2008 was a year of instability in the world at large ending with a season of uncertainty for many employees: seafarers and those involved in shore-side ship management operations amongst them. At SIRC, we are not insulated from such anxieties and Universities and independently funded research centres face difficult times ahead as budgets are cut and as potential research funders divert resources elsewhere. Nevertheless, 2008 was a year of development and change, success and challenge, as the Centre moved forwards with funding from its existing supporters and as a result of successful competitive tendering.

The financial year 2008-9 is the final year of core-funding support from the ITF-Seafarers Trust. The Seafarers Trust has supported SIRC, and the work undertaken here on issues related to seafarers, since the Centre’s inception in 1995. It has been instrumental in the development of research capacity in this vital and under-researched area of work which it has undertaken for the greater good of the maritime community and for which it deserves recognition. The Seafarers Trust’s support has been critical in allowing the Centre to develop initiatives to stimulate an interest in research on seafarers globally and has underpinned current initiatives which divert resources to specific programmes of work. Core funding from the Seafarers Trust has enabled researchers to work independently and objectively and it has also allowed the Centre to become a public resource for members of the industry and for other academics and scholars. Whilst the ending of Seafarers Trust core-funding will certainly impact on the Centre it will not bring about its immediate demise. SIRC is fortunate in having substantial on-going financial support from two other charitable sources, presently extending to 2012/13. This support has been allocated for two rather different programmes of work: The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust (LRET) continues to support the conduct of research considering issues associated with the interaction between ship systems and ship personnel via the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust Research Unit (LRETRU); whilst the Nippon Foundation is engaged in supporting a PhD programme at SIRC with the intention of creating, and increasing, research capacity in human element issues pertinent to shipping. In addition the Centre continues to tender for work, where appropriate, and was preoccupied to a great extent, in 2008, with a year-long study for the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) which was awarded following a competitive tendering process.
One of the major priorities for the Centre remains the publication and
dissemination of research findings and as such staff and students
undertook a range of activities in 2008 to communicate research
outcomes to relevant audiences.

Early in the year, Professor Sampson attended the 3rd LSM Manning
and Training conference in Mumbai, and was fortunate to be able to catch up with contacts
from India and discuss relevant local issues. While Dr Nick Bailey travelled to Shenzhen and
delivered a paper to an international audience at the Shenzhen International Maritime Forum.

In the summer, staff and students enjoyed the pleasure of witnessing the success of SIRC
Nippon Foundation Fellows Lijun Tang and Victor Gekara in gaining their PhDs. The beaming
smiles in the photographs told their own story and there is little doubt that the awards were
deserved after the efforts entailed. Jessica Bernfeld also successfully obtained her MPhil but
was unable to attend the graduation ceremony having begun studying towards a law degree in
the United States.

Following the award ceremony, SIRC-Nippon Foundation alumni and current SIRC-Nippon
Foundation fellows came together for a residential teaching/workshop event in the heart of the
Monmouthshire countryside. Whilst croquet on the lawn was clearly a mystifying highlight, the event
had the more serious agenda of strengthening the maritime research network that the Nippon
Foundation funded programme seeks to support and stimulate ideas for future collaboration and
research. Following on from this activity, a plan was made for the SIRC-Nippon Fellows to organise
a conference, early in 2009, involving other Nippon Foundation-supported fellows from
different parts of the world.

A further summer occasion for getting together was provided by colleagues at the Centre for
Occupational and Health Psychology (COHP), Cardiff University, who ran a seminar for the
shipping industry on issues of fatigue. This was attended by a variety of industry
representatives and stakeholders and was a useful occasion for SIRC staff to catch up with
familiar faces.

In September Dr Nick Bailey and Mr Neil Ellis attended a specially arranged meeting, in
Southampton, of stakeholders and researchers associated with, or interested in, the varied
menu of research activities supported by the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust (LRET). This
two-day event was reported to be a fascinating occasion and it seemed that papers presented, by
the SIRC-LRETRU team members in attendance (Bailey and Ellis), were well received.

In October we welcomed the 5th cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows to the Centre and students were given an opportunity to meet with supervisors and peers at an informal buffet arranged to mark the occasion. We also welcomed an intern from Germany – Martina Schindler – who arrived, in October, for a four month work-experience programme and has focussed upon acquiring research analysis and administration skills using appropriate software packages and tools such as NVivo and SPSS.

November proved to be a particularly busy month with six of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows attending a Nautical Institute seminar on ‘Manning the Future’ (Acejo, Anand, Edmund, Li, Leong, Mazhari) whilst Professor Sampson travelled twice to the Far East to meet with sponsors and attend conferences (including the Nippon Foundation-supported International Symposium on Safety and Protection of the Marine Environment in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, the 9th LSM Asia - Pacific Manning and Training Conference in Manila, and the 2nd SeaTrans Maritime HR Summit 2008, Singapore). Not to be left out, Dr Bailey and Mr Ellis joined in with the travelling in flying to Cyprus to deliver papers at the Frederick University’s 2nd International Scientific Maritime Conference which focussed upon ‘Human Resources in the Shipping Industry: New Trends and Challenges in the 21st Century’.

