Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

11495 COMMERCE PARK DRIVE, RESTON, VIRGINIA 20191-1506
TELEPHONE: +1-703-620-4880 FAX: +1-703-476-8522
EMAIL: maritime@register-iri.com WEBSITE: www.register-iri.com

MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY No. 07-25

To: **Owners/Operators, Masters, Nautical Inspectors, Recognized Organizations**

Subject: **DETENTIONS IN CHINA DUE TO MANEUVERABILITY ISSUES**

Date: **20 August 2025**

This Marine Safety Advisory supersedes Marine Safety Advisory No. 05-24.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator (the "Administrator") continues to receive reports of ships unable to maneuver in high-density traffic or narrow waters in China. Incidents have occurred recently for various reasons as highlighted below:

- On departure from a shipyard in Zhoushan, a ship was transiting from C.J.K. anchorage No.3 to Nanjing, when the Main Engine shut down due to low lubricating oil pressure and high temperature. When the crew dismantled the three-way valve which controls the oil flow to the lubricating oil cooler, the valve was found to have been assembled in the wrong direction during overhaul at the shipyard, and required correction.

- A ship departed from the Nangang Terminal in Shanghai and the Main Engine slowed down due to high jacket cooling water and lubricating oil temperatures. As maneuverability was impaired, it posed as a danger to navigation in L11 buoy of Lingang Main Fairway area. The ship had cleaned the low and high sea chest filters in port, and the high sea chest was in use. However, due to heavy silt concentration in the port, the sea chest filters as well as the built-in filter in the lubricating oil cooler clogged and was required to be cleaned again after the stoppage. This was the vessel's first call to this port.

- A ship arriving in Guangzhou changed the Main Engine fuel to VLSFO and carried out routine pre-arrival engine tests prior the pilot boarding. Once on pilotage, as the speed was increased the Main Engine slowed down. The Fuel Oil Injection Pump No.1 plunger/barrel had seized, the fuel rack and pump required replacement. An accumulation of sludge and hard deposits had gradually collected due to increased wear between plunger and barrel. The running hours since last overhaul were 13,720, which was close to the engine manufacturer's recommended interval of 16,000 hours. Movement of the fuel rack and condition of the fuel pump through the sight glass provided had not been verified by the watchkeeping engineer during the engine testing.

- A ship was underway from Hong Kong to Shekou with the Pilot onboard and experienced a Main Engine shutdown requiring the vessel to drop anchor. During changeover of fuel from LSMGO to LSFO, Diesel Generators No.2 & 3 experienced low fuel oil pressure, leading to a blackout within minutes, and as a consequence the

Main Engine shutdown. After restoring power, unstable fuel pressure led to the Main Engine failing to start three times which activated an interlock preventing the Main Engine from being started again. The Main Engine fuel was changed back from LSFO to LSMGO, and remote assistance was provided by the engine manufacturer to reset the "Start-Blocked" condition.

These incidents show the importance of good maintenance for all main and auxiliary machinery with robust testing. It is in this light that the Administrator reminds shipowners, operators, and Masters that:

- When leaving a shipyard or after Main Engine repairs, a robust berth or sea trial for an extended period is required to take care of any leakages or wrong assembly. A few engine kick starts are insufficient to identify these issues. This should be done prior to entering any area of high-density traffic or narrow waters in China. Otherwise, while underway when issues arise that lead to a loss of propulsion in China's narrow waters, it often leads to emergency anchoring. The subsequent investigation by the China Maritime Safety Administration (MSA), including an expanded port State control inspection could usually result in a detention.

- Crew should be aware that there could be heavy silting in river estuary ports, and which could be seasonal. In such cases the appropriate sea chest to be selected for use, and frequency of sea water filter cleaning increased.

- If not already available, planned maintenance procedures are to be implemented and followed for periodical cleaning of Main Engine jacket cooling water and lubricating oil coolers and their respective filters.

- Incidents have occurred where there has been insufficient or incorrect fuel preparation before the changeover. This has caused the diesel generator engines to trip, consequently causing the vessel to lose electric power. Crew should be familiar with the fuel oil changeover procedures when entering or exiting Sulphur Emission Control Areas

- Crew should exercise themselves for dealing with any Main Engine emergency situations, including the shutdown and reset functions after shutdown.

- When equipment or machinery is found faulty, in addition to reporting to Class or the Administrator (as required by the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974), the coastal State and local MSA should be promptly notified.

- Any inability to maneuver or loss of propulsion incident in China must be reported by the Master directly to the local authorities and to the Administrator (inspections-hk@register-iri.com).