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Plenary Lecture 1

Enhancing Maritime Officers Opportunities for Managerial Level Positions

Professor Eugen Barsan
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Abstract: In the past few years, we have all witnessed and felt the effects of the global financial crisis. As the world countries economies struggle to adapt to these most extraordinary and continuously changing conditions, so has the maritime transport community to. Consequently, maritime universities must continuously update their curricula so as to offer their graduates the advantage of a successful career in this most competitive domain.
This abstract focuses on the way Constanta Maritime University (CMU) is trying to optimize seafarers' career progression by offering professional alternatives for the maritime officers.
The academic community of CMU has always taken pride in the fact that graduating students apart from becoming maritime officer are also licensed as engineers in Waterborne Transport Engineering. Over the years we have noticed that due to this double qualification, after having acquired some experience on board ships, our graduates are more easily employed within a company in a management position on shore.
Under the provisions of the Bologna Treaty, the period of technical higher education studies for bachelor's level were reduced from 5 to 4 years. With great efforts we manage to adapt the new curricula in order to maintain the license in waterborne transport engineering. The Romanian Naval Authority considered that in 4 years of study and maintaining the engineering specific courses the were no enough time left for all the compulsory maritime courses at operational and managerial level. The consequence was that part of the compulsory maritime courses with subjects for the managerial level had to be shifted to a new professional Master course. This is emphasized by a decision of the Romanian Naval Authority, that all new graduates in order to become Chief Mates or Masters must graduate a Master's course.
This new Master course is dedicated to multi-modal transport, but the first two semesters are mainly dedicated to satisfying the requirements of the STCW Convention for the managerial level. The rest of the subjects, tough in the second and third semester are focused to cover the actual requirements of the modern maritime industry.
As most of the students envision a career at sea for no more than 10 years these Master's courses have proved to be very important for their career both at sea and on shore.
The main goal of our paper is to share with the rest of the MET academic community our experience regarding this new Master course and the practical career opportunities offered to the master graduates.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:
Dr. Eugen BARSAN graduate Naval Academy in Constantza, Romania in 1982. From 1982 to 1991 he sailed as deck officer in the Romanian merchant fleet, on different types of maritime ships. From 1991 his activities were related with the maritime education and training, teaching different nautical sciences at Constanza Maritime University. He completed is PhD in Surface Transport in 2004 defending his Doctoral thesis on "Oil Spill Prevention and Response along the Romanian Coastline" at Bucharest Technical University. In the last 18 years was appointed as Head of the Nautical Department, Vice Dean of the Maritime Transport Faculty of Constantza Maritime University. Now he is the Vice Rector for research and international cooperation at Constantza Maritime University. Dr. Barsan's primary areas of interest are: radar navigation, navigation and ship handling simulation, maritime safety and security, waterborne transport. Many of his research projects deal with optimization of maritime transport, analysis of human errors in navigation and ship handling, maritime traffic safety and control, man-machine interface in waterborne transport. He is member of the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) and of the International Maritime simulation Forum (IMSF). Acting also as Director of the Constantza Maritime University Simulation Center, he is managing the development of the maritime simulation facilities and supervising the research activities that are applying simulations and on site experiments.