

Editorial
From the Editor-in-Chief
Professor Chris Bellamy



Welcome to the third issue of the *International Journal of Maritime Crime and Security*. The first two issues, published in February and September 2020, have attracted much interest for which we, the Editors, are deeply grateful. So here is Volume 2, Issue 1.

The World remains convulsed by the pandemic. New, more transmissible variants, now known by letters from the Greek alphabet have emerged and spread like wildfire. Thanks to the miracles of modern technology, however, we at the Centre for Business and Economic Research, UK have been able to continue business online. On 10-12 June we held a very successful 10th International Conference on International Business and Economic Development with delegates participating from around the World using Zoom. Here in the UK, we have achieved vaccine roll-out unequalled elsewhere, apart possibly from Israel. And one of the vaccines, I am proud to say, was developed at my own first university. Oxford, with the international pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca.

It has been an extraordinary few months for maritime crime and security. The most spectacular incident, at least from a media and pictorial viewpoint, was on 23 March 2021 when the giant 200,000ton container ship *Ever Given* ran aground in the Suez Canal and was refloated after blocking it for nearly a week. The Suez Canal carries some twelve percent of the World's trade by volume and *Lloyd's List* estimated the cost of the blockage, with ships queuing up at both ends of the Canal, in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, at over \$9 billion per day, this is equivalent to \$400 million worth of trade per hour or \$6.7 million per minute! *Ever Given* was carrying around 20,000 Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs)-maritime containers. At 400 metres long it is 'Suezmax', the biggest ship that the Suez Canal can accommodate. She was presumably designed with that purpose in mind, and it is unlikely that the Egyptian authorities will be able to reduce the permitted size of ships transitting that critical choke point. The Suez Canal has been closed five times in its 152-year history, and with twelve percent of the World's trade passing through it, the Canal remains perhaps the most vulnerable choke point of all. The *Ever-Given* incident will no doubt give further incentives to exploit the 'polar silk road' the Arctic Sea route which will cut the time taken to travel from Dalian in China to Rotterdam by two weeks.

However, the blockage of the Suez Canal by one vessel for a week pale into relative insignificance compared with the fall-out from Covid-19 in China. A report on the Al-Jazeera news channel on 16 June revealed that the port of Yian Tan in Guangdong Province was operating at between 30 and 40 percent capacity, Yian Tian handles some 24 percent of China's exports.¹ Maersk estimated that the effect of the crippling of the port would be far worse than the relatively short-term impact of the Suez Canal closure.

¹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/inside-story/2021/6/16/could-a-shipping-crisis-derail-economic-recovery-from-covid-19>

Guy Platten, Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Shipping reckoned three times worse. Shipping costs from China to Europe have risen by 300 percent in the past year and from China to the west coast of the US by 200 percent. The loading of ships has been delayed by weeks. The port's operating capacity has been cut by 40 percent. Among its activities, it handles at least thirteen million containers a year. That activity is now at 30 percent of the usual level. That has had a critical effect on the supply of microchips, of which China is the leading world supplier. That has slowed down production of numerous items, including the automotive industry, around the globe.

Another, much worse container ship catastrophe occurred on 20 May 2021. *X-Press Pearl* was a Singapore-registered Super Eco 2700 class ship which had only entered service in February. The 37,000-deadweight tonne (DWT) vessel was about 186 metres long. She could carry 2,743 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) although only 1486 were on board at the time. Among the cargo was 25 tonnes of nitric acid, which started to leak, and other chemicals, including sodium hydroxide (caustic soda (cosmetics and low-density polyethylene (LDPE) pellets. On 20 May 2021, *X-Press Pearl* caught fire off the coast of Colombo, Sri Lanka. She was moored in the outer harbour awaiting a berth. By 27 May it had been engulfed in flames and was declared a 'constructive total loss' the insurance term for a complete write-off. She was still afloat, and the fire was thought to be under control by Sri Lankan firefighters by the late hours of 27 May 2021. The 25 crew on board were all evacuated safely. After burning for 12 days, the vessel sank on 2 June as it was being towed away to deeper waters.² The incident was deemed the worst marine ecological disaster in Sri Lankan history for the chemical products and plastic pellets that spilled.

The incident highlights the link between maritime safety – the leaking nitric acid which may have reacted with other chemicals to cause an explosion – and maritime security, in terms of the effects of the spilled cargo on the environment. More than 500 fishing boats were ordered to stop fishing and the environmental damage will take months if not years to clear up. And the likely failure to observe safety regulations is also maritime crime.

