Maritime security in a time of challenge: Admiral Makarov State Maritime Academy (SMA) facing the challenges with pride

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1   Introduction

The process for establishing a maritime security system in the Russian Federation began at the same time as the Inter-session working group of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee. Most of the process had been achieved by the time Chapter X1.2 of SOLAS-74 and the ISPSC Code were accepted. The implementation of the new regulations was difficult due to the considerable size of the country and the remoteness of many marine regions.

2   The beginning

In the beginning of 2003 SMA already had experience in the training of professionals in accordance with safety management systems in compliance with ISM Code, the analysis of operational risks and dealing with emergency circumstances. As a result, SMA formed a group to work out a methodical system for training professionals in the field of maritime security in Russia.

The Ministry of Transport assumed the responsibility for the compliance with the regulations of Clause XI-2 of SOLAS – 74 and ISPS Code in the Russian Federation.

"Maritime Security Service" Enterprise was commissioned as an executive organization. It accepted the SMA proposal as a concept basis for the unified training system of the personnel responsible for the security measures on board and ashore. In August of 2003, a national working seminar was held at SMA. It was held within the Global IMO Program for the Maritime safety and was devoted to the training of maritime transport security professionals. The instructors of "International maritime security" Ltd (UK) were involved in the work of the seminar as well as a wide range of other security and safety specialists. The professionals of these organizations contributed their experience

and combined it with the knowledge of the experts in the field of maritime education and training.

The international experience has also been taken into consideration as well as the approaches used in other countries and leading maritime organizations, including some courses in foreign countries, the requirements of national Administrations, the recommendations of the classification societies, the requirements of the US Coast Guard and, of course, the IMO model courses.

3   The approaches selected

The major goal posed by the academy has been formed in the following way: to determine the general national requirements and the programs for the training of the professionals in compliance with the requirements of the ISPS Code. That is to be done with the obligatory consideration of the national experience in the field of the accident prevention with the application of modern approaches used in the national practice. An important decision was made to shorten the preliminary preparation period as well as for attracting the most experienced instructors and professionals: firstly to arrange the security familiarization training at the basis of higher maritime educational institutions.

As a result, this system became the basis for the national system of training in compliance with ISPS Code and was subsequently unified and standardized. Such an approach guaranteed a definite quality of the qualification levels in most of the regions of Russia.

The programs for 5 categories of trainees were designed in the Russian Federation in the autumn of 2003. Requirements for educational institutions providing the training in compliance with the ISPS Code were also formulated. The program training pack includes the following specialist categories:

- Ship Security Officer;
- Company Security Officer;
- Port State Control Security Inspector (Officer Duly Authorized for Security);
- Inspector in maritime security for the training centres.

It is important to note that all Russian instructors qualified to provide training in the ISPS Code have been trained at the Makarov Training centre of SMA.

So the unified system of training of the professionals for the security of ships and port facilities was established in the Russian Federation. The system of standard approaches has enabled us to provide the depth of the issue outlook exceeding the IMO Model Course, and to show the role of the safety and security measures at sea in the wider context of present maritime industry problems. At the first national seminar for Maritime Security, it was mentioned that an effective system of training and certifying of Maritime Security professionals had been created in Russia.

4   Today

Today the Academy is cooperating intensively with many international institutions. The main target of this cooperation is to formulate standard methods

and procedures which can be implemented in training exercises targeted to port personnel in the areas of coast security.

To provide the unified national system for ISPS certification of personnel, the Academy has designed complex software toolkits for the knowledge assessment in the five categories of specialists ("Delta-ISPS"). It was approved by the Maritime Administration of Russia and Liberia for the worldwide usage in training centres and companies in-house seafarers' assessment. During 2004-2005 the instructors and examiners completed the final certification with the "Delta –ISPS" appliance at the Academy and all other training centers.

The total number of the professionals trained in Russia is approximately 5000 people (summer 2005). A large number, 2,700 to be precise, were trained at the Makarov training center of SMA. We have been assigned with the design of the programs, methods, examination standards, and with the very procedure of training and certification of the security professionals.

The level of training and assessment achieved at the Academy Courses on the Security of Ships and Port Facilities is confirmed by the appropriate certificates of Russian and Liberian maritime Administrations and is under the general quality system which is also accordingly confirmed by the Russian maritime register of shipping and IQNet.

5   What will be the second step?

Now when the preliminary stage of the ISPS Code application is completed, the goals of the educational institutions in every country are changing. They are:
- Firstly, the necessity to provide a smooth application of the Requirements for the Competency of the Ship Security Officer inputting into STCW-78/95;
- Secondly it is necessary to improve the practical component of the security training;
- And finally to develop the most acceptable methods of crew training.

It is necessary to organize a broad exchange of experience in the field of practical training and educational programs at an international level.

During the first months of Chapter XI-2 SOLAS -74 implementation revealed that only, the upper level of the problem is dealt with. Higher Maritime Educational Institutions, providing training in these fields, ought to become the centers of broader research for maritime security.

We shall concentrate our attention not only on such issues as the prevention of terrorism and piracy in marine transport, but also such problems as drug trafficking, illegal immigrants, cargo stealing, etc..

To define the area of the research issues, it is necessary to consider the opinion of Shipping Companies who definitely have a broader experience with regard to facing and solving problems in reality.