for his paper.

#### **Q&A**

**Elias Zachariassen:** there are two different operating possibilities 1/ the ship is operated remotely or 2/ the ship is operated autonomously. **David Appleton** replied that there are different ideas out there, some only refer to small 12m vessels while others refer to large ships. The IMO draft code concentrates, for now, on remote controlled operations. Adding that ‘autonomous’ is quite a way off. **Elias Zachariassen** stated that in his experience there are always problems or situations where physical human input is required. Discussion continued.

### **AGENDA 4**

#### ***ClassNK Autonomous Ships***

***Presented by Shinya Nakamura, President Japan Captains’ Association.***

See Annex 4 to this report for the paper accompanying the presentation.

#### **Q&A**

**David Appleton** – hoped other Class Societies adopt ClassNK proposal. **Shinya Nakamura** – many captains joined experiment to establish standard. He added that he wished it to be a global standard. **David Appleton** noted autonomous cars in USA take longer for journeys as other cars know they will get out of the way.

### **AGENDA 5**

#### ***Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) in Canada***

***Presented by Marshall Dunbar, Company of Master Mariners Canada.***

See Annex 5 to this report for the paper to accompany the presentation.

### **AGENDA 6**

#### ***Revision of STCW***

***Presented by Sudhir Subhedar, Individual Member***

See Annex 6 to this report for copy of paper accompanying the presentation.

## AGENDA 7

### *STCW Amendments & Korea's Maritime Officer Training System*

*Presented by Gwee-bok LEE, Korean Ship Masters' Association*

See Annex 7 to this report for paper accompanying presentation.

#### Q&A

**Marcel van den Broek** asked for information on the annual intake of students in nautical colleges and whether the number is increasing or decreasing. **Gwee-bok LEE** replied it is difficult to tell and they have recommended that the Government separate nautical students into separate college.

## AGENDA 8

### *Maritime Career Paths 2024*

*Presented by Hans Sande, Norwegian Maritime Officers Association & IFSMA President*

See Annex 8 to this report for a synopsis document to accompany the presentation.

#### Q&A

**David Appleton** remarked that there are huge similarities between the Norwegian and UK situation. They have discussions on incentives for shipowners, such as tax rebates. **Hans Sande** replied that in Norway there are two subsidies, 1/ is that they pay 0.6 tax on their net income, 2/ they are refunded NK22,000 for each seafarer, on average this amounts to US\$600m per year. He also summarised that if a seafarer earned £70,000 a year, and social costs were £24,000, then for £95,000 from this you deduct NK22,000 the rest of this is for the shipowner to cover. **David Appleton** added that in the UK they have trouble tracking seafarers when they go ashore, the UK Government only knows if they have a certificate or not. He asked how they find seafarers who have gone ashore in Norway. Hans Sande replied that they carried out surveys in 2012, 2019 and 2021, and they publicise the fact that surveys are taking place, they are allowed to send out the survey to all including those who may no longer be at sea. The results of the survey will be available to all and he was happy to provide more information if required.

**Marcel van Broek** Stated that he is dealing with a drop in membership and he would very much like to see the figures from the latest survey. He noted that the speaker was pessimistic about the future numbers of seafarers in Norway. He mentioned the maritime careers program to attract more seafarers. **Hans Sande** responded that this was funded by the foundation, they sit down with their industry partners and decide how to proceed. There is one full time person working on the foundation and three youth workers in his organisation and representative in schools promoting seafaring. He concluded by saying that there are differences between the labour laws for people ashore and those at sea in domestic and coastal trades, they have meetings scheduled to change this to be more equal.

Discussions continued. Notes follow:

**Shinya Nakamura** – Asked about females onboard. **Ans** – Norwegian companies do not have a policy aimed at females.

**Niels Hansen** - How do you react when employees ashore get 15-20 days off more than I do.

**Ans** - 2,400hrs at sea 1,840hrs ashore. Two Norwegian registries, the Norwegian International registry has exemptions.

**Finland** prepared for a drop in salary in return for more flexibility and time off. It's difficult to get industry to listen to youngsters.

## **AGENDA 9**

### ***Gender Equality & Resistance in a Military Context***

#### ***Frida Linehagen, Naval Officer, Swedish Navy, PhD in Risk & Security***

Frida's presentation explained the difficulties females experience in a military environment.

See Annex to this report for a selection of slides used.

#### **Q&A**

**Marcel van den Broek** – Military angle, in peace time almost the same. If sent to front you need to be drilled, very different to civilian life. **Answer** – We train for war, but in training we need to have better understanding of each other.

**David Appleton** – Many projects around gender equality, publicity, women in uniform. In practice people do not want to do anything. **Answer** – It's the same in the Swedish Navy.

At the invitation of Jim Scorer one of the **Spanish Members** – gave a description of her experiences working in Merchant Marine.

