2017 was reported to be a good year for ports - on the whole. Throughputs rose and have steadily, if not dramatically, risen since 2014. In the container sector there was positive growth, overall, across all world regions and productivity gains with improved efficiencies and operational performance were widely reported by commentators. Such efficiencies are often measured in terms of crane moves per hour (25-40 moves per hour being fairly typical in large ports). However in 2017, UNCTAD’s Maritime Review reported on data that were collected by Marine Traffic on vessel turnaround time. It argued that these data could be considered to be a good proxy measure of port ‘efficiency’. The Marine Traffic analysis (of selected ports) demonstrated that in 2016, container ships spent an average of 0.87 days within port limits - spending least time in Japanese ports and most time in the Netherlands port of Rotterdam. This represents a considerable decrease in the time spent in ports since 2006 when across the world there was an average stay of 2.62 days. Efficiency sounds like a very positive facet of modern life. Counter-posed against wastefulness its attractiveness seems indisputable. Yet efficiencies do not always have desirable consequences for real people in a real world where human feelings and interactions have significance. From the vantage point of the world’s 1.5 million seafarers, rapid vessel turnaround looks rather different. In relation to the opportunities for respite which are offered by shore-leave Rotterdam appears to be a rather attractive port of call!

In 2017 we reported on some of our recent research findings which shed light on some of the consequences of increasingly rapid vessel turnaround. Data that we collected in 2016, and analysed in 2017, suggest that more seafarers today find themselves unable to ‘ever’ get ashore than they did in 2011. In 2016, 11% reported ‘never’ getting shore-leave, whilst in 2011 this figure stood at 7%. The figures on more ‘efficient’ and faster turnarounds provide us with part of the explanation for this negative trend. With ships berthing for very short periods of time, and 24-hour port working, the possibilities for seafarers to go ashore are steadily diminishing.
This is likely to impact negatively on seafarers’ physical and/or mental wellbeing as life on board any ship is highly constrained, relatively monotonous, and potentially stressful. It may well underlie other findings that we reported in 2017 which indicated that there has recently been an overall deterioration in the short-term mental health of seafarers which has been manifested in higher levels of anxiety and depression.

Encouragingly some of the other research analysis which we reported in 2017 indicated that there are also positive changes afoot which are likely to impact beneficially on seafarers’ health and wellbeing in the longer term. Seafarers are drinking less alcohol on board, and at home, and fewer are smoking cigarettes. Seafarers report eating less fried food at home and to our surprise an increased proportion describe themselves as vegetarian. These positive changes in health-related habits should carry physical health benefits for seafarers and promote longer and more active lives. However, this isn’t the only cause for optimism. From the perspective of mental health we should also start to see improvements in the coming years as a result of increased company awareness, reduced average tours of duty, and increased access to free, shipboard, internet provision. Free internet provision is reported by active seafarers to have increased between 2011 and 2016 and it seems that most companies now identify this as essential in line with both their obligations vis a vis the exercise of corporate social responsibility and their need to continue to attract high quality officers and ratings. These combined factors provide seafarers with better opportunities for mental restoration, and the kind of access to social support that many of us take for granted ashore.

It is impossible to say whether these collective improvements will adequately mitigate the negative impact of faster vessel turnaround and the growing stresses that are more broadly characteristic of increased ‘efficiencies’ across the shipping sector but there is little doubt that they will be of help. In a society characterised by a quest for more and more efficiency it is important not to lose sight of the human consequences of drives for increased productivity. Post-MLC, and with concerns relating to seafarers’ mental wellbeing being expressed by industry leaders, perhaps 2018 will be the year that sees shipping focus greater attention on more humane, as well as better economic, outcomes. Certainly we will continue to produce research evidence at SIRC to inform and guide practice and policy relating to working seafarers in the UK and abroad. We hope that it will prove to be of benefit.

