2009 was a year when many companies, within shipping, demonstrated their ability to ride out a financial storm and imaginatively and creatively meet the challenges of an economic crisis which battered Western Europe, the USA, and Japan. This was good news for many seafarers although sadly some will have found it more difficult to find work and, ratings in particular, may have been negatively affected by the requirement for some companies to lay up vessels and lay off members of their sea-based workforce whilst others have been forced into liquidation and larger scale ‘redundancies’.

In Universities, in the UK in particular, the aftermath of the 2009 economic downturn is likely to be prolonged. In staving off some of the negative effects of the ‘crisis’ the UK government has increased public borrowing and in the years to come it is clear that public sector cuts will be required to reduce the burden of debt. In this context ongoing external support for the kind of work established at Centres such as SIRC will be essential if research is not to be hit very hard with associated detrimental effects to shipping policy and practice as it relates to the ‘human element’ within the sector.

At SIRC the year seemed to pass by in a flash. In part this was due to the hosting of the 6th SIRC International Symposium for the shipping industry. This event always entails a great deal of preparation and organisation and it keeps everyone very busy from around March to July causing time to ‘fly by’. This year we were very fortunate in attaining financial support for the event from The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust1 which also supports a major programme of work at the Centre involving studies of Perceptions of Risk, Training and Technology, and Accommodation Design. We were delighted that, as with other years, we enjoyed a good turnout over both days and that delegates freely participated in a range of active discussions2.  

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1 The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust (The LRET) is an independent charity working to achieve advances in transportation, science, engineering and technology education, training and research worldwide for the benefit of all.
2 We are grateful to The LRET for their generosity in facilitating the conduct of this ‘no charge’ event for the maritime sector.
The SIRC symposium was not the only event hosted by the Centre in 2009, however. In January, we hosted the 1st SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows’ Maritime Conference. The conference was given the title ‘Maritime Matters in the 21st Century’ summing up both the content of the event and the sentiment of many of the staff and postgraduates at the Centre. It was open to members of the shipping industry and attracted a good audience from across the sector (much as the SIRC symposium does). The programme included talks from 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 the identity management strategies employed by women seafarers working in all male environments (Ms Momoko Kitada). However, SIRC also invited two outside speakers, both of whom were formerly recipients of Nippon Foundation support at other academic institutions, to present papers. Their chosen papers focussed upon: 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). The proceedings from this conference and the SIRC symposium can be found online at www.sirc.cf.ac.uk

In April 2009 the British Sociological Association’s annual conference was most fortuitously held in Cardiff. This provided many people from the Cardiff School of Social Sciences with the opportunity to present papers at a prestigious academic event without the inconvenience and cost of travel. Amongst them were SIRC’s own Professors Bloor and Sampson who presented a paper about the difficulties of global regulatory enforcement based upon research conducted in the shipping industry. This was well received with one very friendly professor from Cambridge pronouncing it to be the ‘best’ paper he had gone to at the conference, which attests to the usefulness of the shipping industry as a case study in this context.

In March, in line with the fostering of closer ties between SIRC and the Cardiff Work Environment Research Centre (CWERC) Professor Sampson delivered a paper on ‘Pressures on safety within the shipping industry’ at the CWERC conference ‘Paradoxes of the Supply Chain and Worker’s Health and Safety’. The audience was largely unfamiliar with issues of health and safety within the shipping industry and the conference provided an interesting opportunity to discuss these, alongside the broader issues of health and safety which were identified by other speakers.
In May, whilst Professor Sampson was undertaking some fieldwork aboard a chemical tanker, the SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows (accompanied by Dr Bailey) had the pleasure of meeting the Chairman of The Nippon Foundation, Mr Yohei Sasakawa, in London where he briefly stayed. The postgraduates were delighted to have an opportunity to express their personal gratitude for The Nippon Foundation’s support in connection with their PhD studies and they happily explained what they were doing to Mr Sasakawa and his party in the course of the visit. They also conveyed to Mr Sasakawa the greetings and good wishes of all of the staff at SIRC and Cardiff University’s School of Social Sciences (SOCSI).

At the end of May, Professor Sampson was invited to give an address at the Annual General Meeting of Falmouth Mission to Seafarers and visited the seafarers’ centre which has been established within the port perimeter.

