

EMPA NEWSLETTER



Antonio Alcaraz Arbelo

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Editorial

Dear readers, Dear Colleagues

It has been a long time since we were able to publish a newsletter. This is mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but also and mainly that little news was passed on to us. I hereby launch a call to forward as many interesting facts or festivities as possible so that we can process this in the newsletter and the website. In this way we can inform all colleagues about what is happening in the various organisations.

I heard from several colleagues all over Europe that everything is slowly returning to pre-pandemic life.

That makes me hopeful to see that everything can go back to normal and we can come together again to share experiences and have a nice beer.

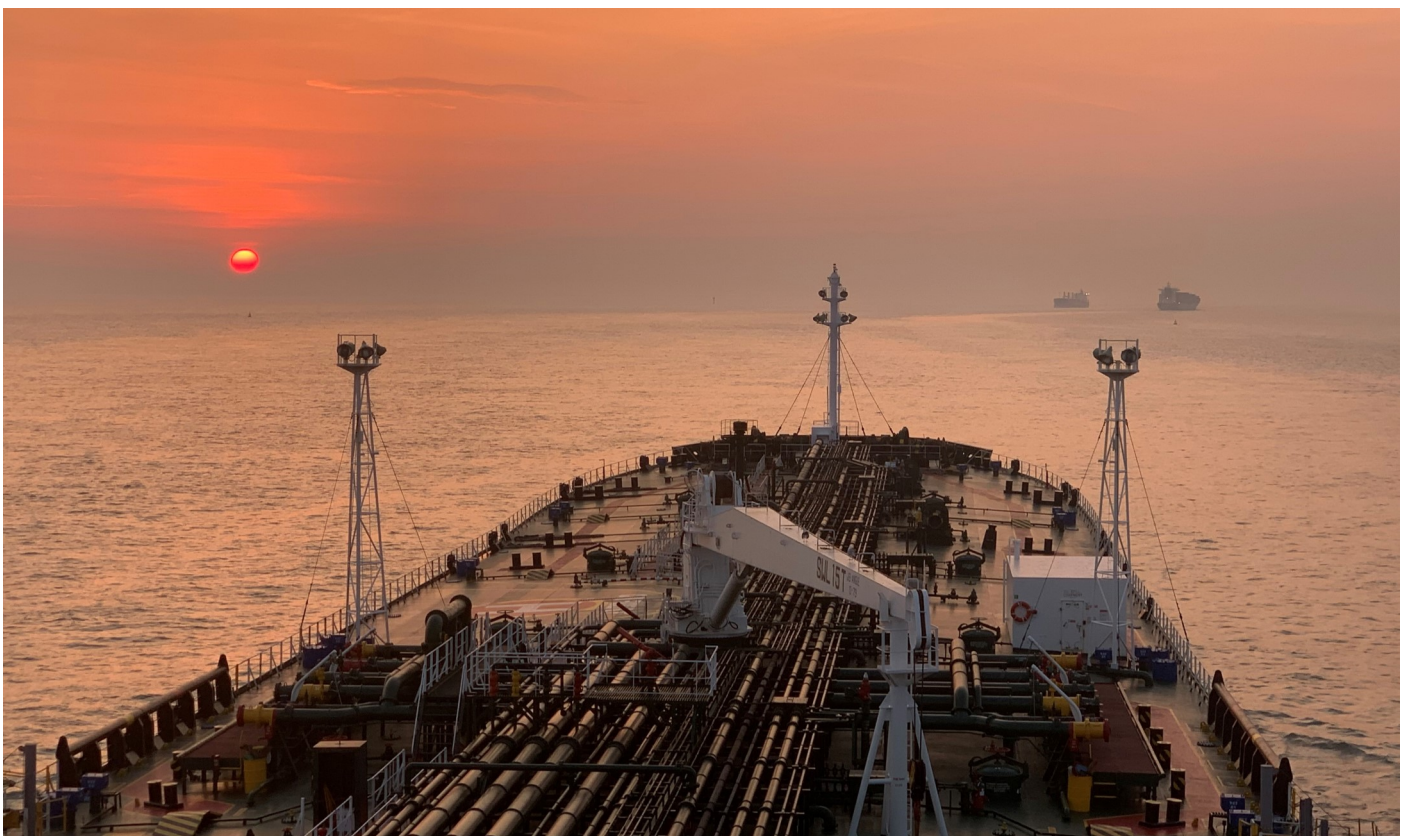
I hope this edition of the newsletter will please you and that we can bring more of this on a regular basis.

