2007 was a busy year for the Centre and one which combined both continuity and elements of change.

In terms of continuity, we saw the further development of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellowship programme and of the work being undertaken by the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust Research Unit (LRETRU) formerly known as the Lloyd’s Register Research Unit. Additionally, we continued to develop research ideas relating to seafarer health and, as with the previous year, the publication profile for the Centre improved. Changes at the Centre related to staffing and research activity as we ventured into new areas of research, exploring the possibilities for new collaborations and sources of funding.

The year began auspiciously with SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellow Victor Gekara delivering a well-received paper to the 14th Bremen Nautical Association Annual Seminar in Germany. The paper focussed upon his work on the effectiveness of the minimum training commitment (an element of the UK tonnage tax) in stimulating the numbers of employed UK officers. It generated much discussion amongst an audience keen to see an expansion of the numbers of European officers working upon international vessels, and was a good opportunity for Victor to discuss and further refine his findings.

March saw the last of the Maritime Transport Co-ordination Platform (MTCP) organised events and in connection with this, Dr Nick Bailey travelled to Brussels, on behalf of SIRC, in order to attend a workshop focussing upon the administrative barriers to short sea shipping. Participants included members of the EU Directorate General for Transport and Energy and an array of external stakeholders.

In May, Professor Helen Sampson travelled to Dubrovnik to deliver a paper at the 10th Lloyd’s Shipmanager European Manning and Training conference. Here, as at many industry events in 2007, the talk was of officer shortages, wage hikes, and potential delays to sailing schedules as a result of insufficient shipboard personnel. Professor Sampson’s paper addressed the issue of seafarer retention, in this context, and the need for living and working conditions to improve in order for the occupation to become more attractive and more competitive in relation to alternative, shore-side, jobs.
Back in Cardiff the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows were busy preparing a fundraising event on behalf of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). The event was held in the Glamorgan building and involved the preparation of food from around the world and the screening of a film accompanied by a presentation from RNLI staff about the organisation and its activities and needs. The event was unprecedented in the School and very well received by staff and visitors alike. Through this, and some related activities, the fellows were able to raise £742.78 for this worthwhile maritime charity.

In June, Professor Sampson, Professor Bloor (associate researcher), and Mr Lijun Tang (SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellow) attended the 9th International Maritime Health Association Conference in the city of Esbjerg in Denmark. Cardiff University was well represented at the event with both Emeritus Professor Lane, and Professor Smith (Psychology) in attendance to consider issues of maritime health in the industry. Lijun’s paper to the conference was well-received and, in the light of some of the research that was presented, Professors Bloor and Sampson spent some time discussing the possibilities for the further development of health research at SIRC with senior researchers in the field.

A little later in the month, we were happy to organise a presentation (and even a small boat trip) for Mr Michael Franklin who had been newly appointed to the Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust. The work of the research unit continues to develop and attract the interest of the maritime community and it was a useful opportunity to update Michael on progress and developments.

The big event of 2007 was, of course, the SIRC biennial symposium. Once again the event was staged over two days to allow people to travel to, and from, Cardiff without missing out on any papers and to participate in a conference reception at a local hotel. Our first day was opened by Mr Peter Grant, on behalf of the Minister for Shipping (there had just been a cabinet re-shuffle) and we were delighted that the First Minister for Wales, Rhodri Morgan, was able to take time from his busy schedule and open the second day of the event. We received very positive feedback about the symposium, in general, and the content and quality of the papers in particular. This was especially pleasing as we included some of the SIRC-Nippon fellows in the programme and they made an excellent job of delivering selected findings to our skilled and knowledgeable audience.
Just before the start of the new semester, several of the SIRC-Nippon foundation fellows were busy again as Syamantak Bhattacharya and Victor Gekara joined Dr Bin Wu in delivering papers to the Work Employment and Society Conference run by the British Sociological Association. Reports suggested that the papers were very well-received and the Cardiff and SIRC presence was notable. This success is a further reflection of the quality of the students that we are able to attract to the SIRC-Nippon Foundation programme and the rapid development that they can achieve in the short time they are at Cardiff. Once again in 2007, SIRC-Nippon Foundation students completing their assessed component for the research methods diploma, did very well with two of the four of them (Acejo and Turgo) achieving well-deserved distinctions.

In October, Professor Sampson travelled to the Nippon Foundation headquarters in Japan and had the pleasure of meeting, once again, with its President, Mr Sasakawa. On the ‘agenda’ was the future development of the fellowship programme, which we hope to be in a position to continue with, in years to come. It was a pleasure for Helen to meet with Mr Sasakawa and to renew acquaintance with Mr Nagamitsu and Mr Unno both of whom have visited Cardiff in former years. October also saw the arrival of the fourth cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows who were welcomed by staff and existing students at a special reception buffet.

