A Seafarer's Perspective about keeping it simple

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Introduction

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Chief Officer on Product Tankers (Oil and Chemical) since 2011

Commenced sailing in 2002

Some limited experience in Quality Management

Key Topics

* Can we involve ship's crew in drafting new procedures and improving the ISM system?
* Using cloud based systems offshore
* Facilitating communication with the office

Common Prejudice

"Managers don't know the reality on board"

"Seafarers don't care enough"

Questions to Shore Personnel

* How many of your Captains and Senior Officers do you know personally?

* Do you know the daily routine on board?

* Do you know the hierarchy of ranks on board and their responsibilities?

* What is your preferred means of communication?

Questions to Senior Officers

* Do you know the key personnel in the office?

* Do you know how standard processes are handled ashore?

* Do you know how the office is organised (departments)

* What is your preferred means of communication?

Bottleneck of communication
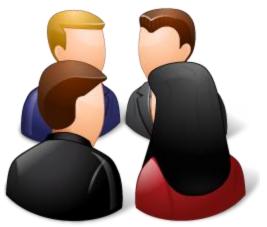
Checklists vs. actual job

Introduction of new procedures

* Shipboard Operation Manuals tend to grow
  → growing administrative workload
* Procedures often designed to comply with regulations / provide evidence of compliance
* Procedures vs. Seamanship and common sense
* Acceptance of newly introduced procedures among seafarers often very low

Involving the crew

* Seafarers usually not included in the process of drafting procedures
* Feedback of crew often too late (procedures already approved)
* Crew to review new procedures on board during operation
* Involvement of Seafarers could be established during
  * Meetings ashore
  * During superintendent visits on board
  * Via electronic media

Communication

* Different background of crew
* Processes, structure and responsible persons ashore often not well known
* Difficulties to communicate in non-native language
* Loss of motivation due to responses taking too long
* Crew sometimes scared of reporting problems to Office or superiors

Means of communication

* E-mail
  * Limited access
  * Exchange of larger data packages often failing
  * Usually only access by Captain
* Phone
  * Language barriers
  * Different time zones / weekends
  * Often very expensive
* Instant Messaging
  * Rarely used, usually on private devices
  * First choice for private communication with relatives/friends

Cloud-based software

* Work offline / synchronise whenever connection available
* Implementation of different modules / applications
* User created content
* Potentially reducing paperwork
* Risk of redundancy, when not properly incorporated in company's ISM
* Depends on powerful IT infrastructure / broadband internet

Example CloudShipManager

Modules in use:

- Noon Reports
- Bunker Orders
- Crew List and Crew Planning
- Crew Assessment Reports
- Resting Hours Records
- Payroll
- Disturbance Reports
- Near Miss Reports
- Risk Assessment
- Blog

Useful Functions:

- Purchase Orders and Stock Control
- Weather Reports and Routeing
- Resting Hours with Overtime Records and Watch Planner
- Risk Assessment with work permit
- Forum or Port Database
- Document Archive
- Instant Messaging and/or Chat function

Summary

* Know the processes on board and the people running the vessel
* Make sure, your crew understands how your company works
* Use simple and direct means of communication
* Provide a smart software solution and hardware with broadband internet connection
* Circulate new procedures before final release
* Motivate the crew to get involved