Happy reading and stay safe.

The Editor

Olivier Allaert

Registered Pilot Region Scheldt



Statement of the President

Dear Colleagues,

When I was elected President on May 20th, I was overwhelmed that the vote was unanimous.

I thank all the presidents of the member countries for this great vote of confidence.

I will do everything possible to meet the high expectations.

It is of course a pity that the election could only take place during a virtual meeting.

What makes me sad, however, is that the farewell of my predecessor as well as that of our board members Capt. Christophe Reux, Capt. Fiorenzo "Cino" Milani and our long-standing deserving colleague Claire Van Lokeren could only take place within this virtual meeting.

However, we will definitely make up for this at our next general meeting !

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the aforementioned colleagues for their excellent work over the past years. My predecessor Captain Stein Inge Dahn has lived the goals of EMPA with all his heart.

With his positive and robust charisma he has been an excellent representative of our profession.

During his long term in office he has always made sure that the pilotage system in Europe has received the attention and appreciation it deserves.

As a special merit, I would like to highlight the implementation of the so-called EU Port Services Regulation or PP3. In the regulation, pilotage was excluded from the chapter on market access and is described as what it is in our opinion:

A service within the framework of public services of general interest.

Many thanks on behalf of the European pilots for this great achievement.

We had so many excellent candidates for the positions of Vice President. I feel sorry for those who were not elected, they definitely deserved it, too.

In 2023 we will again have three new positions to vacate. It would be great if the candidates who did not make it this time would make themselves available again.

I am happy to have a good mix of experienced and new colleagues on the new board.

Our first (of course virtual) meetings have already shown me that there is a lot of enthusiasm and the will to innovate.

A good idea of our communication team is that we want to start a survey , in which each member can choose what expectations they have of EMPA in general and the new board of directors in particular.

Of course, the tasks of EMPA are already laid down in our statutes, but what other expectations are there?

We'll start this survey after the summer break - I'm already looking forward to the exciting results.

We will continue to change our communication channels.

We will choose a platform via which we can communicate in channels and on a topic-related basis. This way of working is more productive than our previous e-mail communication.

Another topic we are working on is the cooperation with IMPA, especially with regard to the safety of pilot ladders, in which many would like EMPA to be more active. We will also let fellow pilots with great expertise in this regard have their say here. Further topics for the near future are the revision and development of EMPA recommendations, the continuation of cooperation with other maritime stakeholders and the accompaniment of long-term topics such as the European Green Deal and "autonomous shipping", whatever is understood by this in detail.

At the political level, a close monitoring and participating in the evaluation of Article 20 of the ports regulation is extremely essential, because the Commission shall, no later than 24 March 2023, submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the functioning and effect of this Regulation.

What is important outside of the work of the board is greater involvement of the presidents of the individual countries. A meeting on an annual basis within the framework of the general meeting is simply not enough. A more frequent virtual meeting is a good idea here. I would like to schedule such a meeting this autumn. Knowing and accompanying the situation of pilotage in the member countries is indispensable.

It is obvious that there are many tasks ahead of us. I look forward to tackling them in close cooperation with all of you.

Yours faithfully

Erik Dalege

Hamburg, July13th, 2021



EMPA General Meeting 2020

Perhaps you were wondering what happened with the General Meeting, which was due to be organised last April during the Corona period? A General Meeting was indeed held, but in a slightly different form, namely by proxy.

What follows is a brief summary of the events.

When it became clear in March that the General Meeting could not physically take place as we know it, the Secretary General looked into the different possibilities to organise a legally binding General Meeting in accordance with the statutes of EMPA and the applicable Belgian legislation. The list of viable options was limited, but the Board of Directors still managed to organise a successful meeting, not physically but by proxy.

On September 7, 2020, the Council of Presidents meeting was held where all Presidents of the affiliated associations were able to discuss and evaluate various matters. Of course, the main topic was the current Corona pandemic and its further consequences.

Subsequently, the General Meeting was held by proxy, whereby the accounting documents for 2019 were adopted and the budget for 2021 approved. Following this procedure, EMPA complied with the statutes and the applicable legislation.

The Board of Directors will continue to look closely at all evolutions in order to be able to hold a physical General Meeting next year, but the future will tell whether this will be possible with regard to the ongoing pandemic.

