August/September 2014 News

Introduction

There are several important events taking place in the September and October 2014. The EU funded EBDIG-WFSV Conference will take place on 3 and 4th September 2014 at Coventry University, UK. This is the second EBDIG project funded by the EU. This Conference is sponsored by Royal Institution of Naval Architects (RINA) and many of the papers accepted for presentation will be published in the RINA's Marine Design Journal. This Journal commenced with the first EBDIG project and its first edition includes all the papers presented at that event. For registration and more information about RINA and the conference please see http://www.rina.org.uk/Marine-Design-Registration.

The second main event concerning the MariFuture partners will be ACTS project meeting in Bulgaria on 3 and 4th of October. The ACTS project is an attempt to improve the understanding of Collision Regulations, better their interpretation and hence improve their implementation. Many accidents at sea have been attributed to mis-application of these rules.

The third event is the IMLA (The International Maritime Lecturers Association) Conference which will take place in China at Jimei University for 10-13th October 2014, unfortunately since the EU does not fund dissemination activities outside Europe, it was not feasible to send a Marifuture representative to IMLA this year, however the conference will be closely followed by MariFuture and its proceedings will be studied and reported in November 2014.

ACTS Project

As reported in previous News and due to its importance and relevance to the Marifuture ACTS project it is worth reminding members that in the latest IMLA Newsletter it was disclosed that the Maritime Safety Committee had reviewed and provided their comments on the development of a specific model course for the 1972 Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs). The new model course was proposed by the Turkish Maritime Community to "ensure global standards on the understanding, interpretation and application of the provisions of COLREG".

The IMLA feedback points included the fact the Model Courses are frameworks for Maritime Education providers to develop their training, not a list of concrete knowledge and skills. IMLA also stated that the Model Courses are a set of recommendations for Maritime Education Providers, there is no compulsion to follow or use them. These two points together led IMLA to point out that developing a Model Course might not be the best solution to the problems in teaching and applying COLREGS. IMLA also pointed out that provision for training in COLREGS are already included in Model Courses 7.01 and 7.03, and so any development of additional COLREGS Model Courses should be based on the existing information and guidance included in these documents. IMLA also state their opinion that the IMO has provided clear text on COLREGS and that organisations and Individuals have developed their own Interpretations. IMLA concluded that any COLREG specific accidents were not due to a lack of uniform interpretation of the COLREGS but due to failures in the training - such as lack of simulator time. IMLA suggested that further discussion amongst Maritime Education Institutions needed to take place regarding clarifying COLREGS interpretations, rather than developing a Model Course.

These conclusions from IMLA are encouraging for MariFuture's involvement in the ACTS project which has bought together Maritime Education Institutions and SME's to research the differing interpretations of COLREGS across the EU, the differing ways COLREGS are taught, and to develop new training materials and guidelines to make learning and teaching COLREGS easier - thus bettering understanding of the rules and ensuring a better ability to apply them in emergency situations to sea.

More information on the ACTs project can be found in the MariFuture progress reports and the project website: http://ecolregs.com/.

SeaTALK Project

The SeaTALK project partners are working on a comprehensive Maritime English Course content. Their work will take into account IMLA's recent announcement in its latest newsletter that it will be reviewing the IMO Maritime English Model Course (3.17) to ensure it is in line with the 2010 Manilla STCW amendments. The completed revision will be submitted to the IMO by the 24th October 2014 to the IMO Validation Panel for review.

It worth noting that the existing content of the 3.17 Model Course will be largely retained, with an additional section added containing guidance on how the Knowledge, Understanding and Proficiency statements contained in the Manila amendments can be used to enhance Maritime English Training Programmes.

As reported in the previous News, MariFuture partners are working through the SeaTALK project to develop a comprehensive framework for the effective teaching, learning and assessment of Maritime English. The SeaTALK framework is being directly linked to the European Common Framework levels, the new ECVET Framework, as well as the IMO 3.17 Maritime English Model Course. With close links to numerous free online learning materials for Maritime English and the MarTEL Tests (www.martel.pro) the SeaTALK framework will be a holistic way for Maritime Education Institutions to embed Maritime English into their curriculum and ensure the highest standards.

Several of the SeaTALK/MariFuture partners are members of the IMLA-IMEC steering committee, as well as being members of the IMLA Working Group assigned to revise the 3.17 Model Course. As such these partners will work to ensure not only the quality of the new Model Course and SeaTALK framework, but also ensure that the SeaTALK framework truly reflects and includes all aspects on the Model Course revisions.

More information about the SeaTALK project can be found in the MariFuture progress reports and the project website: http://seatalk.pro/

Written by: Miss Faye Mundy & Professor Dr Reza Ziarati
Reviewed by: Dr Martin Ziarati