**Jim Scorer** – Recounted that he was in command of first Frigate in the Royal Navy to have female crew on board. He compiled a set of guidelines for conduct on aboard which was only used on his ship whilst the other ships had strickter Rules and 18 months down the line his ship, out of the five, was the only one to have no serious problems, his ship was thought to be too soft. He concluded that you don't need to have aggression to be good which was proven by his ship classified as the best in the Fleet under combat conditions.

## **AGENDA 10**

### ***Baltic Shadow Fleet, Hybrid Maritime Threat Analysis***

#### ***Presented by Martin Bjökell, Finnish Ship's Officers Union***

See Annex 10 to this report for further information on this subject.

#### **Q&A**

**Jim Scorer** – Recounted that this subject was discussed in length at the IMO Legal Committee earlier this year, in particular the illegal registration of ships. IFSMA brought up that there are no international policemen to enforce regulations. It is in active discussion and will be brought up again at next Legal Committee. ICS, INTERTANKO and other NGOs are very interested in this problem. We will continue to work with the NGOs to see what we can do.

**AGENDA 11*****Ukraine, Geo-Political Problems, Global Threats******Presented by Oleg Grygoriuk, Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine***

See Annex 11 for text of the Open Letter to All Governments, International Organizations and the Maritime Industry

**Oleg** Subjects covered in the presentation may be seen in the IFSMA Open Letter, he reiterated the problem of criminalisation of Shipmasters and other crew members, a subject which he acknowledged IFSMA is very concerned about.

**Hans Sande** – Regarding criminalisation of seafarers, this makes it difficult to recruit seafarers. ‘Despite all efforts taken by Govt’s, IMO and NGOs it is apparent that nothing works.’ It was agreed that IFSMA would issue an open letter to the industry on this subject. The IFSMA Open Letter to all Governments, International Organizations and the Maritime Industry can be seen here: <https://tinyurl.com/3denkd8r>

**Hans Sande** – Regarding Drug and Alcohol testing in shipping – First Court Case in Norway will be in October. In 1988 mandatory, started testing seafarers in US, after a few years it was world-wide. When going to sea you have to declare you will not abuse drugs and alcohol while in service. If you smoke a joint, after 10 days you may still have traces in your system but no longer under the influence. No one is suggesting that we do not test but are we taking it too far.

**Jim Scorer** - Jim gave an example of incorrect test result, resulting from poppy seeds on bread!

**Hans Sande** – Asked rhetorically, is it fair that I lose my job for something I take off duty which does not affect my job.

**AGENDA 12a*****Carriage of Electric Vehicles******Presented by Jens Meinhard Rasmussen , CEO of Smyril Line***

The company operates RoPax and RoRo between Europe and Faroe Islands and also between Faroe Islands and Iceland.

Jens stated that the company’s main policy is zero harm to personnel and assets. We have a highly regulated industry in part due to *Herald of Free Enterprise*, *Scandinavian Star* and *Estonia* casualties. Up to now he has considered the greatest risk for RoRo ships is stability/freeboard issued. If fires are detected early you can usually deal with them. Now it is fair to ask the questions: Has fire become the largest safety issue onboard RoRo/RoPax due to the carriage of EVs? EV fires can produce a violent chemical reaction releasing tremendous amounts of energy and heat dives through the battery in a domino effect way. They are difficult to extinguish. The only way to stop the thermal runaway seems to be to fully submerge the vehicle for a long time.

The traditional fire triangle (Heat, Oxygen, Fuel) is not applicable in EV fires. Controlling fires in EVs is all about stopping the thermal runaway in the batteries, which is different from a normal burning process.

Another issue facing the company is decarbonization, one of the greatest challenges for the industry.

When an incident happens the control measures are acceptable however, existing counter/recovery measures are not sufficient.

We needed to find a way to stop the thermal runaway in batteries, we tried various cooling methods, we eventually chose a salt and water mixture – also known as brine. The best-case threshold for cooling brine additives is -21°C, at lower temperatures than this the brine begins to crystallize and freeze. A cheap solution using simple technology. It can be stored in a tank kept at the low temperature. The speed of reaction by the crew is a critical element in managing the fire. The crew must wear BA to approach the fire and insert a lance into the car interior. 20 tonnes of brine is enough to cool one large vehicle. We have special training to handle our brine system.

The system works by monitoring vehicles with thermal cameras. When danger is detected, the inside of the car is flooded with the cooled brine to cool the battery down which stops the thermal runaway. In tests on a quay, we ignited a vehicle and had temperatures of 1,500°C and then flooded the car with cooled brine which took 13 mins to extinguish the fire. There was no undesired reaction from the battery. A perfect brine mixture would lead to even better results.

The company have two newbuildings on order which will install cooled brine and thermal camera systems.

**Jim Scorer** - are you organising your training in conjunction with your Maritime Administration so they can provide feedback to the IMO who are considering the carriage of EVs. **Answer** – yes, our administration is fully aware of what we are doing.