More information will be provided through our usual communication channels and the EMPA website.

Please check the website regularly to see if there is more information.



EMPA General Meeting 2021

This meeting was organised digitally as a result of the current measures, as everyone knows it was not yet possible to organise this meeting physically. We hope that next year we can be together again to share our knowledge and celebrate our friendship.

This year's General meeting was dominated by the elections for a new President and 4 members of the board of directors.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all board members who stepped down for their contribution to the European Maritime pilots organisation in recent years.

It is with a heavy heart that we have not been able to organise a beautiful physical farewell.

We also want to welcome the new board members and look forward to their contribution for the coming years.

Retiring board members are :

President: Stein Inge Dahn

Vice President - Treasurer: Christophe Reux

Vice President : Fiorenzo Milani

Vice President : Erik Dalege

Vice President : Joost Mulder

New board members are:

President: Erik Dalege

Vice President - Treasurer: Henry Caubrière

Vice President : Joost Mulder (Re-elected)

Vice President : Kaj Hahtonen

Vice President : Patrick Galvin

We would like to thank all candidates who stood for election for their commitment and participation.

The board of directors was pleasantly surprised that the number of candidates for the number of places available was large, which means that the sense of engagement is great among the pilot family, and that together we are represented as a great unity in Europe.



Programme EMPA General meeting

28/4/2021 COP meeting

28/4/2021 Interactive digital presentation Candidates board of directors

Presentation President EMPA

Capt Erik Dalege

Bundeslotsenkammer—BLK

Presentation Candidates Board of directors EMPA

Re-election :

Capt Joost Mulder

Nederlandse loodsen corporatie—NLC

New election :

Capt Henry CAUBRIÈRE

Fédération Française des Pilotes Maritimes - FFPM

Capt. Francesco BANDIERA

Fedepiloti

Capt José Antonio PÉREZ LORENTE

Colegio Oficial Nacional de Practicos de Puerto

Capt Kaj Hahtonen

Finnish Maritime Pilots Association—Luotsilitto

Capt Patrick Galvin

Association of Maritime Pilots Ireland—AMPI

Capt Pieterjan Van Broeckhoven

Beroepsvereniging van Loodsen - BVL

Capt Mutlu Dundar

Turkish Maritime Pilots Association — TUMPA

New Elected Boardmembers

New EMPA President



CAPT. Erik Dalege

*President EMPA
President Bundeslotsenkammer
Active pilot Elbe river, (Germany)*

Phone: +49 40 60 77 60 310

E-mail: president@empa-pilots.eu

New EMPA Vice Presidents

CAPT. Henry Caubrière

*Treasurer EMPA
Secretary General FFPM
Active pilot in Le Havre (France)*

Phone : +33 145223523

mail: henry.caubriere@ffpm.fr



CAPT. Joost Mulder

*Vice president EMPA
President Dutch Pilot Corporation
Active pilot in Rotterdam (Netherlands)*

Phone: +31 6 10937792

E-Mail: j.mulder@loodswezen.nl



CAPT. Patrick Galvin

*Vice president EMPA
Chairman AMPI
Active pilot in Shannon Foynes
(Ireland)*

Phone: +353 86 0265280

Email: patrick.galvin74@googlemail.com

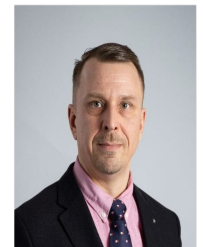


CAPT. Kaj Hahtonen

*Vice President EMPA
Finnpilot Board member
Active pilot Bay of Bothnia (Finland)*

Phone: +358400382000

E-mail: kaj.hahtonen@luotsiliitto.fi



Resigning Vice Presidents

President

Capt Stein Inge Dahn

We would like to thank Stein Inge Dahn for his many years of dedication to EMPA. Both as a delegate, but also as a member of the board of directors and as chairman. During his presidency he has managed to hold back a very important item such as competition in the pilotage services in Europe. Security and many other matters were also fulfilled with the necessary leadership.

The move of the head office from Antwerp to Brussels to improve ties with European partners was a success.

We wish Stein Inge Dahn every success in the future.



