Past issues
IUMI Political Forum

Loss of ship records

Brief description

When a ship changes ownership, all too often the outgoing technical manager removes the Planned Maintenance System (PMS) data which contains all maintenance and service records from the ship. Consequently, there will be no fluid take-over of the ship by the new crew, no maintenance records left on board, and no list of short and long term maintenance to be carried out. This increases the risks of required maintenance being overlooked, of incorrect handling of equipment, and of serious breakdowns due to pure lack of knowledge of the ship's service history.

One main reason for not submitting the relevant records to the buyer is that the outgoing manager may want to remove any licensed computer programmes developed by them or purchased and installed. They may want to remove their ISM manuals and any other documentation which is part of their branded maintenance system developed and improved over many years. However, this should not be extended to include historical maintenance records and other important information which should remain as a service history with the ship throughout its life.

Under most insurance conditions the insurer will not be liable for ordinary wear and tear as this is not a fortuitous event the insurance is paid to cover. Hence, it is an important task of the surveyor, claims handler or adjuster to check and evaluate whether damage is caused by wear and tear.

Classification survey records will always be available to the owner of the ship, and a new owner may obtain these through the present owner giving instructions to the classification society. The separate Continuous Machinery Survey (CMS) records carried out by the Chief Engineer are stored in the on board PMS. When the PMS data is removed, this also means that the CMS records are lost to the new owner and the classification society.

The type of information that is typically lost includes:

- Records of main engine cylinder liner calibrations showing the amount of wear and previous wear rates.
- Generator engine overhaul reports showing the amount of wear to various components parts, ovality readings for connecting rods, and the presence of any non-standard (undersize) crankshaft bearings.
- Dry dock reports showing the work carried out at the last dry docking.

- Ultrasonic steel thickness measurement reports showing the condition of the full plating and structure.
- Historical lubricating oil analysis results showing the nature of any wear or contamination of the main engine, generator engine and stern tube bearing lubricating oils.
- Historical fuel oil analysis results, showing the condition of the fuel oil on board at the point of change of ownership.
- Record of components and spares used during routine and unscheduled maintenance, including use of non-manufacturers' parts.
- The remaining spares inventory at the time of transfer.
- Whether manufacturers or non-standard replacement parts were used during a repair.

The IMO International Safety Management (ISM) Code, Clause 10, includes reference to records and procedures related to the maintenance of the ship and equipment. However, to reflect the intention of the Code and allow historical maintenance records and service history to follow the ship throughout its life, a modification would be necessary.

The BIMCO Sale form 2012 does not contain any mentioning about ship records, planned maintenance system or other records of maintenance and repairs. Through additional clauses in the sale and purchase agreement requiring maintenance records, operating reports and spares inventory, a significant improvement in the risk profile would be achieved.
Transfer of maintenance records could also be made a condition of class through amendments in the IACS Procedure for Transfer of Class, PR1A.

Relevant authority / organisations and documents

– **ISM Code** – Clause 10: Maintenance of the ship and equipment with guidelines.
– **Sale form 2012.**
– **JHC Circular 2010/006** - Loss of Ship records, 23 June 2010.
– **IACS PR1A** – Procedure for Transfer of Class.
  • JHC/IUMI letter presented in meeting with IACS 21 July 2014. Reply letter from Philippe Donche-Gay, new IACS Council chairman 25 July 2014; issue will be taken up with General Policy Group. IACS reply 4 December 2014; following consideration, proposal to amend PR1A declined.

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About IUMI The International Union of Marine Insurance e.V. (IUMI) is a non-profit association established for the purpose of protecting, safeguarding and advancing insurers‘ interests in marine and all types of transport insurance. It also provides an essential forum to discuss and exchange ideas, information and statistics of common interest for marine underwriters and in exchange with other marine professionals. IUMI currently represents 46 national and marine market insurance and reinsurance associations.

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– act as a focal point and representative voice on behalf of the marine and transport insurance industries in dialogue with all interested parties,
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– bring together marine insurance practitioners to facilitate the exchange of technical information and best practice, and
– provide information on positions taken by IUMI.

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