



# SAN NEWS

On work environment and safety in shipping

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## Eight months of paternal leave welded family together

After eight months of leave, father Fredrik and his son Axel have grown close and the family has become even more united. But combining a job at sea with the role of father to small children is no easy match.

"Lala!" Axel, 18 months old, is jumping up and down and pointing enthusiastically at the figures dancing on the screen in his favourite TV programme, the Teletubbies. But he does not watch very much television during the days. Fredrik Lundmark, by profession an officer at Älvtank, has taken paternal leave since June last year and has not had any problems finding things to do during that time.

– I thought that I would perhaps start to get really bored after a while, but that has not been the case at all. We have been to the open daycare centre or in the park almost every day. Sometimes we have been to the Katarina Seaman's Club for a snack, and a couple of other seamen have had their children with them too, says Fredrik, sitting on the sofa with his wife Johanna beside him.

By taking out compensation and parental leave at the same time, Fredrik has managed to put together a really long stay at home – something which both he and Johanna appreciate.

– It has been absolutely brilliant, she says. We have become even closer, and Fredrik and Axel have great contact with each other. We are overjoyed about having all this time together.



According to statistics, Axel Lundmark, 18 months, has a greater chance of continuing to live with both his parents, Johanna and Fredrik, after Fredrik has taken out paternal leave.

Fredrik agrees. For him to take time off and provide ground service while Johanna has been able to continue her career has given several positive outcomes. As well as making ties between them stronger, they have both gained a better understanding of each other's situation.

### Reversed gender roles

– We have really reversed our gender roles. Fredrik has taken on the cleaning, washing and cooking while I have been able to engage in my new job. It has made me feel less stressed, says Johanna.

The Lundmarks have to help each other out to make it all possible. Fredrik

is away four weeks at a time. Johanna is a graduate economist and has a demanding job locally as a newly appointed private market manager at a Stockholm branch of Nordea bank. She grew up in Mariehamn on Åland and Fredrik's home town was Västervik, so they do not have any relatives in the city.

– We have planned for Johanna to work a bit less when I am away since we don't want Axel to have such long hours at his daycare centre. When I return I take over at home so that Johanna can focus on her work. It is important for us that Axel grows up in good conditions, says Fredrik.

They also explain that things have been very difficult at times, such as when Axel was less than a month old and Fredrik was about to go to sea for the first time since they had become parents.

– I didn't know much about children, I didn't know Axel's personality at the time, and since I'd had a Caesarean I was not allowed to lift anything. It was hard when the decision came that Fredrik had to start work again, and I felt down for two days before he left. But I stayed with my family on Åland and they gave me the support that I needed, says Johanna and looks at Fredrik.

– Yes, there were many thoughts going around in our heads at that time and it was really no fun, he says. But when you step onboard you have to be calm and collected, and you must be able to concentrate on the job, even if your family is always with you in your thoughts.

#### Ultrasound photograph by e-mail

When he is at sea they keep contact by telephone, e-mail and Internet. Thanks to their web camera, Fredrik can also see how Axel is growing. The very first photograph of his son, which was by ultrasound, was scanned in and sent by e-mail.

– We were just passing Gibraltar when I received it. It was an extraordinary feeling, says Fredrik.

Just before the birth the ship was delayed and forced to lie at anchor off the coast of Scotland for an unknown period

of time, and then both of them were really worried.

– We didn't know whether Fredrik would manage to get home in time, and the hall was packed with prams and beds that had been delivered but which I couldn't move as I was 9 months' pregnant. Then I felt really despondent, says Johanna.

– At the shipping company they pulled out all the stops to try to get me ashore. In the end we managed to lease a lighter. It chugged away for four or five hours, and I never thought I would make it on the flight. But in the end it all worked out fine. I arrived home on Thursday evening and the day after we registered at the hospital. Axel was born on the following Monday.

From time to time they have talked about Fredrik getting a job ashore. He has received a couple of interesting offers but has turned them down.

