

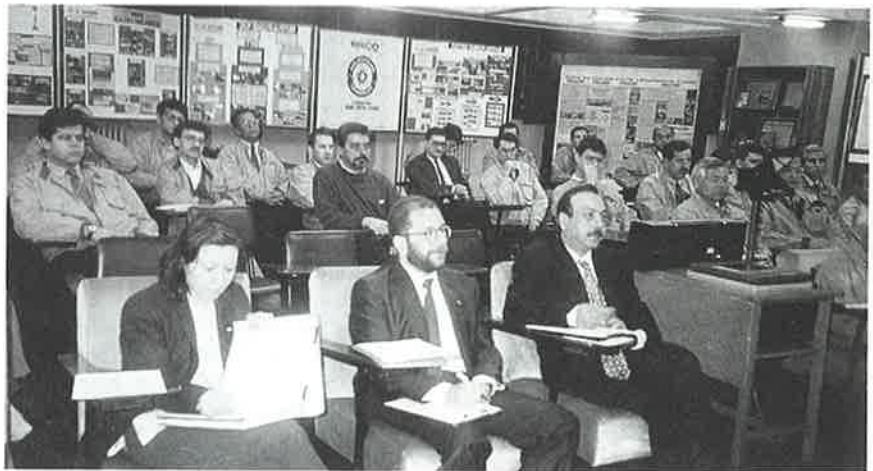
Direct from the horse's mouth

(See page 23)

Baldrige, EQA winners and ISO 9000

Applying the criteria of a quality award and implementing ISO 9000: is one of these approaches to managing quality better than the other, are they mutually exclusive, or can they be successfully integrated to produce synergy and added value?

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A big day at Brisa... a briefing session during BVQI's ISO 9001 audit – which uncovered zero nonconformities.

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40th annual EOQ Congress (See page 13)

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A tanker taking on fuel at the ISO 9000-certified port of Tuticorin, on the southern tip of India, facing Sri Lanka.

and cleaner oceans'

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A full programme of events included dinner at the Kronprinzenpalais, Berlin, complete with entertainment by local mime artists.

'Safer ships and cleaner oceans'



with ISO 9000-related code

by Captain N. S. Singhal

In brief

"Only genuine participation in safety and quality management on ships will lead to safer ships and cleaner oceans," says Captain Bal, General Manager of ISO 9002-certified Essar Sisco Ship Management Co. Ltd., India, quoted in Captain Singhal's article.

The latter reports on the ISM Code – "the marine equivalent of ISO 9000" – which becomes mandatory for most merchant ships from July 1998, and expresses his belief that the success or failure of this initiative by the industry will hinge on the real commitment of top management.

Inspection and certification of vessels owned by less scrupulous ship owners has become a matter of concern in international shipping circles, he reveals. Assessment bodies "should be strict and uncompromising in their audits," he asserts, to deter "fly-by-night" ship owner/operators from running ships with the primary objective of making money "without concern for their crew, environment and social obligations".

Capt. Singhal also reports on ISO 9000 implementation in the Indian maritime industry, citing Tuticorin Port as the first Indian port to become ISO 9000 certified. Tuticorin has set an example for the remaining 11 major Indian ports to follow in terms of the commitment and quality awareness of staff at all levels, he says, having been part of the team that carried out the port audit.

The only way to good ship management is the quality way

A decision by the SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) Convention is making compliance with the International Safety Management (ISM) Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and Pollution Prevention mandatory for all merchant ships registered with member nations of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

All passenger ships, including high-speed light craft, and oil tankers, chemical tankers, gas carriers, bulk carriers and high-speed cargo craft of 500 gross tonnage and over must comply by 1 July 1998. Other cargo ships and mobile offshore drilling units of 500 gross tonnage and over must comply by 1 July 2002.

The ISM Code can be described as the marine equivalent of ISO 9000. The Code is made up of management system requirements and closely resembles ISO 9002, with the addition of requirements specific to the marine industry. The objective of the latter is to ensure safety at sea and avoidance of damage to the environment.

While ISO 9000 quality system certification is voluntary, unlike the compulsory compliance to the ISM Code, ISO 9000 implementation by the marine industry is gathering momentum.

