2006 was a good year for SIRC in terms of research progress and the production of outputs. The Nippon Foundation fellowship programme continued to attract excellent applicants to Cardiff and the work of the Lloyd’s Register Research Unit (LRRU) progressed extremely well. We have seen the completion of some projects, and have been successful in establishing new ones, and the Centre continues to grow in terms of its international profile and reputation.

In 2006, we welcomed our newest cohort of Nippon Fellows with a reception at the School of Social Sciences (Glamorgan Building). The new fellows are from China (2) and the Philippines (2). They arrived just in time to witness the success of our second year Nippon Fellows who did very well in their Research Methods Diplomas with one fellow gaining a distinction (70%) and the others averaging very respectable marks of 60%+.

Within the Lloyd’s Register Research Unit work has concentrated on our very large study of risk perception. The Unit has published a report on perceptions of risk in relation to ship level incidents (see SIRC publications at www.sirc.cf.ac.uk for further details) and is in the process of finalising a similar report on the findings in relation to the risk of personal injury. In an exciting development we have been successful in gaining the co-operation of a number of Maritime Administrations and several P&I clubs, who have provided us with anonymised data relating to ‘real’ incidents involving ship level damage and personal injury. This will allow us to publish a third report in the series comparing ‘perceptions’ with ‘reality’. We hope that this will be the beginning of a longer term collaboration which might ultimately see the production of industry level, aggregate, information on seafarer accidents and injuries at sea.

The Lloyd’s Register Research Unit ended the year on a high note as an extension and an expansion were kindly agreed by the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust. This agreement will allow the Unit to increase its staffing by one and to extend its lifetime by three years to 2012. The increased resource will ensure that the Unit is able to complete its ambitious programme of work relating to various aspects of the interface between ships as technical/mechanical structures and people as living beings.

Other indications of progress at the Centre include: the high number of enquiries that we received in 2006 in relation to publications/expert opinion/advice, etc; the numbers of visits made to the Centre by scholars/teachers/students; and the number of ‘hits’ on the SIRC website.
In 2006 the website received a total of 572,541 ‘hits’. This figure must be regarded with some caution as it will incorporate many ‘accidental’ hits from browsers seeking alternative sites. Page request data is generally a better indicator of ‘genuine’ interest. The site received 180,605 page requests in 2006. Whilst this figure does not indicate the number of users (users may visit the site repeatedly and are likely to make several page requests per visit) it provides us with a firm indication that the Centre is being used as a resource and a site of information by a significant number of individuals. Such use is very pleasing and will encourage us to continue to further develop the website for international browsers. In doing this we will prioritise the inclusion of SIRC ‘in-house’ publications (free of charge in PDF downloadable format) as well as the reproduction of articles where copyright permits.

In the year 2006, we welcomed visitors from across the world but special mention should be given to two separate ‘delegations’ that visited the Centre in October and November from Kobe University in Japan. These guests brought with them discussion of some fascinating ideas that they are in the process of developing in relation to maritime education and training and the ‘human element’. In 2007, we will, of course, be very pleased to welcome, not only our friends from Kobe back to the Centre but, any other visitors seeking to work in areas where we may share common experiences or objectives.

The year was not without its quota of entertainment and ‘fun’. In February, Professor David Walters represented SIRC at an event marking the 25th anniversary of the ITF Seafarers’ Trust, in London. Over the 25 years of its operation the Trust has undertaken very valuable work in support of seafarers’ welfare and we were delighted to be involved in its ‘silver’ anniversary celebrations.

It seemed to be quite a year for anniversaries and in July Dr Sampson attended the 250th anniversary celebrations of the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, accompanied by Nippon Fellow Mr Victor Gekara. The celebrations were staged aboard a Royal Navy vessel moored near Greenwich. HM The Queen attended the event, as patron of the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, and inspected a 96-strong royal guard and a 70-strong band gathered on the flight deck.

