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Commercial news

“Our word is our bond”
– motto of the Baltic Exchange.

Three of STAR Reefers vessels Almeda Star, Avelona Star and Cape Town Star have been on charter to Kalistad Ltd of Nicosia (a subsidiary of JFC, St. Petersburg) since November 2008, but it is with much regret and some anger that we have to report that these charterers have wrongfully terminated the charters

on the basis of spurious allegations relating to the performance of the vessels. Throughout this period STAR Reefers has exercised the utmost due diligence in the technical management and operation of the vessels and takes pride in the performance of its ships and crews.

Unfortunately it appears the real reason for this situation is that Kalistad were not prepared to fulfill the financial obligations of the charter party. This opinion is

backed up in their statement that the “charter rate which is significantly in excess of the market level for the past 1.5 years”.

It is quite wrong that this or any company entering into an agreement should be allowed make an arbitrary termination at a later stage when the deal does not suit them. As a consequence STAR Reefers will take all necessary steps to protect its position.

Market news

After many months of poor rates we are pleased to report that there has been a small recovery in charter rates towards the end of August and it is interesting to observe that for the larger segment, the lowest July monthly average time charter return since 2002 was followed by the highest August average since 2004. Rates have also been sustained and even improved upon during September.

The summer months and extreme hot weather and wildfires in Russia caused demand for bananas to fall and lose 50% of its retail value between mid June and

mid July and at the same time demand from the Mediterranean markets was also very limited. By early August demand for capacity partly recovered as banana markets strengthened in anticipation of an improvement in retail prices and also because of a greater surplus of bananas in Costa Rica and Colombia than had been forecasted. This situation was also boosted by a much needed return of white meat exports to Russia, albeit still with the uncertainty that politics could intervene at any moment and slow things down again. As a consequence the list of open ships dropped over a short period of time and

so rates improved.

With rationalization having taken place and the reefer business down to five major players (Hamburg Reefer Chartering, Seatrade, STAR Reefers, Fresh Carriers and NYKCool) plus two smaller owner/operators in Kyokuyo and Holy House, there is hope that a recovery can take place with more order, now that there are clear indicators that the container lines are seeing growth in the Asia Europe trades and are increasing their rates - hopefully moving away from their aggression towards reefers.

News from STAR Reefers Poland

The “Le Mans” 1.5 hours race.

The Polish office had its annual Go Karting event in September which takes place on a 1 km track in Sopot and involves racing in 4 teams with 4 members on each team.

They obviously take these occasions quite seriously as there was qualification which divided participants into two groups of 8 Karts, each with 10 minute sessions. Later there were 8 karts on the track with 2 per team and the rules were that a change of driver should take place every 15 minutes in a timed pit stop of maximum 2 minutes. The total race time was 1.5 hours, with 6 changes of drivers.

Final results were calculated as per the old F1 system (1st place 10 points, 2nd 8 points, 3rd 6 points, 4th 5 points, 5th 4 points) which showed the best team was Arek Gronowski, Cezary Blok, Vitaly Zabarovskiy, Marta Kalocinska with a total of 14 points. Other notable achievements were “pole position” and “best lap time” awarded to Olek Bieniek, although officials have been called in to establish whether reports of heavy betting in the Far East might have influenced the result.

Finally the driver that received the “most black flags” and who was nearly disqualified was Adam Wolniak. *And so on to health and safety.....*

Colleagues
from Poland
ready for
the race



Nice hairnets, ladies



On the grid

Health and Safety

STAR Reefers is determined to ensure that all aspects of fire and safety on board are carefully analyzed and that safety systems and their operation are effective.

With increased Port State campaigns it is worth noting that well documented safety maintenance records will assist Inspectors/ Surveyors to identify vessels that have a good inspection and maintenance regime.

What we require vessels to do is to *involve all ships staff* in FIRE SAFETY inspections and take note of their observations. Follow through with the Ships Safety Committee meetings to ensure that any deficiencies are closed out and report back to STAR Reefers and your Managers on the forms provided.

What we need to achieve is a greater familiarity with FIRE SAFETY items, better maintenance and record keeping leading to zero deficiencies so as to achieve our goal of a fleet to be proud of and safe ships.



A correctly marked escape door



Fireman's protective clothing in action



Fire line good maintenance

Crew Conferences

STAR Reefers held two conferences in Riga and Gdynia in September

Over fifty participants from SRP and Norbulk attended in Riga with guest speaker Pierce Power from Martin, Ottaway (external Marpol auditors). In line with other recent conferences there was a strong emphasis on Safety and Marpol with practical workshops on Safe Work and Oil Record Books. In addition, there were updates on hot topics such as piracy, drugs and Port State Control audits. Our thanks go to Maksims Nazarenko and Marina Potjomkina from Hanza Marine Management for arranging a successful conference and for our seafarers giving up their valuable leave to attend.