Professor Helen Sampson
Early in the year, while the weather in the UK was still ‘brisk’ Dr Iris Acejo was invited to attend the MCA UK Human Element Development Group (UK HEDG) in Southampton in order to present some of our findings from the Lloyd’s Register Foundation/TK Foundation-supported research that we undertook at SIRC in the period 2012-2016. Iris presented some of the findings from the study relating to the interactions between sea-staff and shore-based staff in the same organisations. This generated a lot of interest and some lively discussion.

In February we were pleased to welcome Daria Gritsenko as a visitor to SIRC. Daria is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Helsinki with a particular interest in the regulation of pollution within the shipping industry. As such, she was particularly interested in the research that has been conducted at SIRC on regulation and more specifically on the regulation of ship emissions.

In April Professor Sampson offered to run a seminar for some of the shore-based personnel working at our most local company, Graig Shipping, with whom we have enjoyed a friendly relationship for many years. The seminar was designed to report on recent research findings from SIRC relating to crew wellbeing. As such we discussed findings from our research on seafarers’ health and self-medication practices in combination with findings from our, aforementioned, study of ship-shore relationships and the stress that may be associated with these. The research findings generated quite a bit of discussion in the course of the seminar and we were pleased to hear from one superintendent (who had been at sea until relatively recently) that our findings on sea-staff and shore-staff interaction very accurately reflected his own observations. We hope that this kind of activity is useful to companies in stimulating discussion of how to improve life on board for seafarers and consequently operational performance. We are very happy to respond to similar invitations to report our research findings to companies that are seeking to make improvements in ship-shore relationships.
In May, Dr Nelson Turgo headed for the beautiful Cornish coast to give a talk on ethnography to the Maritime Logistics Business and Policy Research group. Whilst there he was able to catch up with our former colleague Dr Tang who is a lecturer at Plymouth Business School in International Shipping and Port Management. Later in the month Nelson travelled to Copenhagen to present SIRC research on ship-shore interaction to the CrewConnect conference in Copenhagen. The assembled audience of leading shipping executives showed considerable interest in the research findings and the topic generated a great deal of ‘back-stage’ discussion.

Professor Sampson also went to the ‘seaside’ but a little further afield when she travelled to Haugesund in Norway to participate in the last of the RISKOP workshops. Whilst there she presented a paper with Idar Johannessen on the use of real-life vignettes in social research. The pair hope to complete an article on this novel topic by the end of the year.

Meanwhile Dr Acejo travelled to Swanwick where she joined members of the Apostleship of the Sea for their national conference. Iris was asked to present research conducted by SIRC on seafarer health, a topic which is close to the hearts of many maritime welfare professionals.

In June Professor Sampson was invited by Fairplay to join a Safety at Sea roundtable discussing crew welfare in the context of concerns over P&I reports of increased seafarer suicides. The discussion was particularly useful in bringing together a range of maritime professionals who share a concern with seafarers’ welfare but rarely have an opportunity for meetings or discussion.

Later in the month Dr Wendy Cadge from Brandeis University and Professor Graeme Smith from the University of Chichester travelled to Cardiff to join Professor Sampson, Professor Gilliat-Ray and Dr Turgo at the first research meeting for their new ESRC-funded study of seafarers, port chaplains and faith. The group also met with the project’s advisory team for a very productive session which served to kick off the study to an excellent start.
With water always close to our hearts, the 2017 SIRC-Nippon Foundation scholarship alumni event was held at Lake Vyrnwy on the southern fringe of the Snowdonia National Park in Wales. The venue was excellent and the views spectacular which was fitting for an event at which a great deal of work was planned, discussed and carried out. This year we were able to hear from four guest speakers. Dr Fernando Martins (UNESP Brazil) and Dr Daniel Wintersberger (Birmingham Business School) spoke about the experiences of workers in Brazilian low-cost airlines and the group discussion which followed focused on points of similarity and difference with seafarers. Dean Grace Aguiling-Dalisay (University of the Philippines, Diliman) talked to us about indigenous Filipino research methods and Aaron Mallari (University of the Philippines, Diliman) discussed the methodological approach that he had used in historical work using visual records. These insights into different ways of undertaking research stimulated a rich discussion and exchange of ideas.

