

Abstract

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Applying the ISM Code to Enhance Maritime Safety

A major benefit of the ISM Code is that it encourages lessons to be learned from incidents. Although these incidents may not be significant, they could, in other circumstances, have endangered life and the environment. By learning lessons, safety procedures can be reviewed and amended to reduce risk of occurrence. Global improvement in safety management as a result of ISM Code implementation is dependent on the willingness of flag States and companies to investigate incidents and share the safety lessons without looking for someone to blame. The sharing of responsibility between companies and interested States will increase the chance that a thorough investigation is undertaken and effective safety action taken. Implementation of the ISM Code offers the opportunity for the industry to move away from a culture biased towards blame to one of shared sense of personal responsibility for safety throughout the organization. It is the shipping companies who can provide the driving force needed for this cultural change.