Photos by: LA (Phot) Dave Gallagher RN of HMS Albion
In January Dr Bailey attended the RINA conference ‘Learning from Marine Incidents III’ and the IMO Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping STW 37 (as an observer). May saw the attendance of Dr Sampson at the LSM conference in St Petersburg, and in September Dr Sampson was very pleased to travel to the Royal Society of Medicine, in London, in order to attend the ISF conference and to meet with a number of friends and colleagues. However, it wasn’t just a case of ‘going places’, we also had our share of visitors coming to SIRC and a little later in the month SIRC was pleased to receive a visit from Mr Wada, our new contact at the Nippon Foundation. The SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows and many of their supervisors gathered over a buffet lunch to meet and to chat with Mr Wada in the relaxed and happy atmosphere which very much characterises the programme.

October was a busy month at the Centre. Dr Erol Kahveci went to France to join a seminar on issues relating to seafarer abandonment which was hosted by The Observatory on Seafarers Rights and Dr Sampson was invited to attend a very timely ‘roundtable’ seminar hosted by the Mission to Seafarers on the more general issue of Seafarers’ Welfare. At the event, a selected group of stakeholders was joined by the Minister of Transport, Dr Stephen Ladyman, who gave a well-received address. The ‘panel’ then went on to consider and discuss seafarers’ welfare in its broadest terms.

It can only be hoped that such meetings provide a platform for the future development of collaborative work on seafarer welfare which, notwithstanding the new ILO ‘super convention’, requires a great deal of further attention.

SIRC welcomed a new and important member of staff in October. Anna Dahlgren joined SIRC in the middle of the month and is focussing on a new programme of work dedicated specifically to health and safety. She spent much of her time in her first weeks at SIRC undertaking familiarisation visits to key organisations connected with seafarers, and issues of health and safety, and in the conduct of a literature review relating to ‘sleep’. Anna has experience of working on issues relating to fatigue in other sectors and hopes to contribute to the development of projects relating to sleep and fatigue, nutrition, global accident and incident data collection, and other health-related areas of work in conjunction with this initiative. We hope that she will be joined by a further researcher, late in 2007, to facilitate a concerted effort to attract project funding relating to seafarer health and safety.
The month of October ended with the attendance of Dr Sampson at the Mission to Seafarers (MtS) world conference which marked their 150th year of operation. The conference was addressed by the MtS President, the Princess Royal, who strongly endorsed the work of the organisation and emphasised the importance of the Mission and other similar bodies in providing support to seafarers.

No sooner had the Mission’s conference wound up than it seemed that Dr Sampson was travelling again, this time to the LSM conference in Manila. The attendance, at this popular conference, of many organisations and individuals familiar with, and to, SIRC made it a great opportunity to catch up with people and to discuss new projects and funding possibilities.

Predictably the year ended with the now ‘traditional’ SIRC-Nippon Foundation Christmas event. A decision was made to visit St Fagans Museum of Welsh Life which is set outdoors and includes a range of historic buildings from various moments in Welsh history. Sadly the weather was against the intrepid SIRC party and the rain came down leaving people wet, cold, and wind-lashed. The restorative power of a hot Christmas dinner and a variety of contentious quiz questions is remarkable to witness however, and the event ended with a lot of smiling faces and warm camaraderie!

All that was left to set the seal on a productive and successful year was the successful defence by Anna Dahlgren of her thesis on her return to Sweden. Although the result was never in doubt, Dr Dahlgren was no doubt pleased to go into the New Year having completed this final stage of her PhD, and her colleagues were similarly delighted for her!

Dissemination and Teaching

The Centre has a responsibility to publish different kinds of material to meet the needs and requirements of two different ‘audiences’. On the one hand SIRC seeks to relate to peers within the ‘academic’ world, and engage in academic debate, via publication in social science and maritime policy journals and with academic publishing houses. On the other hand SIRC seeks to disseminate the findings from research conducted within the Centre to the wider ‘maritime community’ via ‘industry’ publications (such as Seaways, The Sea, etc), attendance at industry events and conferences, the organisation of special events such as the SIRC biennial symposia and increasingly via on-line publication aimed at an ‘industry’ audience. SIRC’s publication record can be seen to be improving in relation to both of these target audiences.
The Centre has increased its output in relation to on-line publications (accessible to the wider maritime community) both in terms of total numbers of reports, and impressively, in terms of staff productivity. The two SIRC reports which were published on-line in 2006 (Bailey, Ellis, Sampson, and Winchester, Sampson, Shelly) attracted considerable interest and enthusiasm from the industry and occasioned, not only feedback from individuals accessing the material but also, comment in the international press (e.g. *Lloyd’s List* 20/09/06).

