

# THE SWEDISH CLUB GREEK FIRE FIGHTING & SAFETY COMMITTEE

## ADVANCED FIRE PREVENTION AND FIRE FIGHTING COURSES IN GREECE



It is generally accepted that a well trained crew is the most important factor in preventing accidents from occurring and minimizing their effects, when they do occur. Crew training is traditionally given in short courses ashore and, hopefully, continued onboard under the supervision of the ship's master and officers.

To assist masters of ships insured by The Swedish Club, a committee was formed in 1985 consisting of top executives of the shipping companies insured and chaired by Mr. C.A. Philippou, Naval Architect and Marine Engineer, and acting surveyor on behalf of the Club in Piraeus, to examine the situation and form a plan of action.

In the field of fire safety the committee proposed a series of measures such as the issue of instructions for a more effective emergency response organization, the execution of realistic drills, posters etc. However, it was felt that the value of those measures would be enhanced if ship masters and officers also attended seminars in advanced fire fighting. It was agreed that the objects of the seminars would be:

- **To impress the importance of continuous safety awareness and complete adherence to safety procedures.**
- **To explain methods and ways of conveying safety awareness to the rest of the crew.**
- **To explain effective methods of crew organization and training.**
- **To update knowledge of fire safety and prevention methods.**
- **To improve the ability to use fire fighting equipment.**

The conduct of the seminars was entrusted to Captain A.L. Leondopoulos and Captain I.C. Papaioannou, both Master Mariners with long experience of command at sea and of teaching at Greek State Marine Training Institutions.

The seminars last for seven working days. In a fully appointed lecture room the attending officers receive a thorough update in the use of modern fire safety equipment. Particular attention is given to the importance of proper maintenance of portable and fixed fire fighting equipment and breathing apparatus.

Every opportunity is used to emphasize that prevention is better than cure. The very real dangers of fire aboard are demonstrated by Mr. C. Philippou with statistical information and the analysis of real fire cases as well as the philosophy of structural fire safety and the importance of maintaining its integrity.

In addition, discussions among the participants are actively encouraged and it is recognised that these discussions form a most useful part of the seminar.

One full day is dedicated to actual fire fighting in a training ground. Here the officers attending the seminar have an opportunity to extinguish various types and sizes of fires using all types of portable extinguishers as well as water and foam applicators.

A special feature of the seminar is the use of a ship as a workshop. As there is always a ship of one of the participating companies available, this is used to put into practice the Emergency Response Organisation discussed in the lecture room. The officers attending are organized as the crew of the ship and during a very intensive day execute a series of realistic exercises, such as: rescue from an enclosed space with a



hazardous atmosphere, reclaiming a supposedly CO2 filled engine room and search and rescue from a smoke filled space. All officers enter the smoke filled area wearing B.A.

The last exercise is a full scale response to a fire aboard which also includes the rescue of a person overtaken by smoke.

The equipment used in these exercises is the one actually found on board which in fact offers a good opportunity to evaluate its efficiency and adequacy.

Since the first seminar, held in 1986, more than 550 deck and engine officers have attended with great success, as attested by tangible improvements in the fleets involved. At least on two occasions, seminar attendees have had the opportunity of successfully putting to the test the knowledge obtained. On one occasion promptly extinguishing an engine room fire by using the ship's CO2 installation and on another saving the life of a colleague from a smoke filled engine room and extinguishing the fire.

However, there is reason to believe that the best results are obtained in the area of fire prevention and the consequential reduction in the number of fire incidents.

### **DANGEROUS ATMOSPHERE MONITORING SEMINAR**

Almost eight years have elapsed since the first fire fighting seminar was held. Due to the appreciation from our Members in Greece it has been decided to extend the seminar activities as a part of the overall loss prevention program. The "Dangerous atmosphere monitoring seminar" is now also available for the Greek members. This seminar lasts two days and will be held in the seminar room next to The Swedish Club office in Piraeus. The aim is to increase understanding of dangerous atmospheres in enclosed spaces and also the correct handling of relevant instruments to detect dangerous atmospheres.

The coming seminars are planned for:  
**May 19-20 and June 17-18**  
For further information please contact The Swedish Club branch office in Piraeus.

### **LIFE SAVING SEMINAR**

This seminar is at an early planning stage. The purpose of the seminar will be to train crew members in handling of inflatable liferafts and also what should be done when abandon ship. The seminar should be both theoretical and practical. The Swedish Club hope to be able to offer such a seminar to the Greek members within the near future.

