

The Swedish Shipowner's Association

Maritime

Safety Policy



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The board of the Swedish Shipowners' Association adopted the following maritime safety policy on 19 December, 2002.

The most important link in the maritime safety chain is the shipping company. The Swedish Shipowners' Association holds the view that the shipping company link must be of the highest quality. The Association and its members shall always promote maritime safety on a high level. Maritime safety is one component in the Association's core activities and a fundamental prerequisite of the business activities carried on by the shipping companies.

Maritime safety is a very important concept, which covers an advanced and multifaceted system of players and other factors.. If one link in the maritime safety chain breaks, the consequences could be catastrophic for people, the environment, ships and cargo.

A number of points, which are important to maritime safety, are described in this policy together with a description of the Swedish Shipowners' Association's focus and ambitions in this area.

The Swedish Shipowners' Association's maritime safety policy in brief

1. A good maritime safety culture is the basis of all maritime safety work.
2. Maintaining and developing a high maritime safety level are conditional on an effective organisation.
3. The personnel are the key to a high level of maritime safety.
4. Shipping should be a safe link in a safe transport system.
5. Continuous and preventive maintenance results in safe ships.
6. Uniform regulations are an important tool for achieving a high level of maritime safety worldwide.
7. External inspections should function as a safety valve so that substandard ships are removed from the market.
8. The shipping industry should participate actively in research and development in the field of maritime safety.

1. A good maritime safety culture is the basis of all maritime safety work.



For a shipping company, a high maritime safety level is a prerequisite of doing serious business. Consequently, maritime safety work must be a natural part of its day-to-day business activities.

Maritime safety is a broad concept. It includes measures affecting everything from worldwide transport systems to the individual seafarer. An appropriate starting-point for creating a good maritime safety culture is the insight that a high level of maritime safety will always be profitable. This means that a business concept that includes a maritime safety philosophy is not only good for maritime safety but also makes good commercial sense. It is important to show transport customers and the general public that maritime safety work is taken very seriously. After the introduction of the ISM Code (International Safety Management Code), the level of maritime safety has risen substantially, but we must always strive to be even better.

With a good maritime safety culture as a platform, we in the Swedish shipping industry will consolidate Sweden's position as a nation with very high maritime safety. From an international perspective, the Swedish shipping industry has a very high level of maritime safety. This is a tradition we must preserve and develop. Shipping companies are investing in ships with innovative safety arrangements, there is active involvement in international maritime safety work and Swedish shipping companies and ships were first in the world to be ISM-certified. However, maritime safety work is a constantly changing process with always more that can be done.

2. Maintaining and developing a high maritime safety level are conditional on an effective organisation.

Translating words into deeds is very much a question of being organised. Consequently, when it comes to realising the maritime safety promises made at a strategic level, a smoothly functioning organisation both ashore and on board is a prerequisite. This is particularly true of the interaction between the shore-based organisation and the shipboard organisation. They must be integrated into a single unit with the same goals. The distance between these groups

must be made as small as possible and the importance of communicating cannot be overemphasised.

The ultimate responsibility for the shipping company's maritime safety lies with its management. The shipping company's commitment has a decisive effect on the level of maritime safety. An important task for the Swedish Shipowners' Association is to support its member companies in this work by participating in the organisations and

networks working to promote greater maritime safety.

Short decision-making processes simplify the work on safety and the more strategic decisions are brought closer to reality. At many small shipping companies, the principal owners and part-owners are actively involved in the day-to-day activities ashore and on board. In such cases, the connection between management and ships is particularly clear.

An organisation model widely used to achieve similar advantages in larger shipping companies is so-called onboard management. In practice, this means that the personnel on board are responsible to a large extent for their maritime safety work. This work consists of carrying out inspections, identifying deficiencies and taking measures to rectify them on an ongoing basis.

From an international perspective, the Swedish shipping companies are well organised. Onboard management is commonly practised and decision-making is fast and informal.