– The jobs you are offered ashore are mostly related to shipping and often involve more days travelling than I have at the moment. On top of that I have worked more than 20 years at sea, and I still enjoy it.

Johanna says that she would not try to make him change his mind.

– I promised myself never to ask Fredrik to work ashore – things could go really wrong. He is a real seaman, he enjoys what he does and he is proud of his profession. That's who he is and I respect that.

#### Paternal leave makes for happier families

Families in which the father has taken leave with the first child have 30 % fewer divorces than others and go on to have more children. This is shown in a dissertation, "Gendering family dynamics", from 2001. In 2007 fathers took out 21 % of parental leave.

Both of them are also satisfied with the support and understanding they have received from their employers, not least Älvtank, who have been behind them 100%.

– They have been involved since before Axel was born, and there were never any problems with me taking out paternal leave as long as this. The managing director is about the same age as me, and that probably helps him to understand my situation better.

It is soon time for Fredrik to start working again on the shipping company's latest acquisition, Ramina, which was delivered from a shipyard in Turkey last autumn.

– Then we will have to see how things work out at home, but if problems should come up we will solve them as they arise. I really understand now how much work, energy and courage are demanded from seamen's' wives who, like Johanna, fix things at home every day while their husbands are at sea.

*Text and photos: Linda Sundgren*

## Seamen's wives icon status on Åland

Åland people are proud of their seamen's wives, who have become something of a symbol for women on the island.

– They almost have the status of icons, says Hanna Hagmark-Cooper (picture), who has written a dissertation on seamen's wives on Åland and who is now the manager of the maritime museum in Mariehamn.

There are many seamen's families on the Åland islands. Almost every fifth man of working age on Åland works at sea, which means that there are many women who live with seamen. In Hanna Hagmark-Cooper's paper seamen's wives are described as strong and independent women, accustomed to making their own decisions and managing homes, children and jobs without a partner at their sides.

– Seamen's wives are credited with a number of characteristics and are iden-



tified through their husband's profession in a way that no other women are. To a certain extent this picture is true, and the characteristics of seamen's wives are often used to describe Åland women in general.

The dissertation, entitled "Women in Maritime Communities", was written at the British university of Hull in 2003 and consists of interviews and questionnaire responses from 75 women born between 1912 and 1969. Their perception of life as seamen's wives is to some extent a generation issue. Older women were most worried about their husbands' long periods of absence, and the social network in their home community was extremely important.

– Seamen's wives spent much more time with each other in the past and often met through Seamen's mission

associations or the shipping companies. It was also easier to travel with their husbands since women did not have jobs to the same extent as they do today, says Hanna Hagmark-Cooper.

#### "One long honeymoon"

For modern seamen's' wives, too, everyday life consists of adapting to their husbands' profession. The dissertation describes a lifecycle of four phases: separation, being alone, reunion and life together.

– A large part of the time is consumed in adapting to the men's absence, and then readjusting prior to their homecoming.

But this cycle is not necessarily seen as negative. Many women appreciate being alone at home and having time to themselves. One of the women in the paper described her marriage as one long honeymoon, in which she had many opportunities to long for her partner.

*Linda Sundgren*

## Seamen's priest: Families need to meet to support each other

The seamen's priest in Göteborg wants to make the church into a natural meeting place for seamen's families. He believes there is a need to meet and exchange experiences.

At the moment it is mainly a group of older, retired seamen who faithfully go to the 1950s church at Stigbergstorget. The younger generation disappeared, mostly when the quays



for goods traffic were moved away from the city centre. Anders Radix, who started as the church's priest one-and-a-half years ago, now wishes to open the doors for another group – seamen's families.

– I think that there is a need to meet other people in the same situation. Talking with somebody who has the same worries or the same experience as yourself often feels good.

In what form these family meetings will take place is still an open question. It could be a sunny day out swimming in the skerries, or dinner together in town.

– But really it is not so important exactly what you do together. The most important thing is getting together, says Anders Radix.

### Idea comes from the army

Focusing on the family's situation is an idea that he took with him from his time as a military priest in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

– There are many similarities between families of military men and seamen, since both groups have partners who are away for long periods of time. In the Swedish Defence Forces personnel work actively in supporting families, and this is very much appreciated.

