

IAMU LNG Roundtable

Joint Statement on LNG Ship's Officer Competency Standards

By

The International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU) and
The Society of International Gas Tanker and Terminal Operators (SIGTTO)

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The international LNG transport industry has enjoyed an enviable safety record, without a significant accident or cargo spillage after more than 40,000 voyages over four decades of operations. This record is the result of paying close attention to the quality of vessel crews as well as ship and terminal facilities, which is now becoming more difficult to assure. The rapid expansion of the LNG sector, new security requirements, technological change, increased market competition, and potential labor supply constraints, all point to the importance of assuring that vessels and shore side facilities be staffed by qualified personnel with up-to-date training.

Issues to be addressed include:

- The requirement to remain competitive and a potential deterioration in service quality are industry concerns in today's dynamic environment.
- Heightened safety concerns are fueling widening local opposition to the construction of new LNG terminals, which threaten to slow or stall the rapid expansion of emerging trades.
- Energy utilities are dependent on LNG imports and are vulnerable to a prolonged disruption in power generation resulting from a significant accident on LNG transport.
- Government regulators as well as industry have become more concerned about securing the security of LNG vessels and terminal facilities.

Global demand for liquefied natural gas continues to rapidly expand with critical ramifications for the international shipping industry:

- Industry has responded to the expected growth in transportation demand with unprecedented orders for LNG ship and port terminal construction.
- To operate a growing worldwide LNG fleet which is expected more than double in number by the end of this decade, the supply of trained and experienced LNG crews must also be expanded accordingly.
- There is already a general labor supply shortage for mariners with the needed qualifications and experience, which extend to shore-based support staff.

- Safe and efficient operation of LNG tankers present sophisticated technical requirements, which are changing with a continuing evolution in vessel technology and greatly increasing vessel size.

Therefore, to maintain and enhance the excellent safety record of LNG shipping and associated operations, the undersigned agree to work collaboratively on actions that seek to assure an adequate supply of mariners and other operators qualified for LNG vessel and terminal operations worldwide.

The parties to this Joint Statement recognize the concerns raised at the Round Table regarding impending shortages of qualified staff in the shipping industry and the LNG sector, in particular. These matters require further discussion in other forums.

The goal for the parties is to minimize and manage the operational risks of the LNG supply chain. To achieve this goal, the signatories will:

- Establish a consensus on the current reality and the challenges in the LNG supply chain.
- Using information gathered from companies, industry bodies, classification societies and others, as appropriate, finalize an inventory of enhanced competency standards for safe LNG operations and prepare training packages and assessment criteria to deliver these competencies effectively.
- Formally present to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) the need to consider LNG competency standards, training packages and assessment criteria, and request that the needs of the LNG sector receive the urgent attention of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) .
- Provide assistance to the MSC in this effort, using the results of the review of existing competency requirements.
- Devise an appropriate framework for implementing the above actions.

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