Following the success of the SIRC symposium, and as the summer holidays got underway for schools in Wales, our students remained hard at work as we held the 2nd residential SIRC-NF Alumni Event. We were particularly fortunate that Professor Michael Burawoy from The University of California, Berkeley, in the USA was able to join us to discuss with the Fellows the usefulness of the extended case study approach, which he has famously developed, in social science research. Additionally Professor Huw Beynon from SOCSI (Cardiff University) talked with students about the importance of industrial sociology and Professor Walters (also from SOCSI) ran a seminar on successful writing. We were very fortunate that, as we had hoped, alumni from the first cohort were able to join the day (coming all the way from Melbourne in the case of Dr Gekara) and discuss with Fellows their current research as well as reflecting on their PhD experience with the benefit of ‘hindsight’. This occasion was valuable in allowing the Fellows to develop stronger ties across the programme’s cohorts as well as encouraging them to work together on the production of a newsletter to inform others of their activities as scholars at Cardiff. The inclusion of a strong teaching element in the agenda was designed to enhance participants’ understanding of Social Science Research and to facilitate the development of important research skills.

In September, Professor Sampson was a guest of The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust at the Science, Engineering & Technology (SET) Student of the Year Awards held in London. This high profile annual event is an occasion at which students who have produced high quality dissertations in science, engineering, and technology, are recognised, and it was particularly pleasing to see so many women awarded prizes, including the prize for the best overall dissertation.
As the winter months approached, in October, Professor Sampson was invited to give a keynote address to the International Maritime English Conference at the University of Szecin in Poland. Later in the month she returned to Northern Europe to attend a ship management conference in Hamburg. Here the discussions centred upon operating costs and their control, as well as inevitable discussions about finance, capacity, and freight rates, given the context of economic uncertainty within Europe. Not only was this event useful in terms of the conference content it also offered an opportunity to catch up with contacts within the industry and cultivate some new ones.

In one of the most significant events of the year from the point of view of the impact that SIRC research potentially makes with regard to policy making, Professors Bloor and Sampson were invited to the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) in Lisbon to report on two tenders won (in 2005 and 2007) by Professor Sampson to undertake work on different aspects of international training provision and accreditation within the sector. The audience were a specially invited group of representatives from European Member States’ Maritime Administrations and the research which was reported on (completed in 2007 and 2009) was discussed by them with interest and keen attention.

Sadly the EMSA event coincided with the regular Lloyd’s Shipmanager Manning and Training conference in Manila which Professor Sampson was disappointed to miss. SIRC did not go unrepresented however as despite having a busy schedule Dr Nick Bailey, Assistant Director at SIRC, was able to attend. A little closer to home, Dr Bailey then went on to give a presentation about SIRC at the Barry Yacht Club as part of their weekly lecture series and later in the same month represented SIRC at the ISF Manning and Training conference in London.

The year finished on a real high for one of our SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows as, in December, Eliseo (Don) Lucero-Prisno III was recognized by the President of the Philippines as one of six exemplary young professionals of the year at the Awards Ceremony for Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) at Rizal Hall, Malacañang, Philippines. The award constitutes a remarkable achievement.

### Teaching

Alongside the dedicated seminar series provided for the new cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows (Sampson), staff at SIRC contributed once again to some of the teaching within the School of Social Sciences and the Research and Graduate School (RGS) (which spans a number of disciplines across the University). Specifically a workshop on researcher risk was provided to the RGS (Sampson) and several classes were provided at Masters level on: Globalisation (Sampson); State and Labour (Sampson); Research Design in Practice (Bailey); and Strategies of Applied Research (Ellis).
Project Progress

In relation to The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust Research Unit (The LRETRU) programme of research (Bailey, Ellis, Tang, Sampson), in 2009, we have made good progress. Most significantly, we have been able to take forward the project relating to Training and New Technology. Having completed the first phase of this study, which considered the ways in which AIS (as an example of an adaptation of new technology) was being used on board vessels, we have moved on to begin the second phase. In this stage of the research we have utilised a number of interviews with seafarers to design a self-complete questionnaire for officers working at sea. This questionnaire was piloted in 2009 and distribution of the final document began in the Autumn. We have been very fortunate to be assisted with its distribution by a number of port chaplains around the UK, and internationally, and we very much appreciate their help. In this phase of the project we hope to learn more about how, and when, training relating to the integration of new technology on board is provided to seafarers and how effectively it seems to meet their needs.

We have also made a start with a new project as part of The LRETRU programme of work. This study focuses on accommodation design aboard working cargo ships and we have begun by undertaking a literature review pertaining to the general impact of the built environment on individuals’ health and wellbeing. This work is taking place alongside the on-going write-up and dissemination of project findings associated with our work on Perceptions of Risk.

The work of The LRETRU is central to the work of the Centre, however there are other projects which are unrelated to The LRETRU which have been taken forward in 2009 as well as work which was started under the auspices of The LRETRU but which has been ‘spun out’ under the broader umbrella of SIRC. One such example is, work begun as part of the ‘Perceptions of Risk’ project on fatalities and injuries at sea. Using data initially collected as part of The LRETRU work programme from maritime administrations, SIRC staff (Bloor, Ellis, Sampson) have considered injury data in greater detail and have congruently prepared a publication for the journal Maritime Policy and Management on the limitations of injury data within the sector and the danger that reporting biases within such data are misinterpreted. In a similar vein work is being developed on fatalities (Sampson, Wadsworth) which will culminate in an online report and possibly a journal publication in 2010.