Many maritime companies question whether the ISM Code certificate will simply be another addition to the many mandatory certifications required on board ship, or if it will really add to the quality and safety of life at sea. To answer this question, it is necessary to understand the limitations of ISM Code certification.

The success or failure of a quality and safety management system that integrates both shipboard and shore-based management depends on three key elements:

- People, including shipowners, ship managers, officers and crew, and the inspection bodies and classification societies,

Only genuine participation in quality and safety management on ships will lead to safer ships and cleaner oceans

- Machinery, and
- Natural forces.

In order of priority, it is people alone that are responsible for the safe functioning of machinery on board every vessel, and for the protection of life, property and the environment while on the high seas. Clearly, a quality and safety management system will only be as good or bad as those who own it, those who certify it, and above all, those who run it.

Shipowner and ship manager

A lack of commitment from the owner or top management in adopting the letter and spirit of the ISM Code could well be the first broken rung on the ladder to a safety management system.

"The only way to good ship management is the quality way," Mr. P. S. Ruia, Chairman and Managing Director of ESSMC (Essar Sisco Ship Management Co. Ltd.)¹⁾, India, has observed. He set the trend at ESSMC by establishing the policy, which was then followed by all staff. The result, in April 1995, was ISM Code certification for the company awarded by Lloyds Register of Shipping (LRS), and ISO 9002 quality certification granted by Lloyds Register Quality Assurance Ltd. (LRQA)²⁾ for the "operation and management of bulk carriers and tankers trading worldwide". ESSMC became the first Indian ship management company to receive such recognition.

Captain Bal, General Manager of the company's Safety and Quality Division, commented: "We fully endorse the IMO philosophy that only genuine participation in quality and safety management on ships will lead to safer ships and cleaner oceans."

Certifiers, surveyors and assessors

Laxity on the part of surveyors and assessors towards a ship owner and his vessel, with the motive of generating more future business, can be a second broken rung in the way of effective safety and quality system implementation.

The example set by those in a position of leadership is the most critical factor for the success or otherwise of quality and safety management system implementation, monitoring and maintenance

The Chairman of Tuticorin Port Trust (right), the first ISO 9000-certified port in the Indian subcontinent, receiving the certificate from Mr. S. Bharat, Lead Assessor of the Indian Register Quality System (IRQS).



Ship and shore staff

The third rung in the ladder to an efficient quality and safety management system is the staff on shore and the crew on board the ships. They will undoubtedly follow the example set by management.