We are delighted that staff continue to contribute regular pieces to *The Sea* (published by the Mission to Seafarers and distributed to seafarers across the world). To improve accessibility, all articles authored by SIRC staff, in *The Sea*, are reproduced on the SIRC website by kind permission of the newspaper’s editor and publishers. SIRC staff also write for a variety of ‘industry’ publications such as *Transport International* and speak wherever possible at industry events and conferences.

The biennial symposia continue to come around quicker than any of us expect, and extensive preparations are already underway for the 2007 SIRC symposium. Following each event, SIRC symposia proceedings are made available to all browsers on the SIRC website in downloadable PDF format.

In relation to academic publishing, the centre is also improving its output. In the last few years the Centre has seen members publishing in an increasing number of high-ranking social science journals including: *Ethnography*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *International Review of Social History*, and *Qualitative Research*. In 2006 this record was further improved with the addition of articles in *Sociological Review* (Bailey, Housley, Belcher), *Work, Employment and Society* (Thomas and Bailey), and *Global Networks* (Sampson and Schroeder). 2006 also saw the publication of Erol Kahveci’s book *The Other Car Workers* written jointly with Professor Theo Nichols of the School of Social Sciences (SOCSI) at Cardiff. Whilst publishing in two domains is demanding in terms of skill, and time, staff at the Centre are increasingly meeting this challenge thereby improving the standing of the Centre and disseminating important research findings as widely as possible. This improvement in the quality and quantity of publications (per capita) augers well for the future providing us with a sound foundation from which to develop at a time when we are increasingly required to identify new sources of support and funding for our work.

SIRC staff were also active in relation to giving lectures, workshops and seminars. As with publications, staff at SIRC need to disseminate work via these routes to both academic and industry audiences. To this end, Dr Bin
Wu joined colleague Dr Valter Zanin at Padova University (Italy) in early April to deliver the first workshop organised to disseminate findings from their collaborative study of Chinese entrepreneurs in Veneto. Later in the month, Dr Wu travelled to Shenzhen in China to attend the *Shenzhen International Maritime Forum*. This was an important local event organised by the Chinese government on the theme of ‘Quality Seafarers’. Dr Wu joined other invited speakers from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Shipping Federation (ISF) and European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), to speak on the transformation of Chinese seafarers into ‘global seafarers’ and to assess their current position in the global labour market. Whilst Dr Wu was in Italy, Dr Sampson travelled to the Global University in Kassel (Germany) to deliver a paper to postgraduate students, union representatives and academics, with SIRC associate researcher, Professor Michael Bloor.

In May, Dr Erol Kahveci travelled to Barcelona to deliver his, now ‘regular’, module on the ‘Human Element in Shipping’ to students at the University Polytechnic of Catalunya, in Barcelona, Spain. Earlier in the month Dr Wu was also busy delivering a seminar to 40 staff, postgraduate, and undergraduate students, organised jointly by the schools of navigation and marine engineering at Xiamen Jimei University, in China.

July saw the attendance of Dr Sampson at the ESRC-funded Oxford Research Methods Festival in order to jointly deliver a presentation with colleagues, Dr Ben Fincham, and Professor Michael Bloor, on researcher risk. A similar paper was also delivered at the BSA Medical Sociology Conference in Edinburgh in September. These papers reported on the early findings of an ESRC-funded Inquiry, based in Qualiti (Cardiff University) on researcher risk. The inquiry was chaired by Professor Bloor with input and assistance from both Dr Sampson and Dr Fincham. This involvement represents a continuation of work on research methods undertaken at SIRC over the past three years and an on-going concern with researcher risk.