Senior Vice President/Treasurer EMPA

Capt Christophe Reux

We would like to thank Capt Christophe Reux for his very focused way of working to further improve the financial situation. His insight into savings without compromising operation was also very remarkable. Capt Reux managed to ensure the operation of EMPA for many years by creating a stable financial base. His contribution to the board of directors was also very great, his diplomacy, knowledge and dedication will be missed during the meetings.

But most of all, we will miss Capt Reux's friendship and humor.

Thank you for your support and commitment, we wish you a good and well deserved retirement in the future



Vice President

Capt Fiorenzo Milani

We would like to thank Capt Fiorenzo "Cino" Milani for the many years associated with the EMPA family. Over the years, he has continuously worked for the connection between the various associations, but also strengthened the ties with many stakeholders. His insight and sense of togetherness also means that he played a very leading role in Italy and the surrounding associations on the Mediterranean.

You and Laura always make us feel like part of the family and that's why we wish you a bright future together where the fun will never be far away.



New Member Association

A new member was admitted during the 55th General meeting:

Montegro Pilots association is a new association founded in November 2019. Since that period they have submitted an application as a member of EMPA.

After the normal admission procedure, they were admitted by the 55th EMPA General meeting. We are very excited that a new member has joined EMPA

Below a short summary of the region of the Montegro Pilot Association.

MPAM is a new pilot organization that was started on November 15, 2019. At the moment the organization has 8 members, 6 from the port of Bar and 2 from the port of Kotor (Boka bay). This organization is led by Cpt. Vasko Rabrenovic, who has been an active pilot in the port of Bar since 2008.

Port of Bar

In the port of Bar, an average of about 1,300 pilotage operations are carried out per year and an average pilotage trip takes about 45 minutes. The pilotage trip goes from the pilot buoy to the berth. the pilot buoy is located approximately 1Nm from the entrance of the harbor.

The biggest challenge for the pilots is that there is a NE wind that can develop high speeds from the mountain flanks in a few minutes. This is called the "Bura", the developed wind speeds range from 20 knots to even 50 knots in a very short time, in a few minutes the situation for the pilots changes very much so that they need all the expertise to be able to moor the ships safely.



Port of Kotor

In the port of Bar, an average of about 1,300 pilotage operations are carried out per year

The amount of pilotage trips consists mainly of cruise ships and superyachts, in normal circumstances a pilotage trip in the port of Kotor takes about 2 hours. The pilot's pick-up point is located at the pilot buoy at the entrance to Boka Bay.

The pilot trip takes so long because the maximum speed in the bay is 10kn.

During the pilot trip, the passage "VERIGE" is the most challenging, because of the ever-present southerly wind that is used by the large amount of sailing boats. That is why extra attention must be paid during the pilot trip and that is why the maximum speed is therefore 6 kn.



Training the next generation

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When you want to swim, you take lessons to master this art, should you want to be able to drive a car, it's also a good idea to contact a driving school to teach you the basics as well as the tips and tricks. After this first sentence it seems quite obvious that when you want to become a maritime pilot, you should also be taught how to 'commute' safely: you have to be taught how to use a pilot transfer arrangement and also how to recognise the good and the bad ones, basically: survival skills.

When I started back in 2008 there was nobody explaining me the do's and don'ts on the wonderful world of pilot ladders. All they told me was when a ladder is bad, you can reject, and that was it. Upon approaching my first ship as an apprentice, the pilot who took me with him said: I will go first, you follow me, and whatever you do....don't let go.



2 years ago my Dutch colleagues Erik Kiela and Koen de Kort recognised this problem as well and they started thinking about an in house safety training, teaching the next generation pilots the basic skills about safety regarding pilot- age in general and more specific: the boarding and disembarking of ships. In 2021 they invited me to join them in this training, and so I did this year for the first time. Hanzo Kooijman took over from Erik a bit earlier.

The schedule Hanzo and Koen have developed for these 3 training days consists out of 1 day in the classroom with the entire group, where they are taught the basics about the different types of pilot vessels/launches we use (hosted by Dick Rijnsaardt), the proper pilot PPE and a lecture on pilot transfer arrangements and how to behave and act on tankers. The next day the group was divided in 2 and one group went to an official training centre for practical survival skills as well as a pilot based 'HUET' and the other group boarded the vessel Mercurur that we use for the entire period of training.

The captain of the Mv "Mercurur" has developed a structure on which we can hang a pilot ladder to train the apprentices in the basics of embarking and disembarking.