*Linda Sundgren*

### Get in touch!

If you want to know more about family meetings at the Seaman's Church, you are welcome to contact Anders Radix at 031-14 03 88 or anders.radix@svenskakyrkan.se.



*Staffan Widlert, Director General, sees great opportunities for the new authority.*

# New authority to govern shipping

**Increased distance to the industry and quality assured inspections. These are the changes that the Director General of the newly formed Swedish Transport Agency wants to achieve in the maritime department.**

The Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate belongs to the past. It is now called the Maritime Department and since 1 January is part of the newly formed inspection authority called the Swedish Transport Agency. The Director General of the Agency, Staffan Widlert, says that the separation of the Swedish Maritime Administration and the Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate was necessary.

– In principle, I believe that it is right to separate the inspection unit and make it independent. An authority should not monitor and conduct audits on itself, he says.

In an investigation carried out before the reorganisation, some criticism was aimed at how the Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate has worked up until the present. Among other things, inspectors are accused of having identified too much with the industry they are commissioned to monitor. That is something which Staffan Widlert wants to change.

– It is absolutely crucial that we have this discussion within the authority, and I believe that we will need to take up these issues constantly since we recruit

our personnel from the shipping industry. The inspectors' remit is to pursue government policy and act on the basis of an authority perspective, he underlines.

### Four modes of transport

Within the new authority there are inspection departments for the three other modes of transport: air, rail and road. Each mode of transport has its own department with a large degree of autonomy.

The head of the maritime department is Per Nordström, previously deputy Marine Safety Manager at Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate.

– I believe that this will lead to a closer exchange of experience between the different modes of transport. In issues such as supervising methodology, the man-machine relationship and problems of tiredness, we can certainly help each other a great deal.

Staffan Widlert also sees opportunities for cooperation, including supervisory operations.

– We will appoint a project group to draw up uniform methods of inspection. At the moment there are enormous differences between the methods used for the modes of transport, in which some study every nut and bolt while others look almost exclusively at management systems. We will take the best parts from every area of inspection and create a joint, quality assured inspection policy.

*Text and photo: Linda Sundgren*



## Learning from mistakes – a high price for knowledge

After a long delay, the report of the Swedish Accident Investigation Commission on the Finnbirch disaster, in which two people died, was released at the beginning of December. Poorly secured cargo, hard weather and insufficient knowledge of navigation were determined as reasons for the accident. Serious deficiencies in survival suits were also mentioned, which contributed to one of the deaths. An inexperienced pilot in one of the rescue helicopters caused further problems in the situation. The accident report (read more about this on page 7) reveals a number of shortcomings onboard, which in all probability exist on other ships.

It is not the first time that human lives have been lost in revealing the deficiencies in safety awareness at sea. This makes it no less important, however, to gain insights from this report and look more closely at the shortcomings pointed out in order to prevent similar scenarios in the future, as far as possible.

One dreadful piece of experience from

the accident was that the survival suits fitted poorly and leaked. There were two different models onboard, both of the type one-size-fits-all. They were approved in compliance with the SOLAS Convention, but this proved to be no guarantee for good function. Several of the suits did not fit well. Shorter crew members found it difficult to breathe since the survival suits were too high and covered their mouths. The Filipino seaman who died of hypothermia had pulled down the zip in order to breathe. When he was found, the suit was open down to his chest and completely filled with water.

The accident investigation commission wants Sweden to take up the issue of poorly fitting survival suits with the IMO. The commission does not forward any particular Swedish recommendations but Ylva Bexell, who headed the investigation, points out that there is nothing to prevent individual shipping companies from purchasing more individually adap-

ted suits. The need for better survival suits is one of the lessons that can be learned, albeit at a high price, from the Finnbirch disaster.

We must not forget that new measures are constantly being introduced to improve safety and the work environment on Swedish controlled ships. Several of the enthusiasts and good role models who are working with these questions will be featured in SAN News during the year.