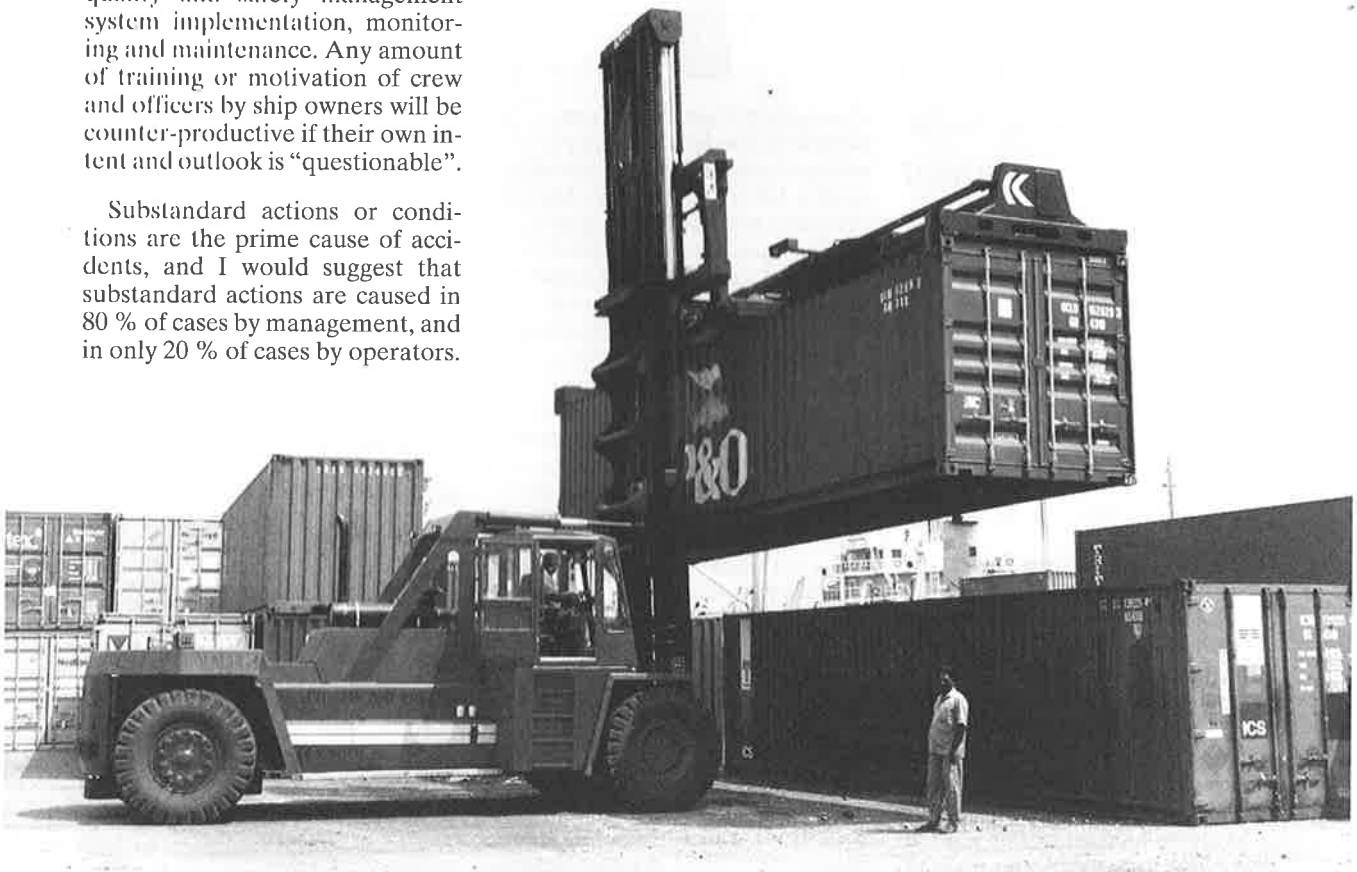
One can conclude that the example set by those in a position of leadership is the most critical factor for the success or otherwise of quality and safety management system implementation, monitoring and maintenance. Any amount of training or motivation of crew and officers by ship owners will be counter-productive if their own intent and outlook is "questionable".

Substandard actions or conditions are the prime cause of accidents, and I would suggest that substandard actions are caused in 80 % of cases by management, and in only 20 % of cases by operators.

audits, in order to communicate the importance of quality and safety to the boardroom of every ship owner and manager.

This would not only encourage a positive attitude towards ISM Code certification, but should also deter "fly-by-night" ship owner/operators from running ships with the primary objective of making

international shipping circles. This has come to prominence because Protection and Indemnity Clubs that had never had cause to doubt their own inspection and certification in the past have now started appointing third-party surveyors to report on the condition of vessels. The result has been a significant reduction in the number of spurious claims.



Stacking containers at ISO 9000-certified Tuticorin Port's Container Terminal.

Maintaining the value of ISM Code certification

Preventing the devaluation of the ISM Code certificate is to a great extent the responsibility of the monitoring bodies and classification societies. They should be strict and uncompromising in their

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money without concern for their crew, environment and social obligations.

Auditing of ISM Codes

The 11 permanent and two associate (India and China) members of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) are adopting a unified approach towards the certification and monitoring of the ISM Code. This will be simplified by the fact that most of the member societies are already carrying out ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 (environmental management system) auditing and certification.