You might notice the manropes are non-compliant, but the idea of manropes came up like a last second idea to show them how they are used. Manropes are hardly ever used in our region. We only demonstrated it to them. Next training session the manropes will be as they should be. After all, we teach them not to use a non-compliant (i.e. dangerous) PTA and they were fully aware of the fact this setup was not as it should be. When we have a compliant setup, the next group will be allowed to use them of course. All apprentices went up and down the ladder a lot of times and we explained them the do's and don'ts.

Another aspect of pilotage we taught them is how to behave should you go overboard and what actions will be taken by the pilot launch. Every apprentice jumped in the water from the pilot launch and was retrieved. On of the younger pilots in the association recently ended up in the water and he told us that the same thing happened as during these 3 training days....so training makes sense!!

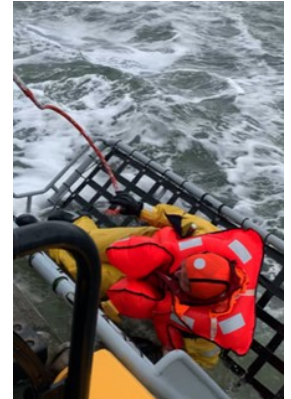
Finally, we also had an impressive helicopter fly by and a demonstration of a self-propelled, remote controlled life buoy. Links of the videos will be uploaded onto the EMPA website.

I hope more associations will implement some form of training like we did, because after I uploaded some videos on my LinkedIn page and onto the well known Facebook page '#Dangeroussladders', I found out that there are not a lot of associations conducting these kind of trainings and I would really suggest that every association should train the next generation in these aspects as well. Yes, it does cost money, but after all, safety is not a cost, but an investment! And to use another popular proverb: When you think safety is expensive, try accidents!!

Please take a look at the videos and I would like to receive all feedback on this training so we can keep improving it.

Please stay safe!!

Author : Arie Palmers, Registered Pilot Netherlands



Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service

Last November maritime pilot and author Capt. Kevin Vallance received the message that he has been awarded the Merchant Navy Medal for his ongoing efforts, services and work regarding maritime safety in general and in our case of course the work he is doing to make pilot transfer arrangements safer. The continuous work he does, as well as the books and articles he publishes, make him a very worthy recipient of this considerable award.

On the 29th of June, Kevin and his family were invited to London to attend the Medal ceremony, where he was given his well-earned medal during a solemn ceremony. They had a lovely day in London and of course a big celebration during this day and I hope Kevin has recovered soon from this wonderful event.

When I speak for myself I cannot think of any other person in the big and dangerous world of ladders, who deserves this award more. I hope this prestigious award and the publicity around it will help in getting all the PTA's around the world safer for all who are climbing them and let's also not forget all the seafarers who have to rig them day in and day out.



We all have learned a lot from our colleague Kevin and we still do today. He is always ready to help or advise anyone who drops him an e-mail or a question. Thanks again Kevin and please keep up the good work you are doing!



Author : Arie Palmers, Registerd Pilot Netherlands

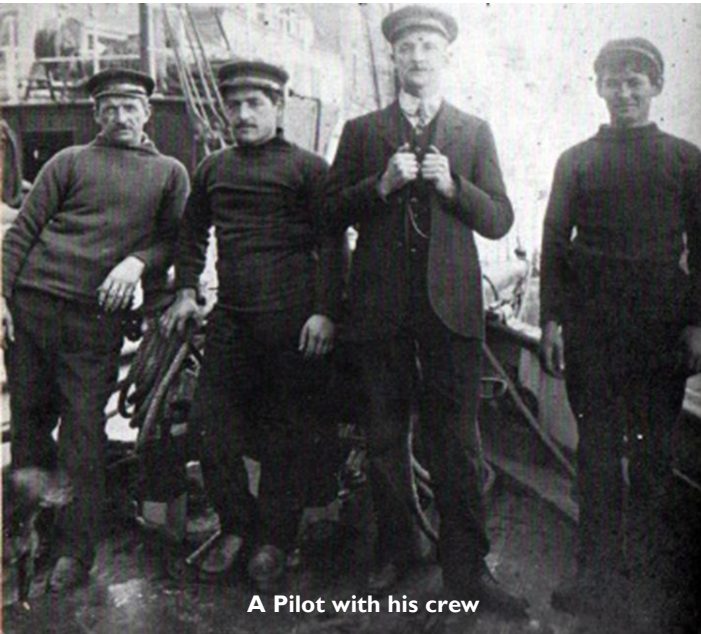
Photos courtesy of Vicky Vallance

Learn from History

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Today, the pilotage service in France is certainly a model to be imitated and possibly exported, for organization, efficiency, economy and high safety standards; but it has not always been like this! A little over a hundred years ago, all French pilots were in competition with each other, each individual pilot owned his own boat, had his own crew and managed the service independently both in terms of expenses and profits.

