

BIMCO urges cyber resilience focus – Reflections 2018



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International shipping association BIMCO noted in its latest issue of Reflections that the past year had been a wake-up call to many when it comes to cyber security, and that risk was likely to grow.

BIMCO said that it would “continue to build awareness about cyber risks and encourage shipowners and shipmanagers to implement the industry guidelines”. It felt that doing basic cyber risk assessments for ships in a fleet would be a good first step for many shipowners, while on the technical side the aim should be to build ships that were resilient towards cyber-attacks.



The association said that it was co-operating with classification societies, shipyards and equipment manufacturers to establish how best to equip new ships with cyber secure networks, contemporary and robust software, and high-quality components. If the industry is to avoid repeats of last year’s malware attacks onshore in the form of NotPetya and WannaCry, which cost the industry hundreds of millions of dollars, then awareness of and preparation for potential cyber-attacks should be a key part of any ship’s risk assessment.

In June 2017, the IMO decided to use the ISM Code as the regulatory framework for cyber risk management in the shipping industry. The ISM Code already includes the assessment of identified risks to ships, personnel and the environment, BIMCO said it therefore believed that existing contingency plans (in many cases) could be used if a ship was cyber-compromised.

As a result of this decision, the industry will have to address cyber risk in ships’ Safety Management Systems no later than the first annual verification of the Document of Compliance after January 1st 2021.

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