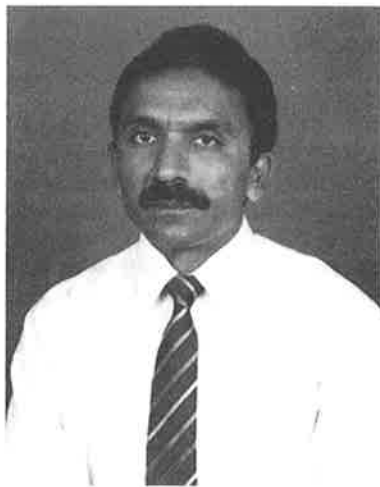
It is for IACS members to realize that their inspection and certification of vessels owned by some of the less scrupulous ship owners has become a matter of concern in

Inspection and certification of vessels owned by less scrupulous ship owners has become a matter of concern in international shipping circles

The responsibility for safeguarding the value of the certificate, and the interests of the maritime industry, its employees, society and the environment in this respect, is very much in the hands of the classification societies. They must demonstrate the highest standards of

competence, integrity, commitment and management in the inspection, certification, and monitoring of the ISM Code certificate.

However, the responsibility for creating a positive, proactive approach to the development of a new and systematic quality and safety management culture in the maritime industry rests with all involved, and not just the classification society.



The author, Captain Naveen Satanand Singhal, is a master mariner and Managing Partner of M/S SAI Consultants⁵⁾. The company provides safety and quality management guidance in ISO 9000, QS-9000, ISM Code and ISO 14000 to private and public enterprises, and also marine consultancy to the shipping industry. During 21 years in the maritime industry, his duties have ranged from port management to shipping construction and captaincy of merchant ships. In addition to his work with SAI, Capt. Singhal also conducts third-party ISO 9000 audits on behalf of certification bodies Det Norske Veritas (DNV) and IRQS.

One organization that needs to follow good management practices in line with ISO 9000 is surely the machinery of government

ISO 9000 and Indian ports

All 12 major ports, and most of the minor and intermediate ports in India, are controlled by the Government, and if there is one organization in particular that needs to follow good management practices in line with ISO 9000, it is surely the machinery of government. This is likely to happen in the years to come. However, the trend has already been established by the Indian Government which now encourages quality management system implementation by all in accordance with ISO 9000.

Tuticorin Port Trust, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Surface Transport of the Indian Government, was the first ISO 9000-certified port on the Indian subcontinent. The port, situated on the southern tip of India, facing Sri Lanka, was certified in February 1996 by Indian Register Quality System (IRQS)³⁾, and has set an example for the remaining 11 ports to follow.

However, quality awareness was born three years previously at Tuticorin and the port staff worked hard for their well deserved certification, while such a culture is in its infancy at the other ports. Time will tell how efficient their systems become.

While measurable results at Tuticorin will still take some months to realize, there has been a strong "quality awakening" among employees at all levels and an awareness of the need to be competitive and results-oriented. In addition to certification, this small and proactive port has been busy preparing for major expansion and development in its aim to become the most prominent in South Asia. Certainly, I became most aware of this endeavour as a member of the IRQS team that carried out the certification audit in December 1995.

"Quality certification of Tuticorin Port Trust will establish a trend leading to improved operation, and increased savings due to reduced operating costs," said IRQS Chief Surveyor In-charge Mr. R. C. Thamba. His organization was the first certification body in India to be accredited by Raad voor Accreditatie (RvA)⁴⁾ of the Netherlands. IRQS is a department of the Indian Register of

Shipping (an associate member of IACS), which has to date issued over 160 ISO 9000 certificates to companies in India.

Although Indian ports might lag behind others, such as the container and conventional cargo divisions of Tilbury Port, in England, which received ISO 9000 certifications in June 1992 and July 1994 respectively, the tide has nevertheless turned towards certification across the industry. In a few years' time, it is reasonable to expect all ship owners, ports, shipping agents, vessels, as well as shippers and consignees, to be ISO 9000-certified.

Quality certification of Tuticorin Port Trust will ... lead to improved operation, and increased savings due to reduced operating costs

When that happens, it is to be hoped that they will all think, speak, write, act and understand each other through the common and harmonious language of ISO 9000! □

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4) Raad voor Accreditatie (RvA), Stationsweg 13F, 3972 KA Driebergen, Netherlands. Tel. + 31 34 381 26 04. Fax + 31 34 381 85 54.

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