

Letter from the President
October 2007 Marine Technology

During the last ten years the amount of cargo carried by ships has tripled. At the same time the types of ships carrying this cargo has increased in number, type, size and complexity. Some have tripled in size such as Container Vessels from 4000 teu capacity to over 12,000 teu's. Other fleets have doubled in number and size such as the Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) fleet. Service characteristics have also significantly improved such as speed, endurance, propulsive efficiency, emissions, automation, strength, fatigue life and even coatings. What is even more significant is that at the same time this was occurring, safety has increased threefold and loss of life, cargo, ships and vessel oil spills have been reduced to one third or less of what they were ten years ago. That is quite an impressive achievement and Naval Architects and Marine Engineers the world over can take their share of the credit for this, along with owners, operators, administrations and international organizations such as IMO and IACS. How can we keep up this remarkable progress??? By focusing on what is relevant to our profession, including the consideration of "Human Factors" in all that we do as Naval Architects and Marine Engineers.

What is relevant?? I am proposing ten areas that we need to increase our focus on and consider for inclusion in our meetings, papers, symposia and technical and research initiatives. They will be placed before the Council at our upcoming meeting for review and consideration, and discussion on how we can best make advances and progress in these areas, and perhaps include others as well, so that we may remain relevant to our industry and profession. I know that many of our over 8,500 members have valuable opinions on what is relevant to our profession and Society and I invite you to share your thoughts with members of the Council who represent you, or to members of the Executive Committee including myself. The topical areas we choose to focus on will give direction and meaning to our strategic plan which has just been completed this summer. Here is a proposed list of areas that I will provide to the Council for review....

.....Maritime Energy Transportation; Oil and Gas.

.....Offshore Energy Exploration and Production.

.....Inland Waterway Marine Design and Operation ; Safe and efficient transportation on the worlds Inland Marine Highway System.

.....Challenges in the design , construction and affordability of Combatant Naval Vessels.

.....Size and Hi-Speed for Vessels; Risk and Reliability...what are the limitations.

.....Super Yachts and Ferries; new worldwide demand for quality and safety.
....Maritime Environmental Protection; Design and operation for a self sustaining marine environment.
.....Maritime Alternative Energy sources; Oceans, Waves, Wind, Currents and Tides.
....Coastwise Trade; advances in design and construction of Cabotage Vessels; Short Sea Shipping, MR Tankers, ATB's/ ITB's
....The Principles of "Human Factors" in Design , Construction and Operation of Marine Vehicles.

Again these are my proposals, a "Strawman" if you will, to get us started....I do believe we should settle on approximately ten to get started and each year when we update the Strategic Plan review our list and update as appropriate. I look forward to seeing many of you at our annual meeting and Expo in Fort Lauderdale. See you there....

Admiral Bob Kramek