3. The personnel are the key to a high level of maritime safety.

A ship's maritime safety is ultimately determined by the crew's actions on board. A single human mistake can destroy in a moment what has taken years to build up. Instilling a high level of safety awareness in the crew is perhaps the most important job when it comes to eliminating mistakes due to the human factor. Education, training and practice are important measures, but a sense of well-being also plays a central part.

The ship as a workplace must be attractive if the employees are to feel at home. The working and living environ-

ments are important factors, as is a good choice of recreational activities. The individual's well-being should be seen from a more long-term perspective where personal development, internal education/training and career opportunities play an important role.

Personnel who enjoy their work have a positive impact on maritime safety work. Sweden has come far, both as regards working environment, personnel policy and education/training. Our maritime officer education and training have a good reputation internationally and every

year, high-class and competent ship's officers graduate from the maritime universities in Gothenburg and Kalmar. Other personnel on board have received a first-class education in the maritime programs at the Swedish upper secondary school. There is a high standard at sea in terms of both work and leisure time and Swedish shipping companies run comprehensive internal education/training programs. The activities on board Swedish ships are both efficient and well organised.

4. Shipping should be a safe link in a safe transport system.

Transportation is often arranged in the form of networks where the actual voyage is only one link in the chain. The big challenge for the players in the shipping market is to satisfy the demands for precise transportation made by industry at the same time as maintaining a high level of maritime safety. However, these different interests do not conflict with each other; high maritime safety contributes to high transport quality. Consequently, it is important to get the transport customers to realise that there is a connection between high maritime safety and high transport quality.

A reliable infrastructure is a fundamental prerequisite of a safe voyage. The infrastructure consists of more than just safe shipping lanes, and setting up special reporting and traffic surveillance facilities in waters with heavy traffic is becoming increasingly important. With “online” traffic information, transport efficiency can be maximised.

With Sweden’s geographical location in Europe, where shipping interacts directly with rail and road traffic, the system perspective will in all likelihood become increasingly important in our waters in the future. However, system safety is not only a question of

monitoring and IT. Safe operation of ships is still fundamental. The development of organisation, technology and equipment is another important issue. Other measures for enhancing maritime safety are efficient routines for reporting and processing incidents.



5. Continuous and preventive maintenance results in safe ships.

Without safe ships there is no safe shipping. Building new ships sounds good, but it is not the only option. Developing new ships requires enormous resources. Continuous maintenance is also a long-term and serious strategy. Shipping companies with an explicit policy of maintaining their ships contribute to safe shipping just as much as shipping companies that build new ships. Gaining acceptance for a natural maintenance philosophy is an important goal for the industry.

There is, of course, no conflict between a maintenance philosophy and the development of new ships. On the contrary, a maintenance philosophy serves as a complement. Even new ships require maintenance from the very beginning and the aim must be to operate ships that perform optimally over a long period of time. Modern ship designs, which are based on, among other things, all the experience gained from earlier tonnage, offer the best prerequisites of high maritime safety. Without well-planned maintenance programs, the quality of new ships deteriorates rapidly.

Irrespective of age, ships must be continuously maintained at a high level. Swedish shipping companies, both large and small, have a long tradition of thorough and systematic

ship maintenance with an emphasis on preventive measures. A maintenance philosophy is part of the shipping companies' business concept. They

utilise the experience gained earlier to develop new solutions that promote safety. This is a tradition we in Sweden must both safeguard and learn from.



6. Uniform regulations are an important tool for achieving a high level of maritime safety worldwide.

Maritime safety regulations are the cement in the work on safety. The purpose of these regulations should be that the safety work carried out by shipping companies, authorities, organisations and other players involved reflects society's demands for safe shipping. A high level of maritime safety is in everybody's interest. It is for this reason that it is important that the maritime safety regulations are formulated in the right way, are set at a reasonable level and have reasonable transitional periods.