In this issue, for example, you can read about Christer Sjökvist at Silja Galaxy who is participating in work with adapting the newly-flagged ship to Swedish work environment requirements. We have also focused on the impact of one member of the family working at sea.



Linda Sundgren  
editor, San news

Enjoy your reading!

## “Sweden must make its voice heard internationally”

In 2006 the Swedish Mercantile Marine Foundation initiated a research project on the work environment and ergonomics in machine rooms and control rooms. After almost two years of research, the project is nearing completion. The goal of the researchers, Monica Lundh, Eric Wagner and Peter Grundevik, was to improve the work environment, safety and efficiency in machine rooms as well as formulating proposals for new national and international rules. International rules are currently governed by details and certain regulations run the risk of being contradictory.

The Swedish researchers instead propose having rules and regulations based on function (goal-based standards). The problem with this is the difficulty of including mandatory concepts. Almost all of them are recommendations and it is easy to get by with compromises.

Many problems and solutions are taken up in the forthcoming research report and it makes for very interesting reading. We must now acknowledge all the results



Minister of Infrastructure, Åsa Torstensson.

and drive the issues forward, both locally and internationally.

The Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate has been incorporated into the Swedish Transport Agency and we ask ourselves what this will bring about. From our point of view it is important that shipping does not just disappear in the new, large authority which is to monitor road, rail, air and sea safety under the same roof.

The Minister of Infrastructure, Åsa Torstensson, officiated at the inauguration of the authority in the LFV (Swedish Civil Aviation Authority) premises in Norrköping and held a short speech about the goals of the government's transport policy. The most interesting aspect mentioned by Minister was that Sweden should make its voice heard internationally. I interpret this as meaning that Sweden, in its presidency of the EU, will participate in current issues in a more active fashion.

For the maritime section, this will mean more work with the IMO. There are many issues to monitor and right now we are involved in the review of the STCW code. Sweden must safeguard its interests in order to guide questions our way as much as possible.



Mikael Huss  
Ombudsman for  
the Ships' Officers'  
Association,  
member of SAN

The Maritime Department of the Swedish Transport Safety Agency (previously the Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate) will spread information about relevant events and convey important messages to the shipping industry. The aim is to increase knowledge and safety awareness among parties in the shipping industry.

## Fake hydrostatic release units

A shipping company recently purchased a number of release units from chandlers in India. The company tested five of these by sinking them in water, but only two of them released. After contacting the company presumed to have manufactured the devices, CM Hammar AB in Göteborg, it was established that the devices were not made by them at all but were counterfeits. Not a single one of them operated in compliance with SOLAS standards.

The Maritime Department is sending out a warning for these counterfeits and encourages anybody in doubt to contact CM Hammar to verify the serial number and production date. CM Hammar has also sent out a Safety Alert showing how to distinguish between the real item and fake units. It is not known whether the fake units only come from India, so all owners are recommended to check the authenticity of their units by following instructions on [www.cmhammar.com](http://www.cmhammar.com).

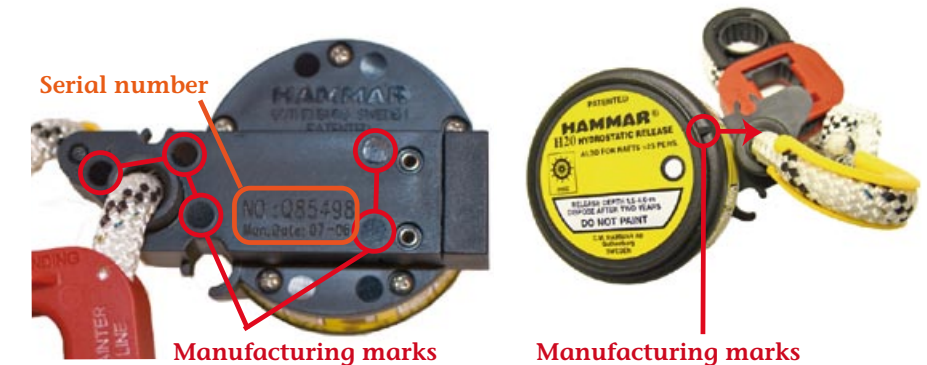
*SjöI dnr 070206-08-22948.*

*Hammar Press release 16/12/2008*

## Pilot injured while boarding tugboat

A pilot was about to board a tugboat in the evening, but due to high winds and seas it was decided that the boarding should take place before the normal boarding position. On this occasion the usual pilot boat was not being used, which made conditions more difficult with poorer visibility from the bridge of the pilot boat.

