



FORMER TECHNICAL MANAGER OF MALTA MARITIME AUTHORITY LECTURES AT IMLI

Captain Joseph Zerafa, former Technical Manager in-charge of the technical aspects of vessels registered under the Malta Flag in the Malta Maritime Authority, visited the Institute on the 15 and 16 October and delivered a comprehensive lecture on “*The Technical Aspects of Shipping*” to the IMLI class of 2019/2020.



Captain Joseph Zerafa meeting the IMLI Class of 2019-2020

Captain Zerafa’s lectures comprehensively covered the technical aspects of ship construction, ship stability, standard load line marks (the Plimsoll mark), international tonnage convention and the safety of bulk carrier among others. In this later subject area, he dealt with, in general terms, the dangers associated with bulk carriers especially when carrying heavy cargoes while making references to previous casualties associated with these types of carriers.

In both the areas of ship construction and ship stability, Captain Zerafa discussed many important definitions commonly used in these capacities, including, ship's dimensions, construction of different types of ships, such as crude / product / chemical / LNG tankers and container vessels. In the later (ship stability), he defined centre of gravity, centre of buoyancy, reserve buoyancy, metacentric height (GM), righting lever (GZ), metacentric stability and angle of loll.

In discussing the standard load line mark, Captain Zerafa gave the background of the name 'Plimsoll Mark' which this line is also known as. He stated that the original line was a circle with a horizontal line through it to show the maximum draft that a ship may load to and added that over the years, additional marks have been added to this to allow for different densities of water and expected sea conditions.

With his graphic lecture materials, Captain Zerafa was able to reduce this very complex area of study to one easily comprehensible for the students.

Captain Joseph Zerafa started his career at sea in 1975 when he joined Shell Tankers (UK) Ltd as a Deck Cadet. He studied in the UK and obtained his Class 1 Master's Certificate in 1987. During his time with Shell he sailed on the largest oil tankers, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carriers and Oil Bulk Ore (OBO) vessels.

When his years of sea work came to an end, back ashore Capt. Zerafa continued working in the marine sector by first working for 6 years in the marine insurance surveys, then with the Malta Maritime Authority as the Technical Manager in-charge of the technical aspects of the vessels registered under the Malta Flag. A position which he maintained for 13 years, after which, he worked with the IMO as a SAFEMED Project Officer in Maritime Safety for 7 years.

The last six years has seen Captain Zerafa working as a Freelance Consultant in Maritime Safety, including consultancy work for IMO in North and West Africa, and as a Government Ship Surveyor.

Capt. Zerafa has been assisting IMLI, as a visiting lecturer since the very early years of the Institute.

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