The year overall proved to be a busy one for visitors reflecting, perhaps, the increasingly international profile of the Centre and the exposure which it has gained as a result of the assiduous dissemination of research findings and the continuous development of the SIRC website. In January we received Mr Wong Chi Chung, Dr Tai Sik Kwan, and Dr Ng Jim Mi from Hong Kong Polytechnic; in March we were visited by Captain Robin Lock of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary; and in June we were visited on separate occasions by Mr Victor Dass (SMIT Singapore), Dr Tim Bunnell of the National University of Singapore, and by Mr Michael Franklin and Dr Fai Cheng (LRET). September brought Dr Maria Borovnik from Massey University (New Zealand) to our doors whilst in October we were visited by a team of three distinguished guests from Japan in connection with the Nippon Foundation funding programme: Professor Hara; Capt Akatsuka, and Ms Tanaka were all most welcome. Professor Ajit Shenoi (School of Engineering Sciences, University of Southampton) visited SIRC in October to discuss future collaborative work whilst the year was rounded off by a visit from Dr Malcolm Willingale of V. Group.
The year ended with the successful delivery of the final report from the EMSA- commissioned research on computer based assessment associated with seafarer licences. This study had involved a team of three researchers (Gekara, Bloor, Sampson) travelling to six different countries to undertake fieldwork with the co-operation of associated maritime administrations, to whom we are very grateful. It is the case with all of our research that we owe a debt of gratitude not only to our sponsors and funders but also to the large numbers of seafarers, managers, key stakeholders, and shipping companies, who assist us in our endeavours on a regular basis.

**Teaching**

Within the school of Social Sciences staff contributed to courses on State and Labour (Sampson), Research Methods (Sampson), Research Design in Practice (Bailey), Discourse Analysis (Bailey) and Contemporary Social theory (Bailey). Whilst essentially small, these contributions are indicative of the greater integration that has been achieved between the Centre and the School of Social Sciences (SOCSI) which bodes well for future collaborative working and the development of new projects across the school which include a focus upon seafarers and shipping.

**Project Progress**

In relation to the LRETRU programme of research, in 2008, we took forward work on both the ‘Perceptions of Risk’ and ‘Training and New Technology’ projects.

In 2008, we published a report online relating to preliminary observational studies of AIS in use, which have informed the development of the study of training and new technology. We also took forward the collection of new data for the study with the assistance of colleagues at maritime colleges who facilitated access to relevant interviewees. The published report is titled ‘Training and Technology Onboard Ship: How seafarers learned to use the shipboard Automatic Identification System (AIS)’ and can be downloaded from the SIRC website at no charge – www.sirc.cf.ac.uk.

In relation to the major study we have been undertaking on ‘Perceptions of Risk’ (as part of LRETRU) data coding and analysis have been on-going and we have been focussing on the drafting of a third report in the series which we hope to publish online in 2009.

The Nippon Foundation fellowship programme has been progressing well and three students graduated in 2008. The remaining fellows from the first cohort of students are expected to complete and submit PhD theses in 2009 and we hope that they may be joined, in this, by one or two of the students from the second cohort.
The ITF-ST funded programme of work on health suffered some setbacks and some advances in 2008. Applications to fund work on issues such as seafarer stress, fatigue, and sleep were made to several different funding bodies but did not deliver positive results. Nevertheless, work was progressed in relation to seafarer fatalities, and to a lesser extent injuries, at sea, and we look forward to publishing these data on-line in 2009.

The long running project on the global labour market for seafarers came to an end in 2008 with the publication, online, of a summary of the results from the 2003 analysis of crew lists collected at ports around the world. These data are constantly in demand by ship operators, and academics, but despite publicising our desire to continue with the research, should funding become available, no funding has been forthcoming. This seems something of a loss to the maritime sector as the statistics are rapidly becoming dated and we receive frequent requests for updates which we are currently unable to satisfy. The report titled ‘The Global Labour Market for Seafarers Working Aboard Merchant Cargo Ships 2003’ can be found at the SIRC website (www.sirc.cf.ac.uk) and downloaded free of charge.

A major preoccupation for several SIRC staff in 2008, was the conduct and completion of a report for EMSA on the effectiveness of computer-based forms of assessment when applied to seafarer licence examinations. This study was particularly intensive, involving research in six maritime labour supply countries over a relatively short period. The final report has now been accepted by EMSA and it will be disseminated to member states and may (at the discretion of EMSA) be more widely published elsewhere in the future.