This, together with the somewhat poor conditions for holding onto the boarding rail in combination with the tugboat's inward sloping bulwark and the lack of a pilot's ladder or other boarding arrangement, meant that the pilot stepped onto the outer side of the tugboat's bulwark. The waves caused the pilot boat's fender to ride above the tugboat's fender instead of underneath it, and the pilot's leg was crushed between the two. As soon as the



To the left, the serial number and production date on a genuine Hammar hydrostatic release unit. To the right, one of the hydrostatic release units in question, the H20.

boats were separated a seaman on the tugboat was able to help the pilot onboard. The pilot sustained serious injuries.

The investigation shows that poor boarding arrangements and a poor view from the pilot boat's bridge in combination with relatively bad weather conditions with swell and slippery surfaces were important factors in the sequence of events. Vessels with inwardly sloping bulwarks or poor boarding arrangements are recommended to review these and compensate for any deficiencies. In this specific case, for example, a boarding rail that reached further wingwards from the boat could have prevented the accident.

*Iu dnr 080201-08-20686*

## Hawsers in propeller

During mooring work there were two tugboats giving help. The after boat was connected with a towing hawser which had a gantline in its end; it had been used to take onboard the tail rope on the ship's poop deck. When the hawser was to be released, the gantline fell in the water and was sucked down and got tangled in the propeller. The propeller had adjustable pitch blades and was still rotating, even though it was not driving. The towing hawser was stretched so hard that it broke off and seriously injured a crewmember on the tugboat.

A number of similar incidents have been reported to Insjö, of which seven have been studied. Of these, most had been using heavy hawsers of the Atlas type, which sink in water. Only one used a floating hawser, and even that had been forced under the water by currents.

It seems that adjustable pitch propellers, which continue rotating even though they are not in use, commonly create currents that pull hawsers towards them. In two cases it has been judged necessary to emergency stop the propellers. In one of the cases described in Insjö there was

a personal injury. All incidents required assistance from divers and caused delays and consequential costs. In two cases material damage was caused: one damaged axle bush and an oil leakage.

The above incidents lead to the following reflections:

- Propellers with adjustable pitch blades require great care to be taken since they continue rotating even when not used for propulsion.
- Heavy hawsers run a greater risk of fastening in propellers than floating hawsers.
- The risk of personal injury or material damage is evident.

*BSU 607/07. Insjö 392 394 1099 1102*

*1766 1776 2234*

## Poor scuppers cause serious danger

On many ships with RORO decks there are above-deck valves known as scuppers for drainage. The aim is that any water flowing onto the deck, for example when extinguishing a fire, is able to drain off. Scuppers can be closed using manoeuvrable valves, but in the event that these are not closed in time there are also non-return valves to prevent water from entering from the outside.

It is possible that poorly functioning non-return valves can accelerate the process of capsizing, such as when the Finnbirch sank two years ago. These non-return valves must be checked in accordance with rules for the class, but since the valves are often inaccessible these inspections can be difficult to carry out.

One method of checking the valves is to externally attach a plug with a hose connection. By applying water pressure to the non-return valve from the outside, any water that passes through is visible on the deck. If this is the case, the non-return valve is not functioning correctly.

*Iu dnr 080201-06-17352*

# Christer Sjökvist: Safety officers can draw advantage from each other's knowledge

**The Grand Hotel is not that bad, but he enjoys being at sea most of all. Christer Sjökvist is the bartender on Silja Galaxy and right now he is involved in updating work after re-flagging to Swedish standards.**

Many things can be changed and improved. Other things remain as they are. Since the Galaxy's Estonian flag was replaced by the blue and yellow Swedish flag in the summer of 2008, the crew has worked hard to adapt the interior and procedures to Swedish regulations.