**IFSMA member** – How do you manage when you have a full load of cars and an EV is in the centre of the stow. **Answer** – it is extremely important that the crew have access to all the cars and our car stowage takes account of this requirement.

**Hans Sande** – do you need to apply the brine before thermal runaway starts. **Answer** – no, the system works after the thermal runaway has started.

## **AGENDA 12b**

### ***Challenges in the Maritime Education Sector of Faroe Islands***

***Presented by Hans Johannes A Brugv, from Faroese Maritime Authority.***

He has 20 staff with a budget of DK21m. They are responsible for the ship register, survey and inspections, managing around 1,000 certificates of competency a year, aids to navigation with 26 light houses and they recently took over the maritime laws of the Faroe Islands. We have 55 ships with 7 larger than 20,000 GT. With 2,800 small boats under 5 tonnes and we are a flag State. We have outsourced surveys to the Class Society for all vessels over 24m. We are an Associate Member of IMO and also an Associate Member of IALA.

Our Ship Register was started in 1992 and today we have 80 ships in the Register. Today no more fishing licenses are available and vessels are changing from fishing to trading.

Recruitment is a challenge in Faroe Islands Maritime Industry. In 1988 we had 266 fishing vessels, today we have 107, a reduction of 60% over 36 years. Fishermen have reduced from 2460 down to 1284, a reduction of >50% in 18 years. In the cargo vessels we have 1,304 seafarers of which 523 are Faroese. Many of the seafarers work on Norwegian vessels.

He provided other statistics for the Faroese seafarers.

Recommendations from the Faroese Maritime Education Council:

- 1 **The maritime industry should have a stronger presence in the school system**, both in primary, secondary, and higher education.
- 2 **Establish maritime education at all levels** - from vocational and secondary education to higher education within shipping and logistics.
- 3 **Safety training course should be accessible at all levels** in compulsory school, especially in the upper grades, for all pupils.
- 4 **Ensure that the education enables further studies** - current maritime programs should provide academic pathways or be designed to allow continuation into further education.
- 5 **Improve access to cadet training programs**, so that more students can qualify and apply.

**Niels Hansen** – Noted the loss of seafarers and mentioned that they have the same problem in Denmark. **Answer** – Many of our students go to Denmark to study and some do not come back, especially female students. In Faroes we have two times more men than women. **Jim Scorer** asked where the non-Faroese fishermen come from **Answer** mainly from Indonesia and Poland. The monthly salary for Danish Fishermen is around DK25,000.

### AGENDA 13

#### *My takeaways from 30+ years in Maritime Education and Training*

##### *Presented by Willi Wittig, VDKS Germany*

Willi having just retired went through three stages he experienced with education & training, starting in 1989 up to 2025:

1. When and how he became involved with education and training.
2. Shared his observations on past and present training
3. Shared his thoughts on the future development of E&T in Europe.

### AGENDA 14

#### *Hebie Spirit Incident*

##### *Presented by Andrew Cook, IFSMA Secretary General Designate*

Andrew Cook started by explaining why he chose this subject, it had a significant effect on him. He went through the events leading up to the collision. He assisted the insurer for this case.

He then recounted what happened after the collision to the Master, Captain Jasprit Chawla, and Chief Officer, Syan Chetan. They were convicted and sent to prison, mainly for not reducing the amount of pollution. They were eventually found not guilty on appeal by the Supreme Court and released from prison.

**Marcel van den Broek** – Mentioned that this case is very well known and that IFSMA and the ITF put a lot of pressure on. Your account demonstrates that the Master and Chief Officer did everything they could to reduce the effect of the collision but still finished up in Prison. **Answer** The case went on for the best part of two years. After this very difficult time the Master left the industry, he never wanted to go back to sea again. Initially the Chief Officer went back to sea, his whereabouts today are not known. **IFSMA member**, Do you think the publicity helped in this case. **Answer** Yes, we were pushing information out to the press, the truth, as much as we could. Although he was not sure how much that helped inside Korea. **Captain Lee** stated that the prosecutor contacted them to ask about the accident as he had no knowledge of maritime matters. We had a special team to investigate the incident.

See Annex 14 to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

### **AGENDA 15**

#### ***Any Other Business***

It was confirmed that IFSMA would issue an open letter to the industry on the criminalisation of seafarers. The IFSMA Open Letter to all Governments, International Organizations and the Maritime Industry can be seen here: <https://tinyurl.com/3denkd8r>

On closing the BGA the IFSMA President thanked the host association for a wonderful venue with outstanding food. He also offered thanks for those who travelled long distances to be with us.

There being no further business, the General Assembly was closed at 1500 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

The BGA Dinner was held at the Føroya Hotel on the evening of 26th October, hosted by Føroya Skipara Og Navigatørfelag and enjoyed by all.