The incident has highlighted imbalances in container supply which may have led to carelessness when containers are loaded. The international freight transport insurer TT Club warns against cutting corners when it comes structural integrity, cleanliness, and cargo-worthiness of those that are loaded. Mike Yarwood, TT's Managing Director, Loss Prevention commented,

The ripple effects of various national lockdowns, interruptions in trade and less predictable peaks and troughs in cargo volumes has resulted in severe imbalances of container equipment "Compounding the challenge, national stay and work at home policies have resulted in unexpected surges in consumer demand particularly for e-commerce goods, translating to beyond peak demand for empty containers in the dominant manufacturing centres of Asia. These circumstances must not be allowed to lead to the widespread use of inferior container equipment or that which does not comply with industry standards³

Vitaly Tyutkalo, the Russian captain of the ship was arrested on Monday June 14th in Sri Lanka and was granted bail later the same day. Sri Lanka is seeking \$40m in damages from ship operator X-Press Feeders due to losses incurred by the island nation after last month's fire. Which has not resulted in an oil leak but caused significant micro-plastic pollution of the country's beaches, as well as having an unknown long-term impact on the local fishing industry. Tyutkalo appeared in Colombo's High Court on Monday, but no formal charges were laid. 'He was brought before the court on suspicion that he had committed an

² 'Fears of environmental disaster as oil-laden ship sinks off Sri Lanka, BBC News. 2 June 2021.

³ TT Club 'Are your containers fit for purpose?' London, 17 June 2021

offence under the Marine Pollution Prevention Act', a police official said. The next court hearing is scheduled for July 14.

The cases of both the *X-Press Pearl* off Sri Lanka and the *Ever Given* in the Suez Canal are likely to end up in an Admiralty Court. This could well be in the UK as the insurance policies will be under UK law, unless they go to arbitration (to reduce costs and ensure confidentiality), which could be in Hong Kong. In the former case, there is an ongoing argument about the leaking container identified in Qatar port) where the blame may well rest with the company that processed the container and declared it ready for shipment. In the case of the *Ever Given*, there is an argument between the P&I (professional and indemnity) insurer and the Suez Canal Authority about the accident. The likelihood is that both cases will take years to resolve.

On a more positive note, we shall shortly see an unprecedented voyage across the Atlantic by a ship called the *Mayflower*, named after the ship, that took the Pilgrims to New England more than 400 years ago. Not a sailing ship, this time, but an Uninhabited Surface Vessel (USV) – a maritime drone - captained and navigated by Artificial Intelligence (AI). The captain and a "navigator" are versed in the rules of avoiding collisions at sea. The ship's AI captain was developed by Marine AI and is guided by an expert system based on IBM technologies, including automation software widely used by the financial sector. The technology could someday help crewed vessels navigate difficult situations and facilitate low-cost exploration of the oceans that cover 70 percent of the Earth's surface.

The new *Mayflower*



Over its roughly three-week trip, the *Mayflower* Sea drone will sail through the Isles of Scilly and over the site of the lost Titanic to land in Plymouth, Massachusetts, as the colonists on the first *Mayflower* did more than 400 years ago. This sleek new vessel, however, will carry experiments instead of people, and

⁴ <https://insurancemarineneews.com/insurance-marine-news/x-press-pearl-captain-arrested/>

has more room for experiments because it has been designed without sleeping quarters, a galley, or heads. Up to 700kg of experiments can be housed in modular compartments inspired by the design of the payload bay of a space shuttle. The 15-metre-long aluminium trimaran is solar-powered and is capable of speeds of up to 10 knots (20km/h). It has a backup diesel generator. The ship cost \$1.3 million to build and is owned by the not-for-profit marine research organization ProMare in partnership with computer-tech company IBM the ship will sample the water for pollutants and study marine life during its voyage. It will also trial its computer systems.⁵

The last six months have seen some changes at CBER-UK and the IJMCS Editorial Board. The Managing Editor for the first two issues, Dr Martin Wright, has decided to forego that role, but remains on the Editorial Board. Dr Wright, a former police officer specialising in anti-fraud operations, will bring his expertise on criminology and crime science to bear on the anti-crime side of the journal. Dr Wright played a leading role in setting up the *Journal* and navigating it through the tricky initial stages of inviting articles, refereeing them and publication. He remains a senior member of the team and we are all grateful to him for his leadership in the opening year. The Managing Editor role is taken by Peter Cook, whose initial vision led to the creation of the Journal and who initially had the role of Asia-Pacific Editor. A former Royal Marines officer, now resident in New South Wales, Australia, Peter will continue to provide expertise on the Indo-Pacific, as well as overseeing the vetting and double-blind refereeing of articles and continuing to provide book reviews.

