



Times Marine *Aalmar Surveys*



# Group Newsletter

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## Group CEO's Message

### **"The shipping market is still flat?"**

The extended Eid holiday is fast approaching in the Muslim calendar, the weather is cooling dramatically in London, and at last there are no more brush fires around Houston. On the business front, P&I work has been steady throughout the month, as has project cargo and claims work but the Pre-Purchase inspections are shifting more toward our banker and lawyer clients. This may be a possibly sign that the shipping market is not only a little flat, but that some owners and operators may still be in financial difficulty.

In this issue we cover the serious consequences resulting from putting your vessel to sea when it is ill maintained and manned by possible sub-standard crew.

Some of you out there are spoiling it for the rest, by not paying your bills the historically somewhat "gentlemanly" Aalmar payment terms may soon have to be tightened up which may cause delays with Surveyor attendance whilst secured payment is put in place...this will not affect our regular clients of course.

On a lighter note a flying Corvette plunged in to the marina outside the window of the Houston office last Saturday night. No one was hurt except the driver's pride.

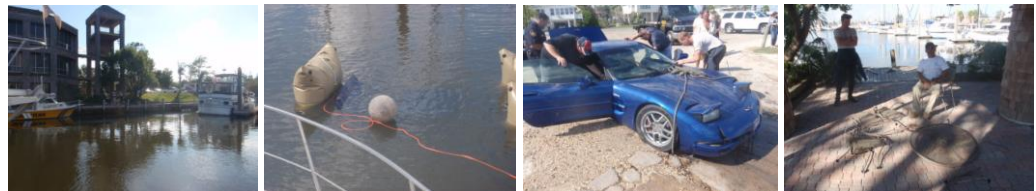
Enjoy...and comments and any articles of interest welcome. As always names have been omitted to protect the guilty!

**Alan Coleman, CEO, Times Marine Group**

## Aalmar (U.S.A.)

### **"Little Blue Flying Corvette"**

It is not unusual after a wonderful day at the office on most Fridays here in Houston to have a small aperitif, with a couple of the marina live-aboard



**Emergency Contact:**

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H&M casualties**

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residents, on the adjacent patio during 'sundowners' to help unwind prior to the weekend break with the family. Fortunately, last Friday, I was in Chile carrying out a pre-purchase inspection on a Panamax tanker, as the driver of a shiny blue Corvette launched from the entrance road, over the access steps, smashing on to the patio furniture and after skimming across the water plunged in to the depths of the Clearlake Marina. The driver escaped through the boot and was apparently helped out of the water by a passer-by, and then subsequently ran off! To date he has not been seen again, however, his yacht has been padlocked to the marina jetty by the local constabulary. Photos show the jetty launch area adjacent to our office, being lifted by air-bags, recovered at the jetty (notice the tow bridle...unfortunately, no towage approval certificate was issued), and the flattened patio table and chairs after recovery from the marina seabed.

As a footnote, the following was heard on the office VHF, "...this is salvage boat 'Sea Fox', other vessels are warned to stay clear...we are restricted in our ability to maneuver as we have a Corvette in tow...!"

We will of course offer to assist our landlord with any subsequent jetty damage claim.

**Alan Coleman, President**

**Aalmar (U.K.)**

**"Paying for surveys is not optional!"**

Here at Aalmar Surveys, London, we very much run the business as true London Gentlemen and Ladies, and are happy to say that we have many excellent clients, who appreciate our speedy and efficient response to their survey requirements, and who honour their part of the bargain with equally speedy payment.

Sadly this month though, we seem to have a scattering of new 'one-off' clients who seem to feel that they don't need to pay for the survey if they decide not to buy the vessel (?)

The knock-on effect of this means that we increasingly have to hold back on our surveyors travelling to surveys until the payment is secured (or a credit card payment made) which, in some cases may mean that we can't get to the ship in time. The result inevitably will be that the speed of service we pride ourselves on will not be available to all clients.

A clear case of the few spoiling things for the many...so, you know who you are, please stop it and remember to treat those in life and business how you would wish to be treated yourself.

**Carole Bryer, Managing Director**

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## Times Marine

### **“Who surveys these boats?”**

Although the Newsletter is celebrating its First Birthday, it is tempered with the thoughts of sympathy for the crew and relatives of the vessel “Khoosha 1”, lost offshore in Iranian waters during stormy weather conditions, along with the lives of 13 persons (mainly divers of Indian nationality). Not only does this have to be investigated, but the transparent findings for once should be made public.

The vessel, built in 1982, was only recently purchased by an Iranian National and apparently it unexpectedly went down bow first. When are the Authorities going to wake up to the fact that there are still far too many sub standard ships and crews being allowed to operate within the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman?



As we go to Press, we hear that another vessel has sunk, in rough weather, off Umm Al Quwain, fortunately without loss of life but with 450 tonnes of diesel oil on board. The water depth is reported as being 35 metres so a testing time for the local Authorities to ensure that pollution is both prevented and minimized.

We, at TMS, like so many other Survey Companies in this area, try to uphold and improve standards but occasionally one wonders who surveys the vessels here that are allowed by the local Authorities to put to sea in such apparently appalling condition?

**Jon Hewson, Managing Director**

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## **Times Marine - Survey Dept.**

### **“Give yourselves a chance, DO NOT highlight SSAS equipment”**



Well I guess it won't take any ship hijacker long to work out where the SSAS is! I guess the crews are relying on the pirates/shipjackers not knowing what S.S.A.S. is or its purpose. It would appear though; pirates are more “Savvy” (in the words of the greatest fictional pirate of all, Captain Jack Sparrow) than we think.