A body of regulations must first and foremost consist of general and functional regulations and not be characterised by mandatory regulation of details. The regulations should be the same all over the world. A single, general body of regulations prevents distortion from arising in the competition between shipping companies. In addition, there is no ambiguity as to when, how, where and why different regulations should be applied. This simplifies matters for the shipping companies, flag states, port states and classification societies.

Since the shipping industry operates mostly in an international environment, the Swedish Shipowners' Association holds the view that the regulations for enhancing maritime safety should be

drawn up within the framework of IMO (International Maritime Organisation), thus making them global in scope. Maritime safety in Europe is also regulated by means of rules and directives issued by the EU. A European Maritime Security Agency has been established. The aim is to create a high, harmonized and efficient level of maritime safety standard within the community. The Swedish Shipowners' Association feels that international regulations should be prioritised and kept at a high

level. It is important to be active in the work carried out by IMO and the EU and, as a result, be able to participate in the international development of regulations. Via its office in Brussels, the Swedish Shipowners' Association has intensified its monitoring of maritime safety issues at the EU level. This means that the Association can make sure that the regulations are drawn up so that the high Swedish ambitions are reflected in the international regulations.





7. External inspections should function as a safety valve so that substandard ships are removed from the market.

The aim of external inspections is to check that the maritime safety regulations are really followed. These inspections are carried out partly by national authorities and partly by classification societies. A special form of inspection is the so-called Port State Control. In contrast to other inspections, this inspection is carried out without prior warning by the shipping authority in the country where the ship is located at the time. Since this type of inspection is carried out by independent authorities, the results are an excellent measure of the condition of different countries' fleets. The best nations are included on a so-called white list and it is worth mentioning that Swedish ships are at the top of this list. The Association's ambition is that Sweden should always

be as high up as possible on the white list.

Like the port state authorities, the classification societies also carry out inspections of the condition of ships. Deficiencies in this work can jeopardise maritime safety. Flag states without quality-assured routines, which allow substandard ships to be registered to their flag, are also held responsible for any deficiencies, defects, etc. Unfortunately, there are loopholes exploited by unscrupulous shipping companies and these must be closed at any cost. This can be achieved by means of more efficient inspections, better insight and improved documentation.

When it comes to preventive maritime safety work, prevention is better than

cure. Internal inspections should thus be a central feature of a maritime safety system. A well working system for reporting of accidents and incidents is an important tool. Analysis of incidents and lesson to be learned are important methods to prevent mistakes not to be repeated. Regular internal inspections by the shipping company enable it to keep its ships updated in relation to the regulations.

The Shipowners' Association considers internal inspections to be the best way to comply with the international maritime safety regulations. Consequently, internal inspections should be encouraged. Quality tonnage and well-managed shipping companies must be rewarded with a reduced number of external inspections.



8. The shipping industry should participate actively in research and development in the field of maritime safety.

Research is the link between experience gained and new ideas. The development of new solutions is extremely important for maritime safety, particularly from a more long-term perspective.

The research field is a large one, but with a special focus on technology, equipment and behavioural science. Growing attention is being directed towards the human factor, organisation and a systems approach. Viewed from a wider perspective, there are closely related fields that make the field of maritime safety well suited to

interdisciplinary research. Maritime safety has to do with the environment, logistics and national economy but also the safety of the general public. This makes it easier to understand why maritime safety is so important, not only for shipping but also for society as a whole.

The practical experience existing in the shipping industry and closely related areas must, of course, be an important source of inspiration for research on maritime safety.

The research into maritime safety has been concentrated to the maritime academy. By gathering all its resources, Sweden has built up a competitive competence centre. This research should be carried out in close cooperation with shipping companies and other organisations concerned.

The Swedish Shipowners' Association

– a trade association for the Swedish shipping industry.

The Association works closely with the Swedish Government and Parliament, ministries, the Swedish National Maritime Administration and other interested parties in the maritime industries.

Areas of competence: economic policy, the environment, maritime safety, nautical science, IT, logistics and information.

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