Finally, our involvement in a University project relating to the experiences of Cardiff students (Project Q) came to an end in September 2008.

**Theses**

In 2008 the following students were awarded MPhil & PhD qualifications at the July graduation ceremony:

- Jessica Bernfeld (MPhil) for her thesis titled ‘States, Ships, and Secondary Registers: Examining Sovereignty and Standards in a Globalized World’ (supervisors: Nik Winchester and Huw Beynon)

- Victor Gekara (PhD) for his thesis titled ‘Globalisation, State Strategies and Labour in the Shipping Industry: the UK Response to Declining Shipping Skills’ (supervisors: Helen Sampson and Peter Fairbrother)
Lijun Tang (PhD) for his thesis titled ‘Coping with Separation: Chinese Seafarer-Partners in Cyberspace’ (supervisors: Nick Bailey and Jane Salisbury)

Our congratulations go to the students and also to the associated supervisors whose hard work culminated in these awards. The achievement of the students, many of whom have no prior exposure to social science research, is difficult to overstate.

Work is currently progressing on the following PhD studies (all but one of which are financially supported by the Nippon Foundation):

- Mohab Abou-Elkawam - Seafarers and growing environmental concerns (how seafarers perceive and react to current environmental agendas and the enhanced public concern with protecting the marine environment from pollution)

- Iris Acejo - Transnational communities and the assimilation of Filipino seafarers

- Nippin Anand - Technology and the future of skills: A case study of navigation and ship handling of fourth generation ships

- Syamantak Bhattacharya - The impact of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code on the management of occupational health and safety in the maritime industry

- Jabeth Dacanay - Regulatory approaches to occupational health and safety of seafarers serving foreign flags

- Samuel Edmund - West Africa and the global seafarer labour market

- Mohamed Ghanem - Accidents at sea: the social construction of marine accident investigation reports

- Elizabeth Gould - The experience of merchant navy cadets: a study of current and enduring aspects of seafaring life

- Momoko Kitada - Women seafarers and their identities

- Priscilla Leong - Recruitment and retention issues in a global labour market: the example of shipping

- Lin Li - Faith and seafarers: religion and spirituality manifested by Chinese seafarers
Don Eliseo Lucero-Prisno III - Navigating the seas, negotiating the sex: an ethnographic study on the sexual risk-taking behaviour of seafarers in the context of HIV/AIDS

Shahriar Mazhari - Certification and competence in global shipping labour market: employers’ perception of fitness for purpose

Nelson Turgo - Globalization’s impact on small-scale fishermen in Lamon Bay, Philippines

Conghua Xue - Maritime safety communication

Zhiwei Zhao - The impact on seafarers of the management strategies of Chinese state-owned crew agencies

The broad interests of the new cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows who joined us in 2008 are as follows:

Ngwatung Akamangwa - Shipboard factors that affect hiring and retention in the global labour market

Roderick Galam - Seafaring, family dynamics and the (re)construction of Filipino seafarers’ masculinities

Aditi Kataria - Ethnography of speech - language of the sea: the role of English in the production of social cohesion onboard ocean going vessels

Peidong Yang - Trade unionism in the shipping industry

In January Michael Bloor returned to SIRC as a Professorial Research Fellow in order to assist us with the programme of work we are undertaking, with Seafarers Trust support, on seafarers’ health. Professor Bloor has had a long standing association with the Centre and his return to Cardiff was very warmly welcomed by colleagues.
In October, we welcomed a previously unfamiliar face to the Centre in the form of intern Martina Schindler. Martina, who lives and studies in Germany, joined us for a period of four months ‘work experience’ and by the end of the year had made a significant personal contribution to the Centre and was felt to be a popular addition to the SIRC team. At the very end of the year we recruited former SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellow Dr Lijun Tang to a position as Research Associate which was advertised in connection with the LRETRU programme of work. We were delighted that Lijun was successful in his application and look forward to his start with us in 2009.

Along with the arrival and return of familiar and unfamiliar faces we also said goodbye to several colleagues and former students.

Erol Kahveci left SIRC at the end of June after a long association with the Centre having been recruited by Tony Lane shortly after his own arrival in 1997. Erol has succeeded in attaining a post at the London Metropolitan University where he continues his interest in seafarers.

Colleagues at the Centre were sad to say goodbye to Tim Shelly and his family in July who departed for new opportunities in China and they were similarly sorry to bid farewell to Dr Anna Dahlgren who had joined SIRC two years previously to advance work on the seafarer health programme of research.

SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellow, Syamantak Bhattacharya, and his wife and young daughter left Cardiff at the end of the year in preparation for the take-up of a senior lecturer’s position in International Shipping & Logistics at the University of Plymouth’s Business School. Colleagues’ sadness at their departure was somewhat offset by their pleasure at his success in attaining his new post.