– They say it usually takes about a year to run in a ship, and we are about half-way. We have achieved a lot during this time, and now we can look to the future with some confidence, says Christer Sjökvist, the chief safety officer onboard.

A check has been made in all departments, which has provided a good overview of what needs to be done. Based



## Christer Sjökvist

**Age:** 54

**Home:** Apartment in Solna, north of Stockholm

**Family:** Shares apartment with his friend Kicki since 1979

**Profession:** Bartender on Silja Galaxy

**Background:** Trainee cook, waiter at hotels, restaurants and onboard Swedish America Line ship Gripsholm. Bartender with Silja Line since 1985. Safety officer since 1997.

**The good work environment is important because:** it influences everything we do. Not least the final result, which is how our passengers feel about us and the ship. But it is also important because people who are healthy, happy and satisfied do a better job and take less time off sick than those who are dissatisfied.

on systematic work environment management, risks and problem areas have been identified and action plans have been drawn up. Slippery kitchen floors have been replaced, double cabins have become single cabins with their own telephones, and the heavy magnetic catches on fridges have been replaced with mechanisms that are far easier to operate, to name some of the changes that have been made.

– We started almost immediately with systematic work environment management. The captain and I walked around the different departments and looked at the risks together with the personnel. We have also had an acoustic engineer onboard who measured sound levels, and an ergonomist. We have included their viewpoints in the SAM file.

## Logistics difficult to improve

But in certain areas it is difficult to find good solutions, above all when it comes to logistics, explains Christer Sjökvist.

– The ship has no container gates, so we have to take onboard all of our goods via the aft ramp. The goods must then be taken to the various departments before departure, and this is extremely stressful since we only have one hour at the quayside.

Christer Sjökvist is among those who earlier worked on the Galaxy's predecessor on the route between Stockholm and Åbo, Silja Festival. At that time there were between 12 and 15 safety officers. He now hopes that there will soon be 20 of them, since the Galaxy has a considerably larger crew. He does not believe it will be difficult to recruit new work environment enthusiasts.

– When everything is rolling smoothly it is difficult to find new safety officers. But when the situation is in flux, such as now when we have changed ships and things are not as usual, then it is far easier.

On a ship the size of the Galaxy, with enough space for 2,800 passengers, it is impossible for the chief safety officer to have detailed knowledge of conditions in every department.

Christer Sjökvist is more of a coordinator and has regular communication with the other safety officers. He does

not feel that there is any competition between the different departments, rather that they draw advantage of each other's knowledge.

– For example, we have a cleaner who is very keen on checking chemicals and dangerous substances, and she has been around to all the departments to talk about this. I usually encourage safety officers to go on work environment courses as soon as possible and to find their own niche, he says.

## Rowdy passengers create problems

Christer Sjökvist works in the upper bar in the nightclub which stretches over two decks. Noise and stress are two large problems for catering personnel, but passengers can also be a big problem.

– Some of the younger passengers really make things difficult and create a bad psychosocial work environment for everybody. It is not good to generalize, but many 18 to 20 year olds behave badly. Either they are just plain selfish and rowdy, or they are on some new sort of drug which makes them aggressive. They are often threatening too, and we are discussing what to do about that.

In general, though, the work environment has improved a lot during Christer Sjökvist's 30 years at sea. When he signed on as a 19-year-old with the Swedish American Line ship Gripsholm, life onboard was a lot tougher than on modern ships.

– The dishonesty onboard was terrible. For example, you had to guard your silver cutlery, which nobody had warned me about when I started. So when I left for a few moments half the things were gone when I got back - my colleagues had stolen them! But I learned what to do and continued working there on and off for a couple of years.