This competition between pilots meant that in order to secure their work, the French pilots went far from their port to intercept commercial traffic, in fact the pilotage operation on arrival was guaranteed to the pilot who first boarded the ship.



A Pilot with his crew

In practice, aboard their cutters, they went 50/60 miles from the coast and sometimes even further, waiting to intercept the largest ship, which brought about problems and consequences that are easy to imagine!!

The pilotage service clearly followed very specific rules, which guaranteed the safety of a service to ships both arriving and departing, limiting the number of pilot licenses, the recruitment of new pilots; but certainly not their safety at sea and a fair sharing of profits.

Each pilot owned his proper cutter, and recruited his own crew, very often among his family members, which normally consisted of four people: the cutter commander, a sailor, a hub and of course the pilot could add an apprentice pilot.

The choice of crew became fundamental because the ability to board the ship depended only on the capability of this crew. The pilot normally spent ten days in port, where the service was guaranteed to the departing ships; a service which, in order not to create disparity, was assigned by the Chief Pilot by casting lots among the pilots on duty; but the ship's Captain could also choose the pilot, paying a little extra. For twenty days, however, the pilot went to sea in search of ships destined for their port and clearly the farther he went, the easier it was to intercept them.

Now what did not work in all this? In the normal organization of the service, ships with a larger tonnage were privileged. After all, no one went sixty miles from the coast to pilot a small ship; taking the risk often prevailed over common sense so pilots went out to sea even in bad weather to get the service. Furthermore, it was nearly impossible to become a pilot: if you were not related to an actual pilot, considering that in addition to the apprenticeship period, they had to become owner of the cutter. Last but not least, there was a disproportionate distribution of the proceeds. Those who risked the most, earned the most !!



A French Cutter in Le Havre

The inevitable consequences were that between 1870 and 1910, only in Le Havre, as many as 14 cutters sank with the pilot and his crew due to bad weather, thereby causing the death of about 40 people!

This way of piloting was a middle way between port and deepsea piloting, which inevitably went into crisis with the transition from sailing ships to steamships and with the war of 1914, which highlighted the need to have experienced pilots at the service of their port!

As always in moments of transition, there are those who try to take advantage of it...

It has to be pointed out that by the end of the 19th century, a study on French pilotage, performed on demand of the chambers of commerce and local users, who were requesting a total change of the pilot organization, demonstrated that the actual situation was satisfactory and up to government's expectations.

The chambers of commerce and local users were asking for the following changes:

- 1) Pilots to be paid by the government
- 2) Reduction of pilotage fees
- 3) Issuing of pilot exemption certificates for captains familiar with the port
- 4) Reduction of the number of pilots
- 5) Working tools provided by the government

But the forward-looking French pilots, on May 11, 1905, founded the **“National Federation of Maritime Pilots Unions of France, Algeria and the Colonies”** which would have their first headquarters at the Hotel Frascati in Le Havre before moving to Paris in 1952, which proved to be a wise decision. In 1910, its President M. Delamarre, refused to accept that pilots became civil servants; pilots had to remain independent men, subject to a regime of freedom, men with moral dignity and the necessary equipment, holders of an elite license, which entails duties and responsibilities but also rights and privileges!

Since 1928, the main ideas of the French Federation for remodeling the pilotage service in French ports are:

- Self employed pilots, running their pilot stations independently although under strict supervision of the Minister in charge of ports;
- Necessary infrastructure (boats, accommodation, helicopters...) owned by pilots under co-ownership regime;
- No competition inside ports (one port-one pilot station);
- Pilot fees discussed every year at local level together with users, port authority and administration, taking into account the specific working and traffic conditions;
- Pilot examination carried out at local level but under the control of French administration and Navy;
- Yearly medical fitness check;
- All pilot stations are member of their national association, FFPM.

This is how the pilotage service as we know it today in France was established!