In an unrelated stream of work, in 2009, we developed what we feel is an exciting new project on seafarer health and self-medicating practices (Sampson, Wadsworth). Previous research at SIRC (Bloor, Thomas) has revealed the limited access which seafarers in the cruise sector have to on board medical services. In the more restricted environment of cargo ships our accumulated data derived from ethnographic-style voyages have suggested that for many seafarers access to medical attention, whilst working, is very restricted and that in this context many seafarers
may resort to self ‘diagnosis’ of ailments and associated self-medication. This is an important area for investigation and the study aims to explore the extent of self-medicating practices, patterns of self-medication, and more generally seafarer health status whilst working on board. By the end of the year a self-complete questionnaire had been designed and piloting and distribution will begin in 2010.

Work on labour intensification and health capital continues (Bloor) and the interview programme associated with this research is now well-established. Once again port chaplains have been of great assistance to us in the rolling out of this study and we are particularly grateful to staff at the seafarer centres in Portbury, and in Falmouth, for their help with this project.

Finally, in terms of postgraduate developments, in 2009 we began a new phase of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation Postgraduate Fellowship Scheme. In this new five-year programme our intention is to recruit three fellows every year to study towards a PhD for a four-year period. The first batch of three fellows joined us under the auspices of the new phase of the programme in October. 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.

**Theses and Alumni**

In 2009 the following student was awarded a PhD qualification at the July graduation ceremony: Syamantak Bhattacharya - The impact of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code on the management of occupational health and safety in the maritime industry (supervisors Nick Bailey and David Walters).

Our congratulations go to Syamantak and also to his supervisors whose hard work culminated in this award. The achievement of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows, many of whom have no prior exposure to social science research, is difficult to overstate.

Dr Bhattacharya has been successful in obtaining a senior lecturer’s position in International Shipping & Logistics at the University of Plymouth’s Business School. Former graduates Dr Tang and Dr Gekara have found employment at SIRC (Cardiff University) and RMIT (Melbourne, Australia) respectively, and Ms Jessica Bernfeld (MPhil) remains in the USA studying for a law degree with a specialisation in maritime law.
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: compliance levels and the possibilities of governance
- **Iris Acejo** - Transnational communities and the assimilation of Filipino seafarers
- **Ngwatung Akamangwa** - Changing global environmental standards and workers in the shipping industry
- **Nippin Anand** - New technologies and the future of work and skills in the maritime sector
- **Jabeth Dacanay** - Regulatory approaches to occupational health and safety of seafarers serving foreign flags
- **Samuel Edmund** - Ghanaian seafarers in the context of the global labour market for seafarers: exploring the local impacts of globalisation
- **Roderick Galam** - Flexible selves: labour migration and Filipino seafarer-wives’ gender identities
- **Mohamed Ghanem** - Accidents at sea: the social construction of marine accident investigation reports
- **Elizabeth Gould** - Towards a total occupation: a study of merchant navy cadetship
- **Aditi Kataria** - Ethnography of speech - language of the sea: the role of English onboard ocean going vessels
- **Momoko Kitada** - Women seafarers and their identities
- **Priscilla Leong** - Understanding seafarer shortage in the context of a global labour market
- **Lin Li** - Great expectations: Chinese seafarers in the age of transition
- **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 the global shipping labour market: employers’ perception of fitness for purpose
- **Nelson Turgo** - 'Bugabug ang Dagat': local life in a fishing community in the Philippines
The broad interests of the new cohort of SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows who joined us in 2009 are as follows:

- **Sanley Abila** - Health promotion knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Filipino seafarers
- **Manasi Dutt** - Recruitment and retention of seafarers
- **Sarah Simons** - Geo-spatial analysis of maritime piracy along the East African coast 1988-2008

People at SIRC

In 2009 we said farewell to some friends and colleagues and welcomed others.

Dr Victor Gekara who had been at SIRC as a Nippon Foundation Fellow from 2004-8 and had been on the SIRC staff from 2008-9 left at the end of his year-long contract for a permanent post at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. Victor was a popular colleague and is missed by staff and students alike. He returned to Cardiff in July, however, to attend the SIRC symposium and the SIRF-NF alumni event and he remains in close contact with some colleagues and friends and has become an active SIRC associate researcher.

In February, Dr Lijun Tang, a former SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellow from the same cohort as Dr Gekara, formally joined the staff and commenced work as a Research Associate in connection with The LRETRU programme of work.

