

## PRESS RELEASE

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**Alert!** Issue No.38

### Health and welfare matter afloat

Seafarers may be exposed to stresses caused by remoteness, loneliness, fatigue and other problems rarely experienced by those who work ashore. Nobody produces their best work when they are feeling off-colour, or struggling with personal problems, or trying to deal with troubles in the close confines of a ship or thousands of miles away.

The health and welfare of seafarers are not trivial matters but are closely connected to the practical matters of keeping ships and people safe and performing efficiently and well.

This is the main thrust of the latest edition of the International Maritime Human Element Bulletin **Alert!** which focuses on a topic that is important to everyone in the shipping industry afloat or ashore. The reader's attention is seized by a gruesome but eminently believable account of a junior engineer, whose preoccupation with personal problems propels him into a horrible encounter with a watertight door.

In his introduction to **Alert!** Issue No 38, Editor David Squire notes that seafarers have to be both physically and mentally fit to cope with the demands of working and living at sea. But it would be wrong to conclude that the shipping industry has ignored matters of health and welfare – the **Alert!** centrespread summarises a very long list of regulations, recommendations, advice and source material which is entirely devoted to health, welfare and safety. So there is no excuse for suggesting that they have been sidelined!

The Bulletin includes helpful advice on the establishment of Seafarers' Welfare Boards, an integral part of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, which specifies that seafarers should have access to shore-based welfare facilities. Additionally, there is a concise and useful summary of the ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health. These are much more than a paper exercise, comprising the same sort of comprehensive risk-based approach for global shipping which those ashore in developed nations have long enjoyed.

Other articles in **Alert!** Issue No.38 include an explanation of the Sailors' Society initiative on *Wellness at Sea*, which will hopefully feature in future training arrangements and takes a holistic view of seafarer health. While serious depression may be rare, it does amount to more than somebody having an off-day, and there are some helpful hints to ensure that this problem can be recognised at an early stage.

Health and welfare really matter and we need to take them very seriously indeed!

**Ends**

Page 1 of 2

Winner 2005 RINA/Lloyd's Register  
Ship Safety Award  
(Industry Category)

Winner  
2012 Lloyd's List  
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Innovation in Ship Operations Award

*Improving the awareness of the Human Element in the maritime industry*

# Alert!



A Nautical Institute project, sponsored  
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## Notes to editors

The **Alert!** Project – launched in October 2003 – is a campaign to improve the awareness of the human element in the maritime industry. This is a Nautical Institute project, sponsored by the Lloyd's Register Foundation.

Further information about the human element awareness initiative, and electronic copies of **Alert!** can be found at [www.he-alert.org](http://www.he-alert.org).

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Page 2 of 2

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