As the skies became greyer over Cardiff, Lijun Tang (SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellow) decided to head for the crisper climate of Austria, where he delivered a paper based upon the findings of his PhD research to the 4th global conference on persons and sexuality. The paper was concerned with the reported value, to Chinese seafarers’ partners, of a website that allows for the exchange of experiences of separation.

This excursion was soon followed by our, now traditional, outing and Christmas meal. Following the soaking we had at St Fagans open air museum in 2006, this year we chose to remain under cover, or more accurately ‘underground’! The visit was a tour of Big Pit, the National Coal Museum, and involved being transported both underground and to another ‘time’ as we saw the former coal mine’s old workings, the stables for the pit ponies, and even the renovated pit-head ‘baths’.

There was good reason to celebrate the end of the year as not only did it mean a short holiday, for most of us, it also ended with the submission of three theses by members of the first cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows. The results of their viva voce (oral) examinations will be awaited with enthusiasm!
Dissemination and Teaching

Within the School of Social Sciences, in addition to PhD supervision, SIRC staff contributed to courses on State and Labour (Sampson), Research Methods (Sampson), Metropolis, Urban Life and Consumer Culture (Kahveci), and Applied Research Methods (Kahveci). A postgraduate seminar is held within the Centre for the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows (Sampson) and in addition, in 2007, Professor Sampson delivered one of the papers in the School of Social Sciences’ popular seminar series addressing the ‘Future of Work’.

Beyond the University, staff contributed to a variety of seminars and conferences including the Work Employment and Society Conference (Wu); a seminar at Hehai University in Nanjing (Wu); a conference on Chinese migrants at Padova University (Wu); the 3rd (LSM) China Manning and Training Conference (Wu); a seminar at Qingdao Maritime College (Wu); the 18th International symposium on shiftwork and working time (Dahlgren), the 10th (LSM) European Manning and Training conference (Sampson), a course on the human element in shipping at University Polytechnic Catalunya (Kahveci) and the ICSW South East Asia Sub-Regional seminar (Kahveci).

Postgraduates at the Centre also began to make a contribution to external seminars and events. These included: a maritime administration seminar addressing safety culture hosted by the World Maritime University (Bhattacharya); the Work, Employment and Society Conference (Bhattacharya, Gekara); the 9th International Symposium on Maritime Health (Tang); the Bremen Nautical Association Annual Seminar (Gekara); and a conference on persons and sexuality (Tang).

Via this range of events, work being undertaken at SIRC was disseminated to a broad range of audiences including groups of academics, of policy makers, and of those at ‘the sharp end’ of the shipping industry (employers, trade unions, welfare bodies).

The desire to reach a variety of audiences was also successfully reflected in the year’s publications. Staff continued to publish in top ranking academic journals including Sociology (Sampson and Bloor); and Qualitative Research (Belousov, Horlick-Jones, Bloor et al) and produced a number of books (e.g. Walters and Nichols) and journal articles for occupational health and industrial relations journals (e.g. Bailey, Walters). The Centre continued to produce publications ‘in-house’ and posted two new reports to the SIRC website made
available in ‘free to download’ pdf format. The first addressed
Perceptions of Risk in the Maritime industry in relation to personal
injury (Bailey, Ellis, Sampson-LRETRU) and the second considered
developments in the Chinese Seafarer labour market (Wu, Shen, Li). In
addition, Kahveci produced a report on port-based welfare which was
published and widely disseminated by the ITF-Seafarers’ Trust and
Bloor and Sampson contributed to a report on researcher safety which
received national attention within the academic research community.

Importantly, we also continued to try to reach seafarers directly via a
staff contribution to the regular newspaper of the Mission to Seafarers,
*The Sea*, which has a global circulation and is distributed via welfare
centres and ship visitors to many seafarers across the world.

**Project Progress**

In 2007, a number of projects were successfully completed and some
new studies were initiated.

The EC-Funded Maritime Transport Co-ordination Platform (MTCP),
in which SIRC had played a minor role, came to a close in 2007, along
with a more substantial piece of research conducted on behalf of the
European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). This latter study, focused
upon training capacity and findings have been reported directly to the
funder and have been disseminated by, and within EMSA, at their
discretion. We do hope, however, that it will be possible to make these
findings more widely available in the future and we are currently in
discussion with EMSA with regard to a dissemination strategy which
may incorporate participation by the authors in a workshop for
member states.

Prior to the July symposium, Dr Wu completed his fieldwork for a
small-scale study of the perceptions of Chinese seafarers with regard
to onboard safety. This might have been further extended were it not
for the transfer of Dr Wu to a new post in Nottingham. However,
subject to the completion of transcription and translation, the data
collected by Dr Wu will be further analysed and we hope to publish
more findings relating to this issue in years to come.