In March, we were all very sad to say farewell to ‘our’ tireless intern Martina Schindler who had been with us since the previous October. Martina worked hard whilst she was at SIRC and as a result she made a very positive contribution to the work of the Centre and to its friendly atmosphere. We were however delighted that, like Victor, Martina was able to return to SIRC and to Cardiff for our summer symposium. We hope that it will not be too long before she is able to visit again.
Later in the year as the autumn arrived so, too, did Helle Oltedal, a Doctoral Research Fellow from the Faculty of Technology, Business and Maritime Sciences, Stord/Haugesund University College, Norway. Helle wanted to spend some time in a foreign University in line with PhD requirements in Norway and whilst at SIRC she developed a collaborative paper with Neil Ellis and Emma Wadsworth. She returned to Norway before the year was out but will come back to SIRC again for a further two months in 2010.

Finally the year ended with the birth, on December 28th, of Taisei Kitada. His mother, Momoko, is currently in the process of finishing up her PhD thesis and everyone at the Centre was delighted for her and for her healthy baby boy.

**Academic Staff at 31 December 2009**

- **Prof Helen Sampson**: Director SIRC and The LRETRU
- **Prof Michael Bloor**: Professorial Fellow
- **Dr Nicholas Bailey**: Assistant Director and RCUK Academic Research Fellow
- **Mr Neil Ellis**: Research Associate
- **Dr Lijun Tang**: Research Associate
- **Dr Emma Wadsworth**: Research Fellow

**Administrative Staff**

- **Ms Louise Deeley**: Executive Officer
- **Ms Maria Goldoni**: Administrator
- **Ms Sarah Venables**: Administrative Assistant
- **Mr John Goodwin**: Archivist

**Associate Researchers**

- **Prof Maragtas Amante**: Prof David Walters
- **Dr Marlene Calderon**: Dr Nik Winchester
- **Dr Victor Gekara**: Dr Bin Wu
- **Dr Michelle Thomas**:

**Future Plans**

In 2010 we plan to continue with developing the programme of work supported by The Lloyd's Register Educational Trust at SIRC. In line with this intention we will place some emphasis on the dissemination of findings from the well-established study of Perceptions of Risk and will publish two on-line reports documenting findings from this study. The accommodation design study will be advanced in relation to pre-pilot work and the finalisation of an appropriate research design to meet the study objectives, and phase two of the Training and Technology study will be fully rolled out with international questionnaire distribution and the conduct of key interviews.
In addition, work will continue on the study of labour intensification and health capital and we will roll out the seafarer health and self-medication research via the distribution of a number of ‘self-complete’ questionnaires for seafarers.

An on-line report on seafarer fatalities will be published in 2010 and collaborative work will commence with CWERC relating to the management of health and safety.

We are awaiting the results of two grant applications (Bloor, Sampson, Baker; and Bailey, Winchester) to the UK’s Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The results are expected in April 2010 and, should an application be successful, then work will commence later in the year.

**Publications**

**Books/Academic Journal Articles** (RAE 2008 Categories A & D)


Short Works/Reports (RAE 2008 Category T)


Professional/Popular Journal Papers (RAE 2008 Category D)


Refereed Conference Contributions (RAE 2008 Category E)


Non-refereed Conference Contributions (RAE 2008 Category E)


Events, Lectures, Seminars, Workshops, etc


Sampson, H. (2009) Keynote Speaker, IMEC, University of Szczecin, Poland, 6-8 October.

Other Conferences Attended


Forthcoming Publications


Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACS: The Associated Colleges of the South
AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIOFE: Association of Institutions for Feminist Education and Research in Europe
AIS: Automatic Identification System
APSA: Asia-Pacific Sociological Association
ASA: American Sociological Association
ATHENA: Advanced Thematic Network in European Women’s Studies
CWERC: Cardiff Work Environment Research Centre
Ed: Editor
EMSA: European Maritime Safety Agency
ESRC: Economic & Social Research Council
EU: European Union
HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMEC: International Maritime English Conference
IMLA: International Maritime Lecturers Association
ISSN: International Standard Serial Number
ISF: International Shipping Federation
ISM: International Safety Management
LRET: The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust
LRETRU: The Lloyd’s Register Educational Trust Research Unit
LSM: Lloyd’s Ship Manager
MPhil: Master of Philosophy
NCRM: National Centre for Research Methods
PhD: Doctor of Philosophy
RAE: Research Assessment Exercise
RCUK: Research Councils United Kingdom
RGS: Research and Graduate School in the Social Sciences, Cardiff University
RMIT: The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
SET: Science, Engineering & Technology
SIMAC: Svendborg International Maritime Academy
SIRC: Seafarers International Research Centre
SIRC-NF: Seafarers International Research Centre – Nippon Foundation
SOCSI: School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University
TOYM: The Outstanding Young Men
UK: United Kingdom
USA: United States of America