**Project Progress**

The Stress Prevention Activities (SPA) project, to which SIRC has made a small contribution in adapting and developing a syllabus for teaching stress prevention techniques in a maritime context, is now at an end. The project was funded under the European Commission’s ‘Leonardo’ programme and aimed to contribute towards the teaching of stress prevention in a range of employment sectors. All that remains is for SIRC and other participating organisations to publicise the outputs from the project and encourage their exploration and use.
Another European ‘project’ that is drawing to a close is the EC-funded Maritime Transport Co-ordination Platform (MTCP). This project is due to end in 2007. It will culminate in a large-scale workshop marking the successful completion of an innovative co-ordination action which has brought together groups of individuals connected with, and committed to, the maritime sector in its broadest sense.

The study that SIRC began in 2005 on behalf of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) will come to an end in early 2007. As a dedicated, and confidential, piece of research commissioned by EMSA the project findings will not be published by SIRC but will be reported to EMSA directly.

Another project which will come to an end in 2007 is a study of port-based welfare work conducted by Erol Kahveci, and colleagues, on behalf of the ITF-Seafarers Trust. Like the EMSA research, the findings of this study will be reported directly to the funders and disseminated more widely only at their request or with their permission. Happily the Seafarers’ Trust has already kindly agreed that the research can be reported at the next SIRC symposium (July 2007) where it is likely to be of interest to a wide section of the invited audience.

In 2006, Dr Wu consolidated links with colleagues in Padova University and took part in a collaborative study of migrant Chinese workers in Italy. This study has led to the presentation of several seminars and it is hoped that the work will be further developed in the future under the leadership of Dr Zanin in Padova.

In 2006, Dr Wu also began working with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University with the objective of supporting ‘seafarer studies’. As part of this initiative Dr Wu and his collaborators are planning the submission of a research grant proposal to the Hong Kong Research Grants Council (the Hong Kong equivalent to the UK ESRC) in 2007.

The Lloyd’s Register Research Unit has enjoyed a productive and highly successful year. In August, the Unit published the first of an on-line series of reports describing the findings from a questionnaire distributed to seafarers and ship operators which focused upon perceptions of risk. The questionnaire was, in itself, a considerable success in capturing the responses of 2,372 personnel which constituted a 36% response rate. This is a remarkable achievement in relation to the return of an international postal questionnaire distributed to a number of remote sites (ships) as well as to more accessible locations (training centres, shipping companies etc). The first report from the LRRU, which considered the results pertaining to ship level incidents and accidents attracted a great deal of attention from the maritime community. It
is to be followed by the publication of two further, on-line, reports and subsequently we hope to disseminate the findings via a range of academic and ‘industry’ outlets.

In 2006 Dr Wu began a small-scale project considering the attitudes, and understandings, of Chinese seafarers in relation to safety at sea. This small-scale qualitative study involving on-board interviewing and observation, was initiated following the publication of the LRRU report on perceptions of risk. Within the report, the finding that nationality was the biggest predictor of risk perception was highlighted. This stimulated us to begin to consider such differences in perception in greater depth and led to the development of this study which is already generating some interesting findings.

New Projects for 2007

In 2007, Professor David Walters will be beginning a small-scale project considering the extent of exposure to hazardous chemicals on board cargo ships and the effectiveness of existing strategies in relation to managing the risk associated with transporting hazardous materials by sea. Building on similar research, recently conducted in land-based industries, the new research project will seek to explore these issues in co-operation with the industry.

The team on the Lloyd’s Register Research Unit will work hard on the dissemination of findings from the Unit’s first project on perceptions of risk. In addition, the Unit will develop its study of training and technology which has focussed upon the introduction of on-board Automated Identification Systems (AIS) and has already involved some data collection.

2007 will see Dr Dahlgren extending existing work to develop a broad dataset describing accidents at sea and including information on seafarer mortality and injury. This work was begun by Mr Neil Ellis, and colleagues, within the Lloyd’s Register Research Unit for the specific purpose of facilitating a comparison of seafarers’ perceptions of risk and the ‘reality’ of accidents and injuries. If it proves possible, the establishment of a dataset including aggregate statistics on seafarer deaths and injuries from a number of sources will provide a vital resource for all those seeking to undertake work on seafarer health and safety. In order to attempt to build a comprehensive dataset Anna, and others within SIRC, will work to encourage the participation and co-operation of Maritime Administrations, P&I clubs, major stakeholders, and academics working in this field.
The Centre is committed to the support of postgraduate research students and doctoral theses. We currently have an excellent range of theses being undertaken within the centre. The support of PhD students within SIRC will assist us in fostering and developing a network of, properly qualified, social scientists working on maritime-related issues in the future. In 2007 we expect some of our first cohort of Nippon Foundation funded fellows to submit theses for examination. We can expect to see further submissions in 2008, 2009, and 2010.

