

## **The Nautical Institute launches the Ice Navigator Scheme**

On 3 June The Nautical Institute launched the Ice Navigator Training and Certification Scheme. This is the latest in the Institute's expanding series of professional training schemes and has been developed in response to rapidly growing demand for officers with proven expertise in handling ships in ice.

While the Scheme is designed to complement the IMO Polar Code, course content is not restricted to the Polar regions, and it expands on the minimum requirements of STCW. The focus is on actual ship handling and operation of vessels in ice-covered waters worldwide.

It is understood that the Scheme is open to those who hold, or are studying towards, a deck officer qualification awarded by a White List administration.

Participants must demonstrate practical competence on board and in simulator exercises, and show a thorough understanding of ice regimes, including ice physics, operations in sea ice, hazards, search and rescue and weather.

Under 'grandfathering' arrangements, a participant who can prove they have prior experience in ice may be eligible for the award of either a Level 1 or Level 2 Ice Navigator Certificate.

Training providers that offer the NI's Ice Navigator Scheme courses must be fully accredited to The Nautical Institute's rigorous Training Accreditation Standard.

All training centres are audited to ensure consistency of delivery around the world and to ensure that they meet the highest professional standards.

Award of an NI Ice Navigator Level 1 or Level 2 certificate means the officer will possess an internationally recognised qualification, valid for five years, demonstrating they have the competence and confidence to navigate safely in ice anywhere within the limits of their certificates of competency (CoC).

Speaking on the occasion of the launch, Captain Duke Snider FNI, (*illustrated*) President of The Nautical Institute, said: *'Operating ships within any ice regime requires specialist knowledge, skills and a level of awareness beyond those of the majority of mariners. This course will help to equip ships' officers to meet the unique challenges posed by navigating in ice. Those who hold the NI Ice Navigator Certificate will be able to prove their ice-readiness to potential employers worldwide.'*

The Nautical Institute has a strong track record in providing best practice guidance for operations in ice, including its publications *Polar Ship Operations*, by Duke Snider and *Handling Ships in Ice*, by Johan Buysse.

New editions of both books are currently in preparation, it is reported by the NI.