While the STAR Reefers Poland conference in Gdynia followed a similar theme to Riga, we were all impressed by the film producing skills of Adam Studzinski on the good and bad approach to Port State Control, a light hearted video with a very serious message – well done Adam!

Once again our sincere thanks to SRP for arranging the conference and to our seafarers for making it a success



Discussions in Gdynia



Officers at work



Conference attendees in Riga

Profile

Alexey Smirnov Chief Officer of the m/v Almeda Star

Chief Officer Alexey Smirnov, featured here, is on board m/v Almeda Star and has just had his first child. We wish him and his new family well.

"I was born in small mining town in east Ukraine and though it was far from a sea I wanted to be a seaman since my childhood. My uncle was a naval officer and visiting his town I would often walk on the embankment and look at ships staying alongside and imagined myself on their Bridge. Yet in school I was preparing for naval institute but when I finished I changed my plans and decided to become an Officer of the merchant fleet. My parents had nothing against my choice and my relatives, who live in the Murmansk region, advised me to join the Murmansk Marine Academy.

In 1990 I became the cadet of this marine academy. As in one song "The school of captains is a school of life..." during my study at the academy I did indeed pass the good "school of life" and met good guys and I still maintain friendly relations with many of them. My first experience at sea was on board of sailing vessel "Sedov". There was my first storm, a fear of heights and a "fight" with huge and heavy sails. It was not easy but very interesting. Later on there were other ships but those 3 months on board the largest sailing ship in the world is something I'll remember all my life.

In 1996 after the academy, I secured the position of 3rd Officer in transport-refrigeration company in Murmansk. My first contract was for 8 months and for this period we visited many different ports and carried many different types of cargo – bananas, fruits, frozen goods and general cargo. During that contract I received a good experience on cargo handling but after several years I understood that this company was not the best and I did not like the climate in Murmansk, so I decided to seek "the happiness" elsewhere.

In 2003 I became a 2nd Officer in a company which manages a reefer fleet in St.Petersburg. Unfortunately the ships in this company were old



Alexey in his office

and the company did not take care of their condition. The only positive moment was that all those ships carried the cargo to St.Petersburg. We called them "home trade" ships, because most of our crew members lived in this beautiful city and it was very convenient to stay with family for several days every 1-2 months. Already during my second contract in that company I was promoted to Chief Officer with good prospects to become a Captain, but with the passing of time the company business became worse, ships became older and I did not see any prospects for improvement. So it was time to change company again.

Right at that time one of my friends, who had already a couple contracts in STAR Reefers, advised me to try to get a position in this company and at the beginning of 2008 I became a Chief Officer on board of STAR Reefers mv "Sun Light". Despite this being an old ship, she was a best I ever had. I also liked the relations of the whole

company and Superintendents in particular. Then I decided that this is the company where I wanted to work and I hope for a long cooperation.

My life ashore is not so eventful. By nature I am a "home" man and my single hobby is football. In childhood and youth I liked to play football and I had good results but now unfortunately my hobby is to watch football games on TV. I am also lucky with my family and I married two years ago and have no regrets. My wife is a wonderful woman, who understands me and waits with patience. I am thankful for this and all my free time I endeavour to spend with her. Now my wife is bringing up our son Timur, who was born a week ago. Unfortunately I could not attend his birth and such is the seaman's life, but anyway I am happy and hope to see him very soon.

At the end I wish the prosperity to our company and calm sea to my colleagues. Good luck".