The S.S.A.S. is not just there to alert the respective authorities that gun waving third world educated Somali pirates have hijacked the vessel; but also to prevent terrorists from gaining control of the ships to use them as a means to rein terror on international waterways or blockade ports. Terrorist group cells have been

known in the past, to execute terrorism with sophisticated operatives who have thorough knowledge of the environment they are penetrating. It is therefore naive to assume undesirable guest on board a vessel may not know what the SASS is. Crews should be made aware to not highlight this equipment, and all components should be installed in a hidden location not readily visible to undesirable personnel. Of course any Master and the Ship Security Officer should already be aware of this, as the photo taken of a recent vessel by one of our surveyors clearly shows (not).

**Robert Kerr, Area Manager for Survey, Abu Dhabi**

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## Times Marine - Naval Architecture & Design Dept.

### “Boat Landings”

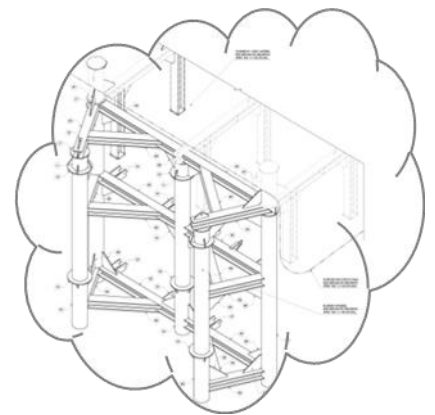
The Persian Gulf is rich with offshore structures, many of which do not have personnel onboard and therefore have unmanned certification.



Maintenance crew transfer is required regularly, utilizing various vessel types available to the contractors. One feature is common to all these vessels and the floating structure, the requirement for a landing platform to facilitate safe embarkation in either direction.

We have recently been involved with several similar design projects that incorporated a novel approach with the vessel approaching with the bow instead of the stern. To make the design workable we had to consider the following points:

- Consideration of various freeboard vessels, providing the operators flexibility with the option of multiple vessels.
- Safety of the personnel, with small gap (aided by knotted 'tarzan' ropes) to step over.
- Position of the platform on the moored structure, avoid obstacles in the normal operations and existing deck layout.
- Ensure, by giving a simple design, that fabrication time was minimized to ensure minimum alongside time of the 'mother structure' during installation.
- Weather Conditions.



Design objectives have been successfully met, with aforementioned factors satisfied, and now that the unit is in operation we are looking forward to the operators' feedback, and more specifically the personnel's comments on the practicality of the platforms.

**Ivan Radenkovic, Naval Architect**

## Update from our Ship Management Dept.

### “Pyrotechnics”

Pyrotechnics on ship is a visual method of sending SOS signals. It's very important for the ship's crew to alert and inform nearby ships about their distressed situation so that someone can come and rescue them.

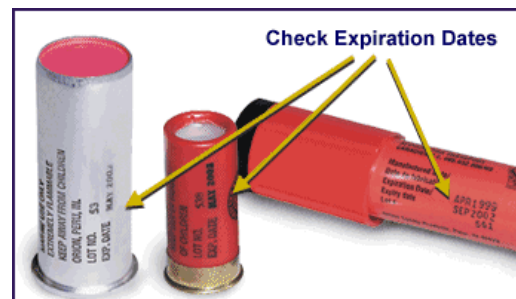
There are four types of pyrotechnics:

**Hand flare:** A hand flare is a small stick. When you activate it, it produces an intense red smoke or light without an explosion.

**Rocket parachute flare:** As the name suggests, the equipment has a flare which is launched at minimum height of 300m in the air, where it self-activates to produce intense red smoke. A parachute opens up and reduces the rate of decent which gives more time to the flare to remain at a height and to provide a clear view to nearby ships or help.

**Buoyant smoke signals:** This equipment is held in compact container with a buoyant nature so that it can float on the water surface to signal distress situation.

**Line Throwing Appliances:** A line throwing appliance is not a distress signaling equipment but is counter acting equipment in distress situations. It is used so that a connection made in terms of a strong line between the distressed ship and the safe ship to pass on towing lines or other kind of help.



Each pyrotechnic signaling device must be stamped with expiration dates. If they are expired or will be expiring soon, you must replace them...it's the law!

*How to dispose the expired pyrotechnics? **NEVER** dispose flares in household trash!*

Contact your local Municipality or Council Authority, depending in which country they are landed and disposed of.

**Anna Cebenko, Purchasing Officer**

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## Event Update



**Marine Equipment Trade Show (METS)**  
**November 15 – 17, 2011**  
**Amsterdam RAI**  
**The Netherlands**

METS is the world's largest trade exhibition of equipment, materials and systems for the international marine leisure industry organised by Amsterdam RAI.

**Number of exhibitors**

1,320 (of which 151 SYP) in 2010

**Pavilions**

15 national pavilions, Marina & Yard Equipment, Composite and SuperYacht Pavilion

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## Survey Surprise of the Month

**"A novel way to check the bilge level..."**



## Finally a note from Nautical Ned.....

### **"Thames Sailing Barge"**



A Thames sailing barge was a type of commercial sailing boat common on the River Thames in London in the 19th century. The flat-bottomed barges were perfectly adapted to the Thames Estuary, with its shallow waters and narrow rivers.

The flat-bottomed hull made these craft extremely versatile and economical. They could float in as little as 3 feet (1 m) of water and could dry out in the tidal waters without heeling over. This allowed them to visit the narrow tributaries and creeks of the Thames to load farm cargoes, or to dry out on the sand banks and mudflats to load materials for building and brick making.

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