After serving rich dollar-tourists he went ashore and for almost 10 years and worked at some of Stockholm's most prestigious restaurants such as the Grand Hotel, Sheraton and Dalarö Skans. But he missed life at sea and since the mid-1980s he has been employed at Silja Line.

– Working at sea is a lifestyle that suits me. It is probably my sense of rootlessness that makes me feel at home onboard, he says.

Linda Sundgren



When a heeling test was carried out by Finnlines in 2007, cargo slid off the roll trailers at an angle of about 45°.

Photograph from the report of the Swedish Accident Investigation Board.

## Criticism of survival suits' fitting qualities

**Poorly secured cargo, hard weather and lack of knowledge among officers sank the Swedish RORO ship Finnbirch, on which two seamen died, according to the report of the Swedish Accident Investigation Board. The survival suits used were also criticised.**

A series of faults and shortcomings caused the tragic capsizing of the Finnbirch, owned by Lindholm Shipping, on 1 November 2006. In hard winds, with gusts up to 29 m/s, high, long waves were whipped up. The officer did not know how to sail in a following sea and pressed the ship hard at 18 knots in the high seas. He should have done exactly the opposite and slowed down instead.

– Knowledge about how to sail a ship in a following sea is generally poor. Certainly, IMO has issued guidelines for procedures but they are not particularly user-friendly and nothing which can be easily studied yourself onboard, says Ylva Bexell, who led the investigation for the Swedish Accident Investigation Board.

### Poorly secured cargo

When the ship was in the waters between Öland and Gotland, she was suddenly subjected to a number of very deep rolls. The cargo, including rolls of paper, timber and steel products, broke loose. Finnbirch was left lying on the sea heeled over badly with her cargo almost totally shifted.

– To have such a large displacement of cargo, it must have been poorly lashed in general, both in the load carriers and on the ship. Poorly secured cargo is a problem which we believe exists on other ships. For this reason we

are recommending that the Inspection Board make a qualified examination of cargo securing manuals, to be followed up by inspections of cargo securing on deck, says Ylva Bexell.

All 14 crewmembers managed to put on their survival suits and get onto the deck. The air temperature was 1°C, and the water temperature 10°C. The suits were a universal model for adults between 50 and 150 kg and 150 to 190 cm.

### Unable to breathe in survival suit

Among those in the crew who were around 160 to 170 cm tall, the suits did not fit well. The Filipino seaman who later died as a result of hypothermia had complained several times that he could not breathe easily because the suit was too high up and covered his mouth. The man pulled the zip down a little to be able to breathe more easily. When the ship sank and the crew were floating in the sea, the suit was filled with water and the man froze to death. Several of the other suits had also leaked through the hood over the face.

In the inquiry, the Swedish Maritime Administration is urgently requested to take up the problem of poorly fitting survival suits in international sea safety work.

– The suits on the Finnbirch were approved in compliance with SOLAS, and we have no other requirements than those. But there is nothing to prevent individual shipping companies from purchasing suits with more individually adapted sizes, says Ylva Bexell.

The chief mate onboard the Finnbirch also died when he was pulled down with the ship.

Linda Sundgren

## ~ IN BRIEF ~

### Coral Seas' mate died

The Croatian mate who was arrested in summer 2007 with the captain of Coral Sea has died. Both of the officers were seized by Greek police after a large quantity of cocaine had been discovered in a container onboard. The mate was released one year later, but was in such a poor condition that he had to stay in hospital. He died on 23 January.

There are more and more protests against the increasing criminalisation of seamen, both in Sweden and internationally, but so far there are no signs of any change.

### Regulations given new name

At the beginning of the year the Swedish Maritime Safety Inspectorate moved out from the Swedish Maritime Administration and became the Maritime Department of the Swedish Transport Agency.

In the future, new work environment regulations that are issued will be known as TSFS (Transportstyrelsens föreskrifter, or Transport Agency regulations). The older regulations will retain their previous acronym of Sjöfsar.



SAN is a joint body for Swedish Shipowners' Employer Association (SARF), Swedish Ship Officers' Association (SFBF), Merchant Marine Officers' Association (SBF) and SEKO Seafarers.

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