We must always learn from history to avoid making the same mistakes, and from the history of our French friends we have learned that a country needs a strong Federation in which all pilots are recognized; because needless to say, the worst enemies of pilots are the pilots themselves!

The pilotage service, in order to be economical, efficient and safe, cannot be subject to competition!



Author : Fiorzno Milano, retired Italian Pilot

Kayak for Charity

Maltese Pilot Captain Albert Gambina, more than a Pilot!

ABOUT MYSELF

I am 60, and have been married for the past 30 years to Astrid. We are blessed with two children - Andrew is 27 and Carla is 22. They are my greatest supporters in all the events that I have taken part in throughout the years.

I can fairly say that my life has always been connected to the sea both as a youngster - whether it was swimming or pottering about in boats, or later on when I made it my professional career. I entered the Malta Nautical School, as it was known in 1976. In August 1977 I joined my first vessel as navigation officer cadet with our national shippingline "Sea Malta" and progressed through the ranks culminating with obtaining my Master Mariner's certificate in December 1993. I then worked as a ship's captain both locally and abroad. In 2002 I was accepted as a trainee pilot with Malta Maritime Pilots Co-op. Today I am a senior Pilot within this organisation.



KAYAK FOR CHARITY

I started kayaking in 2006 and joined the Malta Canoe Federation. My first long trip was a circumnavigation of Malta in 2007.

In July 2008, my friend Dorian Vassallo, who had lost his wife to cancer, organised the first ever kayak crossing from the island of Gozo to Sicily under the banner "Kayak for Cancer - Malta" to raise funds for the Malta Cancer Foundation. I was invited to take part, post-event Dorian and I discussed the possibility of

undertaking more ambitious long-distance kayak events to raise funds for charity. In jest we mentioned that the next event would be to paddle from Tunisia to Malta - which was met with some raised eyebrows. I was confident that the trip to Tunisia was possible, with Dorian agreeing with me our paddling partnership was born. Along the way, Kayak for Cancer became "Kayak for Charity - Malta" in order to broaden the spectrum of causes we would support.

Some of the events we have accomplished in our K2 (double) kayak include quite a few firsts amongst which are;

- The crossing from Tunisia to Malta,
- The unassisted traverse of the Malta Channel to Punta Secca in Sicily,
- The kayak circumnavigation of the Maltese archipelago

Our efforts have not gone unrecognised, in 2011 we were given special awards by SportMalta, as well as the Malta Olympic Committee.



The complete list includes:

2008 – Marsalforn, Gozo – Pozzallo, Sicily
 2009 – Circumnavigation of the Maltese Archipelago
 2009 - Pozzallo, Sicily – Malta night crossing
 2009 - Malta – Punta Secca, Sicily - unassisted crossing
 2009 - 24 hour paddling marathon
 2010 – Circumnavigation of the Maltese archipelago
 2010 – Malta - Linosa

2010 – Mahdia, Tunisia – Malta via Lampedusa and Linosa
 2011 – Malta – Catania, Sicily - unassisted crossing
 2012 – Malta - Linosa

We also have circumnavigated Malta 18 times

Sicily to Malta, first solo crossing

CHIARA BONELLO

As night fell last Tuesday a solitary kayak carrying Captain Albert Gambina and Dorian Vassallo approached the prominent lighthouse at Punta Secca, Sicily, having set off that morning from Marfa.

This was the first time the 54 mile journey had been undertaken completely unassisted and completed in 14 hours.

The pair are no strangers to pushing the boundaries however, as they did last June when they were the first to cross from Pozzallo to Valletta at night in a fund-raising activity.

Travelling without any support boats requires more thorough planning, as the most important food and equipment must be close at hand and cleverly packed. The highlight of the whole trip, however, was definitely the fascinating marine life



they encountered. One such sight was that of a sea turtle floating by, a seagull seated comfortably on its shell, taking a rest.

Both were keen to dispel the myth that under the seas some mysterious malevolent creature is hidden, waiting to jump out and attack anyone who passes by. Very often the largest threats they encounter are man made, in the form, for instance, of speedboats which are driven too fast.

An annual crossing is organised to raise funds for the Malta Cancer Foundation, and this normally takes place sometime around June. The 2010 trip will be more ambitious, however, crossing from Mahdia, in Tunisia to Golden Bay.