Currently theses on the following topics are being undertaken:

- Mohab Abou-Elkawam - Seafarers and growing environmental concerns
- Philip Belcher - Collision avoidance in the Dover Strait (viva due in 2007)
- Jessica Bernfeld - States, ships and sovereignty: what is revealed by industrialized nations’ responses to globalization? (MPhil)
- Syamantak Bhattacharya - The practice of self-regulated occupational health and safety (OHS) management in the shipping industry
- Victor Gekara - Globalisation, state strategy and labour in the shipping industry: the UK response to declining shipping skills
- Mohamed Ghanem - The social construction of marine accident statistics
- Elizabeth Gould - The experience of merchant navy cadets: a study of current and enduring aspects of seafaring life
- Iris Acejo - Exploring the decision of seafarers to participate in temporary migration
- Lin Li - Faith and seafarers
- Eliseo Lucero-Prisno III - Risk, sex and seafarers
- Shahriar Mazhari - Issues affecting the implementation of global regulations concerning minimum standards of competence for seafarers
- Momoko Motohashi - Women seafarers and their identities
- Lijun Tang - Being a seafarer-partner: Chinese seafarer-partners’ experiences online
- Nelson Turgo - Mapping Lamon Bay’s maritime geography: globalization, modernity and small-town politics in Southern Luzon, Philippines
- Zhiwei Zhao - What can shipping companies do for seafarers’ health and safety?
In April, Dr Nik Winchester saddened his friends and colleagues by leaving to join the Open University. He remains in touch however and can sometimes be found catching up with staff and students in the corridors of SIRC as he visits Cardiff for occasional duties at the University. Dr Winchester has joined our team of associate researchers thus retaining an institutional, as well as a personal, link.

In 2006 we lost another of our very popular associate researchers to a job at the European Maritime Safety Agency. Dr Bernardo Obando-Rojas had been connected with SIRC for very many years and is sadly missed by colleagues and friends. However, before he left he delighted all of his friends with the news that he and his wife were expecting twins, and we were thrilled to see the photographs of his delightful babies not long after their birth in the summer. Whilst we might have preferred not to give Bernardo up to his new post at EMSA we wish him very well and all hope to be kept posted with regard to the progress of little Daniela and Lucas.

In October 2006 we welcomed a new member of staff to SIRC. Dr Dahlgren has a strong interest in work on fatigue, shift patterns, and broader issues relating to employee health. She is rapidly developing an understanding of the maritime context and hopes to be submitting new research grant proposals to a variety of bodies in the coming years.

Dr Nick Bailey ended the year on a positive note having successfully applied for a ‘RCUK’ fellowship aimed at contract researchers in the UK. This fellowship will culminate in a permanent job within the University and we were all very pleased for Nick and his achievement in winning the award.

Nick was not the only member of SIRC with a spring in his step at the end of 2006. Syamantak Bhattacharya, one of our first cohort of Nippon-funded fellows, was barely able to contain his delight at the birth of his first child, Rohini. His pleasure was shared by his friends and colleagues who had awaited Rohini’s arrival with keen anticipation and have, no doubt, been queuing-up to offer babysitting services!
Staff at 31 December 2006

Dr Nicholas Bailey  RCUK Academic Research Fellow
Dr Anna Dahlgren  Research Associate
Ms Louise Deeley  Administrator
Mr Neil Ellis  Research Associate
Ms Maria Goldoni  Administrator
Mr John Goodwin  Archivist
Dr Erol Kahveci  Senior Research Associate
Ms Iveta Martinova  Administrative Assistant
Dr Helen Sampson  Director
Mr Tim Shelly  Data Manager
Prof David Walters  Professor
Dr Bin Wu  Research Associate

Associate Researchers

Professor Michael Bloor  Dr Marlene Calderon
Dr Michelle Thomas  Dr Nik Winchester

Future Plans

In 2007, SIRC hopes to consolidate links with the University of Padova in relation to the development of an Italian Research Unit on seafaring labour and welfare based in the Department of Sociology at the University of Padova. As part of the collaboration between SIRC and Padova it is hoped that Dr Wu will be involved in further developing work in relation to Chinese migration to Italy and that work will be conducted on health and illness amongst Italian seafarers.

