

## **NI Log**

### **London Branch**

#### **UK NMIC**

Delegates at a recent joint meeting of the London Branch and the Honourable Company of Master Mariners were given a comprehensive insight into the work of the National Maritime Information Centre (NMIC) by Capt Russell Pegg MNI, Director of NMIC. The NMIC was set up under the Home Office in mid-2011 as a cross-government body to form an integrated information environment in the maritime domain. Building on relationships with other departments, the NMIC brings together existing functions to improve maritime situational awareness and support to other agencies in the event of emergency or crisis. This allows a much better understanding of the threats, risks, and concerns of what is important to the country and what action needs to be taken. For threats which may happen within 50 miles of the UK coast, the NMIC looks at risks from a distance of 2,500 miles and this involves building relationships with other governments. The security issue becomes more complicated involving people, cash, environment, cargo and infrastructure with different agencies owning different data.

In setting up the NMIC, the first obstacle to overcome was building trust and confidence with many other organisations including military, coastguard, police, customs, etc. These relationships had then to be translated into actions – what response assets were available, who had jurisdiction to act, who was the lead agency, and getting the capability including legal powers to address the risks. Was the right information being shared, at the right time, and with the right people – UK Border Agency, police, etc.?

The NMIC checks on a daily basis the intent of any vessel to visit the UK. They profile every vessel against risk (compliance record, nationality, etc) and hold a report card for every vessel. This is kept in a portal where stakeholders (e.g. local authorities) can pull the information and profile as local knowledge with a general report for their action. This enables the NMIC to produce the most comprehensive, reliable, accurate and up-to-date analysis of priority areas of the UK maritime domain, and is readily available to its customers in a useful format.

The London Olympic Games proved a useful exercise for the NMIC, profiling 100% of all UK arrivals in the 2 week period. This involved 2000 vessels in the London and adjacent port areas.

Sharing of data gives confidence to other agencies, getting data to where it is needed as appropriate and sharing properly with good governance. The data is dynamic data and is shared on a national, regional and global level.

Russell ended with a summary of the benefits to the UK – a single architecture, cross-government benefit, single portal for information exchange, and is a national process, sharing full knowledge of what goes in and out of the UK.