Similarly, Professor Walters completed a small-scale study in time for
the SIRC symposium, at which he reported some of his preliminary
findings. The research considered the management of risks relating to
chemical hazards within the shipping industry, a topic with particular pertinence given the transportation of relatively new ‘hazardous’ cargoes (such as wood pellets) in recent years, and recently publicised fatalities associated with chemical hazards (e.g. the deaths in 2008 of two seafarers purportedly related to a ‘chemical leak’: *Lloyd’s List* 22 January 2008). Professor Walters hopes to have the opportunity to continue this research despite his commitment to the development of a new research centre within the University focussed upon the work environment more generally.

In the summer of 2007, a major study was completed on behalf of the ITF-Seafarers’ Trust. The research had been led by Dr Erol Kahveci and it consisted of a major survey of the perceptions of seafarers with regard to the provision of port-based welfare services. A summary report was produced and widely disseminated following an official launch. The final report was delivered just before the end of the year and the feedback, to date, suggests that the study will prove to be significant in informing decisions about the future development of port-based welfare services for seafarers.

The work of the LRETRU was progressed in relation to two ongoing studies: seafarers’ perceptions of risk; and training and the introduction of new onboard technology. With regard to the study of risk perception the second of a series of on-line reports, documenting the findings from this research, was published. It generated a pleasing level of interest and has also been disseminated, at their request, by the UK P&I club (via their own website). In relation to this study, data analysis is on-going and further reports will be disseminated as they become available. The second of the LRETRU projects, which is concerned with the levels of training associated with the introduction of new technology onboard cargo ships, underwent a third phase of data collection at a coastguard station in October 2007. The findings from the preliminary data collection phases are to be presented in 2008 and reports will be made available via the SIRC website.

The Seafarers’ Trust-funded programme dedicated to the development of new projects related to seafarer health suffered a minor setback as Dr Dahlgren and collaborators were unsuccessful in an ESRC application which would have facilitated the conduct of research relating to fatigue and shift-working at sea. Despite this setback new applications are planned for 2008 on, for example, seafarer mental wellbeing and stress, and the programme will further develop work, initiated by the LRETRU research team, on accident and injury rates amongst seafarers.
New Projects for 2008

New funding for the SIRC-Nippon Foundation Postgraduate Fellowship Scheme was approved in 2007 allowing us to begin recruitment for a fifth student cohort. This represents a minor extension of the initial agreement which we hope to build on in the future.

In addition the Centre won a tender to undertake a study on behalf of EMSA relating to the effectiveness of computer-based systems in the assessment of seafarers' professional competence. This year-long study will involve staff in a collaborative effort as Sampson, Gekara and Bloor all contribute to the requisite fieldwork.

Finally, in an unusual development, the Centre won a tender for an internally commissioned study relating to student evaluation (Sampson, Kahveci). This research is important to the University in developing its service delivery in relation to student experiences. It is important to the Centre in broadening the staff portfolio and bringing in much needed revenue.

Theses

The year saw the successful completion of a PhD by Philip Belcher who had undertaken research upon collision avoidance in the Dover Strait. It further saw the submission of theses by three members of the first SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellowship cohort. Theses were submitted by:

- Jessica Bernfeld - (for the qualification of MPhil)
- Victor Gekara - (for the qualification of PhD)
- Lijun Tang - (for the qualification of PhD)

Vivas for these three SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows are expected to take place in early 2008 when we anticipate that further theses may be submitted by their peers from the first cohort.
Work is currently progressing on the following PhD studies:

- Mohab **Abou-Elkawam** - Seafarers and growing environmental concerns
- Iris **Acejo** - Transnationalism and the assimilation of Filipino seafarers
- Syamantak **Bhattacharya** - The practice of self-regulated occupational health and safety (OHS) management in the shipping industry
- Mohamed **Ghanem** - The social construction of marine accident reports
- Elizabeth **Gould** - The experience of merchant navy cadets: a study of current and enduring aspects of seafaring life
- Momoko **Kitada** (nee Motohashi) - Women seafarers and their identities
- Lin **Li** - Faith and seafarers
- Eliseo **Lucero-Prisno III** - Sexual risk-taking behaviour of seafarers
- Shahriar **Mazhari** - Issues affecting the implementation of global regulations concerning minimum standards of competence for seafarers
- Nelson **Turgo** - The dynamics of living a coastal life: an ethnography of a fishing community in the Philippines
- Zhiwei **Zhao** - The impact on seafarers of the management strategies of Chinese state-owned crew agencies

The new cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows is focused upon success in the research methods diploma and all candidates are in the early stages of their research development. However they currently hope to develop studies in the broad areas of:

- Nippin **Anand** - Maritime education and training (MET)
- Jabeth **Dacanay** - The regulation of shipping: issues of jurisdiction and compliance
- Samuel **Edmund** - The Development of seafaring in West Africa
- Priscilla **Leong** - Recruitment and retention
- Conghua **Xue** - Maritime safety cultures
Within the last year we have seen a few changes in staffing at the Centre. In October Bin Wu left SIRC for a job at Nottingham University where he is able to focus upon issues pertinent to China and Chinese development studies. Bin remains in touch and has joined the Centre’s group of associate researchers with whom we collaborate and retain close relationships. His effervescent enthusiasm and positive attitude are universally remembered and we are very pleased that we have been able to maintain a link with him. At the end of September SIRC’s direct connection with David Walters, who had been seconded to SIRC, ended. David has not left SOCSI however and continues to collaborate with members of SIRC in relation to both writing and teaching. In November, our administrative assistant left for a job in Exeter. Lauren Murphy had been a cheerful, and very effective, addition to the administrative team and is much missed. We were joined in December by a new research assistant in the form of Victor Gekara. Victor is connected with an EMSA-funded study of the use of computer-based assessment in the examination of seafarers for licence qualifications. Of course, he is not entirely new to us, having been a SIRC-Nippon Foundation-funded fellow since 2004, and we are delighted to have him join the staff. We also appointed a new administrative assistant and have been pleased to welcome Sarah Venables to the Centre where we are confident she will ably fill the void left by her predecessor.

In November ‘our’ first “SIRC-Nippon Foundation baby” - Rohini Bhattacharya - enjoyed her first birthday and we took the opportunity to celebrate with a small tea party!

**Academic Staff at 31 December 2007**

<table>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Nicholas Bailey</td>
<td>Assistant Public Relations Director and RCUK Academic Research Fellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Erol Kahveci</td>
<td>Senior Research Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Anna Dahlgren</td>
<td>Research Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Neil Ellis</td>
<td>Research Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Victor Gekara</td>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administrative Staff

Ms Louise Deeley  Executive Officer
Ms Maria Goldoni  Administrator
Mr Tim Shelly  Data Manager
Ms Sarah Venables  Administrative Assistant
Mr John Goodwin  Archivist

Associate Researchers

Professor Michael Bloor  Dr Marlene Calderon
Dr Michelle Thomas  Prof David Walters
Dr Bin Wu  Dr Nik Winchester

Future Plans

In early 2008, we intend to recruit a new part-time professorial fellow to the seafarer health programme in order to take this work forward. We hope that this will facilitate the development of work on deaths and injuries at sea and the new member of staff will work with the SIRC Director and members of the LRETRU to publish material in this area.

We plan to submit at least one funding application to the ESRC as well as research proposals on seafarer stress and the employment of women at sea to a number of other funding bodies, for example, the ITF-Seafarers’ Trust and the Maitland Foundation.

Work will continue on the centrally important LRETRU programme of work and will include continuation of both the ‘Perceptions of Risk’ and ‘Training and New Technology’ projects. In addition a major effort will be required in relation to the EMSA-funded study of computer-based assessment and our internally commissioned study of student experiences. We also hope to publish a new report outlining some of the findings from the 2003 Global Labour Market Survey (GLMS) and to continue to make progress with our publications and dissemination strategy which involves directing high quality, appropriately pitched, outputs to both academic and maritime sector audiences.
Publications

**Books/Academic Journal Articles (RAE Categories A & D)**


Short Works/Reports (RAE Category T)


Non-refereed Conference Contributions (RAE Category E)


Contributions to Edited Works (RAE Category C)


**Professional/Popular Journal Papers** (RAE Category T)


**Edited Books** (RAE Category B)


**Forthcoming Publications**


Events, Conferences, Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, etc


Other Conferences Attended


Abbreviations and Acronyms

EC: European Commission
Eds: Editors
EMSA: European Maritime Safety Agency
ESRC: Economic & Social Research Council
GLMS: Global Labour Market Survey
ICSW: International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare
ISF: International Shipping Federation
ITF-ST: The International Transport Workers' Federation – Seafarers’ Trust
LRETRU: Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust Research Unit
LSM: Lloyd’s Ship Manager
MET: Maritime Education and Training
MPhil: Master of Philosophy
MTCP: Maritime Transport Co-ordination Platform
NRCR: National Research Centre for Resettlement
OHS: Occupational Health and Safety
PDF: Portable Document Format
PhD: Doctor of Philosophy
P&I: Protection and Indemnity
RAE: Research Assessment Exercise
RNLI: Royal National Lifeboat Institution
RCUK: Research Councils United Kingdom
SIRC: Seafarers International Research Centre
SOCSI: School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University
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