We are currently awaiting the result of an EU Inti-DRIVEN project submission which has been led by Dr Daniele Cologna (of the Codici social research agency, Italy) in collaboration with Dr Valter Zanin of Padova University (Italy). Within the project Dr Wu, and SIRC, will make a contribution to the research in the UK and in China. This project has got through to the second stage of the funding selection process but we do not expect a final decision until later in 2007.

In the coming year, Dr Anna Dahlgren will work with colleagues within the Centre to attract funding for projects relating to seafarer health. In developing research proposals, collaborations with other institutions both nationally and internationally will be sought. It is hoped that, in 2007, Anna will be joined by a further, newly appointed, colleague to develop a programme of work focussing upon seafarers’ health and possibly including work on nutrition, mental health, sleep quality and deprivation, fatigue and shift systems.
As of April 2007, the Lloyd’s Register Research Unit will be expanded and extended to facilitate the conduct of its ambitious research programme. Mr Tim Shelly will join the Unit as a much needed data manager with responsibility for data cleaning, data entry, transcription, questionnaire distribution, and associated duties. The addition of Tim will be of considerable benefit to the Unit as a whole.

Bids to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) are planned on the topics of seafarers and faith (Kahveci and Sampson), precarious employment and the health and safety of Chinese freelance seafarers (Walters and Wu), shift patterns (Dahlgren et al), and labour intensification (Bloor, Fairbrother, Sampson et al). It should be noted, however, that ESRC funding is very highly sought after and awards are highly competitive as a result.

In 2007, we also expect to continue with our output of publications for both the industry and for an academic audience. Publications already in press include: an article in the leading journal Sociology (Sampson and Bloor); a chapter in a book on marginalisation and globalisation in China (Wu); and several SIRC in-house reports (Wu; Bailey, Ellis, Sampson; Obando-Rojas). This augers well for the coming year when we hope to build on the very solid achievements of 2006.

Publications

Books/Academic Journal Articles:


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CVCP Categories 1 & 11


**Short Works/Reports**


**Regarded Conference Contributions**


**Non-regarded Conference Contributions**


**Contributions to Edited Works**


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2 CVCP Categories 3 & 17
3 CVCP Category 4
4 CVCP Category 5
5 CVCP Category 7
Professional/Popular Journal Papers


Forthcoming Publications


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6 CVCP Categories 12 & 13


Events, Conferences, Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, etc


**Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AIS: Automatic Identification System  
BSA: British Sociological Association  
DG TREN: Directorate-General for Energy & Transport  
Eds: Editors  
EMSA: European Maritime Safety Agency  
ESRC: Economic & Social Research Council  
EU: European Union  
Inti: Integration of third country nationals  
ISF: International Shipping Federation  
ITF: The International Transport Workers’ Federation  
ILO: International Labour Organization  
IMO: International Maritime Organisation  
LRRU: Lloyd’s Register Research Unit  
LSM: Lloyd’s Ship Manager  
MTCP: Maritime Transport Co-ordination Platform  
MtS: Mission to Seafarers  
OHS: Occupational Health and Safety  
PDF: Portable Document Format  
PhD: Doctor of Philosophy  
P&I: Protection and Indemnity  
Qualiti: Qualitative Research Methods in the Social Sciences: Innovation, Integration and Impact  
RINA: Royal Institution of Naval Architects  
RCUK: Research Councils United Kingdom  
SIRC: Seafarers International Research Centre  
SME: Small and medium enterprises  
SOCSI: School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University  
STW: Standards of Training and Watchkeeping