Back in Cardiff we were very fortunate to benefit from the temporary assistance of David Bleines who had just graduated from the School of Social Sciences. David undertook valuable work as a voluntary intern and proved to be flexible and capable in assisting us with a variety of research tasks prior to heading north to study for a PhD.

As the summer sun shone in Wales, Dr Turgo flew to Hiroshima, Japan, to take part in an International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Sciences. Nelson enjoyed the conference and the experience of being in Japan where he presented work on situated knowledge in Southern Filipino fish markets. This constitutes one part of a fascinating study which Nelson hopes to publish in book format in 2018.

In August the BBC approached Professor Sampson and asked if she could assist with a feature that was being made for the BBC World Service program ‘World Update’, hosted by Dan Damon. The 50 minute program focused on the shipping industry and included the issue of seafarers’ mental wellbeing. Both Professor Sampson and PhD student, and former seafarer, Amaha Senu were interviewed by Dan and sections of these interviews were broadcast in the feature itself and then repeated in the BBC Radio 4 ‘PM’ program hosted by Carolyn Quinn. The episode of World Update can be accessed at http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w172vhzw4y02k7r.
August also saw the arrival of Ms Haiyan Yu from Shanghai Maritime University. Haiyan plans to spend a year in Cardiff as a visiting scholar in order to develop her research ideas which will form the basis of a series of applications to study for a PhD. She has rapidly been assimilated into the centre and her ideas have provided the basis for some lively discussions about methodology and the maritime sector.

In September Dr Malcolm Fisk from De Montfort University, Leicester, visited Neil Ellis to discuss the latest SIRC work on seafarers’ health. Dr Fisk has a particular interest in studying older seafarers and has published in this area. His visit was followed in October by Dr Jose Paul who was formerly a professor of AMET and a Port Director in India. Dr Paul was re-visiting Cardiff after a long absence, having been a PhD student of Professor Couper, in the old Maritime Studies Department.

In October, Dr Nelson Turgo attended the ‘Supporting Seafarers Conference’ (organised by the Maritime Charities Group) in London. The conference was attended by UK charities involved in providing welfare services to active and retired Royal Marines, seafarers and fishermen. Participants discussed the challenges faced by charities as a result of the changing demographics of their ‘client’ populations. They also discussed the potential to expand their services to foreign seafarers and fishermen visiting UK ports. Nelson was particularly interested to meet people associated with maritime charities in the UK and to understand how they work with research institutions to help them serve their target beneficiaries.

For the second year running SIRC was represented at the World Maritime University’s Anti-Corruption Awareness Panel. A ten minute video of the findings from our Lloyd’s Register Foundation/TK Foundation-supported study of ship-shore interaction was presented focusing on the relationships between seafarers and port personnel from a variety of departments. Iris Acejo then answered questions by video link as a live panelist. The video is also available on our website and can be accessed via the following link: ww.sirc.cf.ac.uk/Media_Resources.aspx

Closer to home, Neil Ellis attended a one-day BSA Conference, held in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff. The theme of the conference was particularly relevant to work at SIRC as it explored current social research and theoretical perspectives relating to the environment and health, and considered the interactions between the environment and human health/wellbeing.
As autumn crept up on Cardiff, Professor Sampson headed south to Melbourne’s nascent spring. She gave a paper at RMIT’s main campus in Melbourne city centre and then travelled to a departmental ‘retreat’ in the countryside to give a second talk to staff and students. She subsequently spent time with Dr Victor Gekara (an alumnus from the first cohort of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellowship program) providing a workshop for PhD students interested in qualitative research methods. Fortunately, despite a busy schedule, there was just time for Professor Sampson to spend a couple of hours at an animal sanctuary (where she encountered her very first koala bears and wombats) and an opportunity for a quick spell of wine tasting at a local vineyard!