Crew List Owned Vessels

Ship's Name	Master	C/O	C/E
AFRIC STAR	Bogumil Zurawik (Polish)	Piotr Pawlusinski (Polish)	Marek Mila (Polish)
ALMEDA STAR	Oleksandr Petrov (Ukrainian)	Alexy Smirnov (Russian)	Viktor Kriger (Ukrainian)
ARGENTINA STAR	Vladimir Kulinich (Russian)	Andrzej Witczak (Polish)	Sergey Pigarev (Russian)
ANDALUCIA STAR	Andriy Demydenko (Ukrainian)	Józef Slomkowski (Polish)	Anatoly Levitskiy (Russian)
AVELONA STAR	Andrej Kudriasov (Lithuanian)	Alexander Savchenkov (Russian)	Rostislav Bogdanovich (Russian)
AUCKLAND STAR			
AVILA STAR	Artur Brozek (Polish)	Valery Dorozhkin (Russian)	Henryk Utnik (Polish)
BRASIL STAR	Andrzej Mos (Polish)	Evgeny Shlykov (Russian)	Gennady Vorotnyy (Russian)
CANTERBURY STAR			
CAPE TOWN STAR	Jerzy Swiatek (Polish)	Mikhail Makarenkov (Russian)	Andrzej Markowski (Polish)
CARIBBEAN STAR	Dmitrijs Angermans (Latvian)	Konstantin Polyakov (Ukrainian)	Valeriy Mayorov (Russian)
CHILE STAR	Zbigniew Zjawinski (Polish)	Alexander Varzugin (Russian)	Ilya Leychu (Russian)
COLOMBIAN STAR	Eduard Chikulaev (Russian)	Valentins Minkovs (Latvian)	Alexander Butkevich (Russian)
COTE D'IVORIAN STAR	Alexander Kovayov (Russian)	Anton Voropay (Russian)	Sergey Bogdanov (Russian)
DUNEDIN STAR	Valeriy Lukin (Russian)	Dmitry Bogachenko (Russian)	Aleksander Mihhol (Estonian)
DURBAN STAR	Roman Blaszyński (Polish)	Leonid Grechishchev (Russian)	Andrey Shilnikov (Russian)
ECUADOR STAR	Igor Budantsev (Ukrainian)	Piotr Rostkowski (Polish)	Jan Kuriata (Polish)
ENGLISH STAR			
HONDURAS STAR	Waldemar Gozdziwicz (Polish)	Serhiy Pechonkin (Ukrainian)	Evgeny Derkach (Russian)
NAPIER STAR	Vasil Sarmanov (Russian)	Vjaceslavs Severs (Latvian)	Vasily Chernozipunnikov (Russian)
NELSON STAR	Andriy Melkov (Ukrainian)	Konstantin Osokin (Russian)	Nikolay Gurguldayev (Russian)
REGAL STAR	Nikolay Zhuravlev (Russian)	Jan Sapkowski (Polish)	Dmitry Dorogov (Russian)
SCOTTISH STAR			
SOLENT STAR	Oleksandr Tsybalyuk (Ukrainian)	Vasily Kochevanov (Russian)	Jurijs Morevs (Russian)
SOUTHAMPTON STAR	Igor Sorokin (Latvian)	Andrey Panibrat (Russian)	Igor Chernyshov (Ukrainian)
TAURANGA STAR			
TIMARU STAR	Mikhail Kudryashov (Russian)	Oleksandr Melkov (Ukrainian)	Pavels Maksimcuks (Latvian)
URUGUAY STAR	Mirosław Dyrka (Polish)	Andrzej Kuzminski (Polish)	Alexander Ozerov (Russian)
VALPARAISO STAR			
VIKING STAR	Aleksandrs Olsanskis (Latvian)	Aleksejs Dovbna (Latvian)	Genady Panchukov (Ukrainian)

Happy birthday to the following



London birthdays

Jonathan Solomon - 2 Aug.
Kathy Bignell - 16 Sept.
Fran Moorhouse - 17 Sept.
Josie Bristow - 28 Sept.

Poland birthdays

Bartosz Zysk - 8 Aug.
Jolanta Wrobel - 21 Aug.
Eduard Smirnov - 26 Aug.
Anna Piotrowska - 19 Sept.
Arek Gronowski - 27 Sept.

Joiners London

Josie Bristow on 23 Aug.
as Administrator
Armando Veras Sepúlveda
22 Sept. as Business Analyst

Leavers London

Sue Turner on 27 Aug.

Leavers Poland

Michael Pilch on 30 Oct.
Eduard Smirnovs on 25 Aug.

Crew birthdays

Sergey Pigarev
- 10 Aug.
Andrey Shilnikov
- 18 Aug.
Gennady Vorotnyy
- 20 Aug.
Anton Voropay
- 22 Aug.
Andrzej Mos
- 28 Aug.
Igor Budantsev
- 6 Sept.
Andrej Kudriasov
- 8 Sept.
Andrzej Markowski
- 9 Sept.
Andriy Melkov
- 16 Sept.
Miroslaw Dyrka
- 21 Sept.

Sue Turner

In August we said a fond farewell to Sue Turner who had been STAR Reefers London popular and ruthlessly efficient office manager for the past 10 years. Sue was presented with a digital camera and some liquid refreshment from her colleagues in London and we understand that even in retirement she will continue to terrorise opponents on the netball pitch and also carry on with her hobby of Highland dancing (very popular in south of England). **Happy retirement Sue!**



New baby

One night of passion has produced Leia Lawson (a healthy 7.6 lbs) and first born to STAR Reefers



London's Brian Lawson. Brian is married to Joanna (who used to work in our Poland office) so we would like to take this opportunity to pass on our best wishes to this new family.

And finally...

Iain Rae from Star Reefers London has an 11 year daughter Shonah who is shortly to appear in front of 1,500 people in a Youth Theatre production at Her Majesty's Theatre, close to STAR Reefers offices in London. She will perform ballet and tap dance and will no doubt be very nervous but we wish her well and hope this is a start of something big.