We have also just received sad news. Mark T Jones passed away on 28 June 2021. He was a key member of the Centre for Business and Economic Research, UK and was Director of its Centre for Innovative Leadership Navigation for the past twelve years. In both capacities he accompanied the creation of the present Journal. We pass our condolences and sympathies to his family and relatives at this most difficult time.

In the full-length double-blind refereed articles in this issue, we feature the second part of Katinka Svanberg's study of private maritime guards as an innovative means to fulfil states' duty to cooperate in the repression of maritime piracy. We then feature an exclusive insight into a closely related issue, the handling of an incident of armed robbery at sea (it was not technically piracy as it took place within the territorial sea of a coastal state), in the Gulf of Guinea. This is by Spyridon Chiotis, who was a manager in the company involved and used the experience for his dissertation for his MSc In Maritime Operations and Management at City, University of London. Originally founded in 1894, City University joined the Federal University of London in 2016. We then feature a highly scientific article analysing Climate Change and Its Challenges for the Marine Environment with

Special Reference to Ecological Aspects in Bangladesh. Among the environmental challenges the article lists marine mucilage, a result of the mixing of phytoplankton and bacteria from untreated sewage. The same phenomenon, colloquially and unpleasantly referred to as 'sea snot', has recently affected Turkey and now, Greece, Besides ruining beaches, this grey slime kills fish and sinks beneath the waves killing seabed life.⁶

In the 'Sources for Maritime Crime and Security' section, following on from the previous issue, Peter Cook continues his analysis of on-line sources which have become even more increasingly important the prolonged periods of lock-down.

We then move to more traditional book review of the UK's 16 March 2021 *Global Britain in a Competitive Age Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*. This is not only the

⁵ <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/6/14/mayflower-ai-sea-drone-readies-maiden-transatlantic-voyage> 14 June 2021

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2021/jun/09/sea-snot-plagues-the-turkish-coast-in-pictures> 9 June 2021

most extensive *Review* in a generation but embraces the holistic fusion of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy in an unprecedented way. However, several experts giving evidence to Parliamentary committees have expressed scepticism as to whether the vast plans outlined for Global Britain can be achieved, given the resources that are likely to be available. Then we have a review of Joshua Tallis's *the War for Muddy Waters: Pirates Terrorists Traffickers and Maritime Insecurity*, originally published in 2019.

Our thanks go to all those who have submitted articles so far and, in advance, to those planning to submit in the future. And also, to our reviewers. Our next issue is due out in February 2022. **Please submit articles!** Full length academic articles are double-blind refereed by experts in the field, and to those who have acted as referees I also extend our thanks. Such articles meet the criteria of 'research outputs' for exercises such as, for example, the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF). We will also publish shorter articles and comment pieces and book reviews or reviews of online sources, which do not need to be double-blind refereed and can clearly be identified as such.

Based on our experience so far, we urge contributors to follow the guidance contained in our website <http://www.ijmcs.co.uk/about>. Go to the website and then click on Submit, and then scroll down to submission guidelines. Alternatively, you can go to Issues, and see what articles which we have published look like. We request that contributors use the Harvard referencing system (see <https://libraryguides.vu.edu.au/harvard/getting-started-with-harvard-referencing#:~>) with references indicated in brackets and a list of all references cited at the end, in alphabetical order by author(s)' surname where relevant. Footnotes of the 'what I *really* meant to say was ...' type should be avoided. If it matters, please say it in the text! Thus far, I have not imposed this requirement but in order to have consistency we shall do so in the future. The other issue that arises often is figures, maps, and diagrams. Many authors do not think graphically and lift maps, diagrams, and other graphics off the internet. Often, they arrive fuzzy and, in some cases, illegible. We want to be able to produce a hard copy edition of the *Journal* but coloured illustrations are prohibitively expensive. Illustrations which are meant to be in colour often do not work in monochrome. Therefore, please supply illustrations in clear monochrome and preferably in clear, sharp black and white. An illustration may not fit onto the page directly adjacent to relevant text, so it should always be keyed as in ('see Figure 1)', and then identified as such directly below or above the picture. Please do not just drop a picture in and leave the reader to work out what it is referring to!

That is enough from me. Enjoy the third issue and please submit articles.

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