From a rather chilly Melbourne Professor Sampson travelled to Manila to the prestigious CrewConnect conference where she gave a paper. Whilst there she met up with many long-standing contacts in the maritime industry as well as both current and former SIRC-Nippon Foundation PhD students (Carolyn Graham, Polina Baum-Talmor, Rogenen Pepito, and Mark Llangco). Professor Sampson also visited the University of the Philippines (Diliman) with which SIRC and Cardiff University have close ties. She met with members of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy to discuss future collaborations and she was pleased that they were joined by Dr Sanley Abila (also a former SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellow) who was working at De La Salle University in Manila.

The year ended with Professor Sampson travelling to London to take part in filming for a distance learning course for those interested in seafarers’ welfare which was being put together by the World Maritime University with support from the ITF. The venue for the filming was the IMO which was in full session and was alive with activity as delegates mixed together and enjoyed performances from a variety of musicians.
Teaching

The following contributions to teaching in the school and university were made in 2017:

Professor Helen Sampson, Researcher Safety (PhD students) Cardiff University Graduate School.

Dr Iris Acejo and Neil Ellis, Analysing Interviews and Focus Groups; Dr Amaha Senu, Philosophy and Methodology of Social Sciences, Globalisation and Social Change (undergraduate students) School of Social Sciences.

Project Progress

In June we began a three and a half year-long study considering the significance of faith amongst seafarers. The project called ‘Religion in multi-ethnic contexts: a multidisciplinary case study of global seafaring’ is being funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The study represents a collaborative endeavour in which Professor Sampson (PI) and Dr Turgo (Research Associate) are joined by Professor Wendy Cadge (Brandeis University, USA), Professor Sophie Gilliat-Ray (School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University), and Professor Graeme Smith (Theology, Philosophy and Religious Studies, University of Chichester).

We also began a study relating to seafarers’ mental wellbeing which is funded by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). This study considers seafarers’ experiences of mental wellbeing on board and what both supports and undermines this. It also considers the experiences of a sample of companies in relation to the distressing issue of shipboard suicide and to medical repatriations on the grounds of mental health. Professor Sampson (PI) is joined by Neil Ellis (Research Associate) on this study.

In 2017 we published a short report which provided an account of the findings from research we conducted in 2011 and 2016 relating to seafarers’ health and self-medication practices. The publication was called ‘Changes in seafarers’ health 2011-2016: A summary report’ (http://www.sirc.cf.ac.uk/SIRC_Free_Online_Reports.aspx). It was based on the collection of more than 1,500 questionnaires in the UK, Philippines and China and it received a considerable amount of attention in the maritime press.

The collaboration between Professor Helen Sampson and Stord Haugesund University College (SHUC) continued in 2017.
In 2018 we will continue to make progress with our existing studies funded by the ESRC and IOSH. We will also begin work on an important new project funded by Lloyd’s Register Foundation. This involves a programme of work designed to engage with key stakeholders in the maritime community following the completion of two studies in 2016 on shipboard mandatory equipment and ship-shore interaction. These earlier studies were funded by the Lloyd’s Register Foundation, The TK Foundation and Cardiff University.

We will also support two undergraduate students who wish to experience academic life in a faculty abroad. Having successfully applied to the Cardiff University Global Opportunities fund we will be able to support two students who wish to spend a month with our colleagues at the University of the Philippines (Diliman). We hope that this experience will be rewarding and enriching for those concerned and that it will also serve to cement our ties with the Arts and Humanities College in the University of the Philippines.

We will continue to support the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellows who are working towards their postgraduate qualifications.

**Theses and Alumni**

The following PhDs were awarded in 2017:

Polina Baum-Talmor - Careers and Labour Market Flexibility in Global Industries: The Case of Seafarers (supervisors Helen Sampson, Phil Brown)

Helen Devereux - The Impact of the Organisation of Work and Employment at Sea on the Occupational Health, Safety and Well-being of Seafarers (supervisors David Walters, Emma Wadsworth)
Work is progressing on the following postgraduate studies (all of which have been financially supported by The Nippon Foundation):

Amewu **Attah** - The Impact of Oil Exploitation on a Ghanaian Fishing Community

Ralph **Buiser** - Unionised Seafarers and Maritime Trade Unions in the Philippines