One final development on the staffing front related to the registration of Neil Ellis for a PhD. It is not easy to undertake PhD study whilst working but this is an important development for Neil in advancing his career and we all wish him every success.

**Academic Staff at 31 December 2008**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof Helen Sampson</td>
<td>Director SIRC and of LRETRU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Michael Bloor</td>
<td>Professorial Fellow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Nicholas Bailey</td>
<td>Assistant Director and RCUK Academic Research Fellow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Neil Ellis</td>
<td>Research Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Victor Gekara</td>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
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**Intern**

Ms Martina Schindler
Early in 2009, plans are afoot to host the very first SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows’ conference: **Maritime Matters in the 21st Century**. The programme will include talks from active SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows about their research findings relating to: environmental concerns (Capt Mohab Abou-Elkawam); the maintenance of transnational connections (Ms Iris Acejo); and identity maintenance strategies employed by women seafarers working in all male environments (Ms Momoko Kitada). However, SIRC has also invited two outside speakers, both of whom were formally recipients of Nippon Foundation support at other academic institutions who will present papers on the impact of fuel costs on shipping and trade (Mr Nguyen Dang Ben from DP World Container Port Saigon) and the effects of globalization on maritime security in the Caribbean and Central America (Lt Comdr Johnnie Borland of the Belize National Coastguard). Invitations to the event will be extended to all students and staff at the World Maritime University (Malmo), the International Maritime Law Institute (Malta) and of course Cardiff University. In addition we will extend invitations to key stakeholders in the industry and we anticipate the arrival of an audience with wide-ranging interests across the sector.

In 2009, we will focus on the development of stronger links with the Cardiff Work Environment Research Centre (CWERC) and will undertake pilot work (Sampson and Walters) in preparation for a major bid to the ESRC on the impact of precarious employment terms and conditions on workers’ involvement in health and safety management.
Our intention is also to advance the work undertaken in connection with the seafarer health work programme (supported by the Seafarers Trust). With the assistance of a new member of the team (Dr Emma Wadsworth), we intend to publish a short paper on reported fatalities in the industry in 2009 and to undertake pilot work relating to labour intensification and seafarer understandings of the impact of this on ‘health capital’. A further self-report study of seafarer health and self-medication is also planned.

In 2009, we plan to publish the third of our reports derived from analysis of data collected as part of the study of perceptions of risk in shipping companies (amongst seafarers and shore-staff). This work is supported by the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust as are studies on training and technology (which we expect to significantly progress given the appointment of a new member of the team - Dr Lijun Tang) and accommodation design (which is a particular interest of Mr Neil Ellis).

The SIRC Symposium will be a major event in the Centre’s 2009 calendar and will take place on the 8th and 9th of July. We hope to attract an audience of key stakeholders interested in discussing our research findings and considering their implications for existing and future policy and practice. The 2009 symposium will receive the support of the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust and we are grateful to them for their generosity in facilitating the conduct of this ‘no charge’ event for the maritime sector.

In 2009, we hope to begin a new phase of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation Postgraduate Fellowship Scheme. In this phase we will seek to recruit three fellows per annum who will be in receipt of four years of PhD funding subject to successful progress evaluation. This is an important development in the scheme and we are very pleased that it will bring these fellowships in line with the kinds of support available to domestic PhD funded students in the UK. We are very grateful to the Nippon Foundation for their continued support for this programme of work which seeks to build research capacity in the vital area of maritime social science.

2009 promises, then, to be a busy year for the Centre and despite the uncertain economic climate and the anxieties this brings to the industry and to areas of public life (including higher education) we look forward to it with enthusiasm and optimism. There is still much to be done!
**Books/Academic Journal Articles** (RAE 2008 Categories A & D)


**Short Works/Reports** (RAE 2008 Category T)


**Non-refereed Conference Contributions** (RAE 2008 Category E)


**Professional/Popular Journal Papers** (RAE 2008 Category D)


Book Reviews


Forthcoming Publications


Events, Conferences, Lectures, Seminars, Workshops etc


Other Conferences Attended


Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AIS: Automatic Identification System

CWERC: Cardiff Work Environment Research Centre

COHP: Centre for Occupational and Health Psychology

EMSA: European Maritime Safety Agency

ESRC: Economic & Social Research Council

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HR: Human Resources

ISM: International Safety Management

ITF-ST: The International Transport Workers’ Federation – Seafarers’ Trust

LRET: Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust

LRETRU: Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust Research Unit

LSM: Lloyd’s Ship Manager

MPhil: Master of Philosophy

PhD: Doctor of Philosophy

RAE: Research Assessment Exercise

RCUK: Research Councils United Kingdom

SIRC: Seafarers International Research Centre

SOCSI: School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University

SPSS: Statistical Packages for Social Sciences

UK: United Kingdom