The trip will be undertaken in three stages, from Mahdia to Lampedusa, from Lampedusa to Linosa, and the final stage from Linosa to Golden Bay. It is pre-

dicted to take between four and five days, and will be raising funds for Puttinu Cares, the children cancer support group.

Captain Gambina said that although factors like the heat did pose a challenge, the main challenges of such an undertaking were psychological. They had to have utmost trust, both in their GPS, as well as in one another.

Upon meeting the pair it becomes immediately apparent that this is no problem, as they share the same sense of adventure, the same mentality and the same sense of humour, which is crucial when they're out at sea for long hours. More than anything else, however, the trust they have in one another is a vital element.

Both men are certain of one thing, giving up is simply not an option. They both agree this trip would not have been possible without their sponsors, Sullivan

Maritime, Medcomms and VKV, a Swedish company.

Major Andrew Mallia, from the Armed Forces rescue coordination centre, the Malta Maritime Authority and the Meteorological Office offered their full support. Henry Bason and Francesco Petralia, a senior instructor with Sottocosta, an Italian kayak club, also backed their challenge.

Both form part of the Malta Open Sea Kayak Club, which promotes kayak touring sports. The club is affiliated to the Malta Canoe Federation. The federation will be organising a 24 hour paddling marathon on 26 September, to raise money for the Malta Hospice Movement.



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THIS YEAR'S EVENT

The origins of this year's event was formed when we discussed, or rather dreamed of undertaking a voyage by kayak following the footsteps of Saint Paul from Caesarea in Israel to Rome, with a similar route. The volatility in the Eastern Mediterranean quickly put paid to our plans. However, in 2013 we completed part of Saint Paul's voyage, whilst raising funds for the Malta Community Chest Fund, by paddling from Pozzallo in Sicily to Rome. Stopping at the same places as St Paul did, amongst them Reggio Calabria and Pozzuoli.

Our dream of a voyage from the Levant remained undiminished and in 2017 we began looking for a suitable oceanrowing boat that would enable us to row from Crete to Malta. This eventually transformed into an event that would see us paddle our trusty kayak (the "Anita" built by Kåre Ankervik from VKV, Sweden) from Greece to Malta. We were all set to do this in 2020 when the pandemic made this impossible. The crossing to and from Sicily, as well as its circumnavigation are just as arduous and challenging, albeit logistically easier.



WHO ARE INSPIRE FOUNDATION

Inspire Foundation (<https://inspire.org.mt/>) is a non-profit organisation that leads the way in providing therapeutic, education and leisure services to persons with disabilities in Malta and Gozo. Through close relations with parents, government, and the business community, Inspire aims to reach out and assist those who are excluded; to give them choice and opportunity, and to emphasize their human rights and equal access to independence, education, employment, leisure, and an inclusive community.

Inspire are determined to continue helping and serving, but depend on voluntary giving, volunteering, and social enterprise to continue to provide support to those in need. The funds donated will go towards the continuous development of facilities as well as enlarging the capacity to provide quality services to persons with a disability.

LAST WORD

Finally a word of thanks to all who support our endeavours, first and foremost my wife, children, family and friends. Thanks are also due to the team at Inspire who are doing all they can to make this event a success.



European Maritime Pilots' Association Vzw

Adm.Secretary

Claire VAN LOKEREN

office@empa-pilots.eu

T +32 2 430 25 78

M +32 491 61 46 18

www.empa-pilots.eu

Regentlaan 43-44

1000 Brussels

Office Mon. & Fri. 09.00-17.00

President

Erik Dalege (Bundeslotsenkammer, Germany)

president@empa-pilots.eu

Secretary General

Aileen VAN RAEMDONCK

Secretary-general@empa-pilots.eu

Senior Vice President

Miguel VIEIRA DE CASTRO (Sines, Portugal)

miguel.castro@apsinesalgarve.pt

Vice President

Kaj Hahtonen (Bay of Bothnia, Finland)

Kaj.hahtonen@luotsiliitto.fi

Vice President Treasurer

Henry Caubriere (Le Havre, France)

Henry.caubriere@ffpm.fr

Vice President

Peter LIGHTFOOT (Tees Bay Pilots)

peter.lightfoot1@ntlworld.com

Vice President

Patrick Galvin (Shannon Foynes, Ireland)

Patrick.galvin74@gmail.com

Vice President

Joost MULDER (Rotterdam, Netherlands)

J.mulder@loodswezen.nl

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WWW.EMPA-PILOTS.EU