Jabeth **Dacanay** - Regulating Occupational Health and Safety in the Maritime Industry: A Case Study of the Philippines


Isaac **Mensah** - The Dynamics of Poverty, Inequality and Coping Strategies Among Small-Scale Fishers in Ghana

Rogenen **Pepito** - Understanding the Crewing Crisis in the Context of Agency Employment: Perspectives from Seafarers, Crewing Agents and Ship Managers

Amaha **Senu** - The Global Assemblage of Multi-centred Stowaway Governance

Career Success of SIRC-Nippon Foundation Fellows and Alumni

Dr Sanley Abila, Commissioned Researcher, Philippines

Capt Mohab Abou-Elkawam PhD, Senior Lecturer in Nautical Studies, Liverpool Maritime Academy, Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool

Dr Iris Acejo, Research Associate, SIRC, Cardiff University

Dr Nippin Anand, Senior Surveyor/Consultant, Offshore Verification and Classification, DNV (Det Norske Veritas) GL – Maritime, Aberdeen, Scotland

Dr Polina Baum-Talmor, Research Officer, SIRC, Cardiff University

Ms Jessica Bernfeld, Deputy State Public Defender, Denver, Colorado State, USA

Prof Syamantak Bhattacharya, Director, School of Maritime Science & Engineering, Southampton Solent University

Ms Jabeth Dacanay, Dacanay Magracia Law Offices, Philippines

Dr Helen Devereux, Data Analyst, Cornwall Council

Dr Manasi Dutt, Project Manager, Bernhard Schulte Holdings Pte Ltd, Singapore

Dr Roderick Galam, Research Associate, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Department of Social and Political Sciences, Freie Universität, Berlin, Germany

Dr Victor Gekara, Assistant Professor, School of Business Information Technology and Logistics, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

Dr Aditi Kataria, Teacher, The Lawrence School Lovedale, India

Dr Momoko Kitada, Assistant Professor, World Maritime University and Secretary of the WMU Women’s Association, Malmö, Sweden

Dr Lin Li, Translator, Dalian Ocean Shipping Company, China

Dr Don Eliseo Lucero-Prisno III, Associate Professor of Public Health, Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China
In January 2017 we were sorry to say farewell to Lijun Tang who left for a permanent post at Plymouth University. Lijun joined SIRC in 2004 as one of the first members of the SIRC-Nippon Foundation fellowship programme. Having completed his PhD he remained at SIRC as a Research Associate and contributed to many successful projects. Lijun had been a popular member of the team and it is no surprise that although he has left SIRC we remain in close contact with him.

It was also very sad to say goodbye to Maria Goldoni who left SIRC in April 2017 after a very long period of service. Maria joined SIRC in its very early days under the Directorship of Tony Lane. She was a ‘pillar of strength’ and a symbol of continuity for many of us associated with the centre. Maria is greatly missed for many reasons but perhaps especially for her team spirit and contribution to staff morale, often via the provision of treats such as Christmas Panettone and pancakes on Shrove Tuesday!
Academic Staff at 31 December 2017

Prof Helen Sampson Director
Dr Iris Acejo Research Associate
Dr Polina Baum-Talmor Research Officer
Mr Neil Ellis Research Associate
Dr Amaha Senu Casual Research Assistant (part-time)
Dr Lijun Tang Research Associate
Dr Nelson Turgo Research Associate

Administrative Staff

Ms Louise Deeley Executive Officer
Ms Kate Whittaker Clerical Officer

Associate Fellows

Dr Sanley Abila
Dr Mohab Abou-Elkawam
Dr Ngwatung Akamangwa
Prof Maragtas Amante
Dr Nippin Anand
Dr Syamantak Bhattacharya
Dr Helen Devereux
Dr Manasi Dutt
Dr Victor Gekara
Dr Aditi Kataria
Dr Momoko Kitada

Dr Priscilla Leong
Dr Mark Llangco
Dr Lin Li
Dr Shahriar Mazhari
Dr Jean Pia
Dr Don Eliseo Lucero-Prisno III
Dr Desai Shan
Dr Lijun Tang
Dr Conghua Xue
Dr Peidong Yang

Visiting Scholars

Haiyan Yu, Shanghai Maritime University (from August)
David Bleines, Cardiff University (July-August)

Awards & Nominations

Publications

Academic Journal Articles


Short Works and Reports


Books


Contribution to Edited Works


Book Reviews

**Authored Publications in Maritime Press**


**Professional/Popular Journal Papers**


**Theses (completed)**


**Keynote Lectures/Round Tables**

Refereed (Published) Conference Contributions


Guest Lectures, Seminars, Panels, Workshops, Conferences (unpublished papers presented)


Sampson, H. (2017) ‘Isn’t it simple? Aren’t you just talking to people?’ The skill and risks associated with qualitative research on the international shipping industry, RMIT University, Melbourne, 3 November.


Other Conferences, Workshops Attended (paper not delivered)


Other


'Online mental health support is helping UK seafarers, UK Chamber of Shipping, 3 November 2017. https://www.ukchamberofshipping.com/latest/online-mental-health-support-helping-uk-seafarers/


Feature 'Medical and health', IHS Safety at Sea, November 2017, p21.


'Shining a light on mental health', IHS Safety at Sea, October 2017, pp18-19.

'Mental health has to be monitored for it to be managed', IOSH Magazine, 25 September 2017. https://www.ioshmagazine.com/article/mental-health-has-be-monitored-it-be-managed


http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-4818-Seafarers-deserve-the-same-rights-as-everyone-else/#.WfyVTFu0OUk

‘This is how the crew lives in the superyachts of the rich’, El Confidencial, 12 September 2017.
https://www.elconfidencial.com/alma-corazon-vida/2017-09-12/tripulacion-maltrato-yates-gente-rica_1441934/


‘Internet access at sea should be ‘a fundamental right’, IHS Safety at Sea, August 2017, p9.


‘New study to focus on seafarers’ religious lives’, Safety4Sea, 26 June 2017. https://www.safety4sea.com/new-study-to-focus-on-seafarers-religious-lives/


‘Ports Walks Part 2: Beyond the Horizon and Beneath the Surface’ (Podcast), 3 June 2017. https://portwalks.ie/podcast/part2/


'Challenges posed by stowaways', Seaways, April 2017, p30.

'Viele Fragen zur Gesundheit an Bord' (Many questions about health on board), Auf Kurs, April 2017, p8.


'The unspoken role of a seaman’s wife: A seaman’s success cannot be attributed to the hardworking husband or to his good wife alone. It’s a team effort.', The Seafarer Times, 14 February 17. http://seafarertimes.com/2015-16/node/3796


'Seattle chosen to offer US CoastGuard lifeboat training’, IHS Safety at Sea, February 2017, p14.

'A life saver that doesn’t live up to its name', The Sea, January/February 2017, p4-6.


Forthcoming Publications


**Gekara**, V.O., Nguyen Thanh Xuan, V. ‘From brutes to pin-heads; technology, job loss and skills transformation at the waterfront’, *New Technologies Work and Employment*.


Turgo, N. ‘Knowledge sits in places: The vernacularity and emplacement of fish market practices in southern Philippines’, Mabini Review.


Abbreviations and Acronyms

AMET: Academy of Maritime Education and Training
BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation
BSA: British Sociological Association
CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility
DOI: Digital Object Identifier
eds: Editors
ESRC: Economic and Social Research Council
IAMU: International Association of Maritime Universities
IOSH: Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
INTED: International Technology, Education and Development Conference
IMarEST: Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology
IMO: International Maritime Organization
ISSN: International Standard Serial Number
ITF: International Transport Workers’ Federation
MCA: Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MLC: Maritime Labour Convention
NCVER: National Center for Vocational Education Research
PhD: Doctor of Philosophy
PI: Principal Investigator
RISKOP: Risk in Offshore Operations
RMIT: Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
SHUC: Stord/Haugesund University College
SIRC: Seafarers International Research Centre
TK: Torben Karlshoej
UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESP: Universidade Estadual Paulista
UP: University of the Philippines