How the squeeze on standards enables small flags to flourish

How to cite:


For guidance on citations see FAQs

© [not recorded]
Version: Version of Record
Link(s) to article on publisher’s website:
http://www.sirc.cf.ac.uk/

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online’s data policy on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

oro.open.ac.uk
When we see the flags flown by ships, and the ports of registry painted on their sterns, we notice that they are not all attached to such places as Panama and Liberia, Bahamas and Malta. We take them for granted because they have become so familiar and so numerous even though we may find it difficult to connect these flags with our understanding of what constitutes a port state. In recent years a number of other flags have arrived on the scene from countries that are not so familiar, such as Belize, Bolivia, Cambodia, and Equatorial Guinea. The presence of these new registries or flags of convenience is less straightforward than it first appears, because these new flags are less straightforward than it first appears, because these new flags may choose to fulfil all international requirements. But, as we have seen, the larger flag states have begun to place higher expectations upon their shipowner clients. This regulatory squeeze has driven out the smaller flag states, and the new arrivals is simply to see them as yet another example of open registers or flags of convenience. After all, there is an obvious commercial response to their much bigger brothers and sisters. To their much bigger brothers and sisters. To their much bigger brothers and sisters.

The initial response to these new arrivals is simply to see them as yet another example of open registers or flags of convenience. After all, there is an obvious commercial response to their much bigger brothers and sisters. To their much bigger brothers and sisters. To their much bigger brothers and sisters. To their much bigger brothers and sisters.

The very success of these flags involves costs and continues a trend where the option to pick up unwanted tonnage is routine to the rock bottom of the market to themselves in order to fill niches, and the new arrivals are likely to be detained by port state inspectors on entry if the increase in standards has left a gap in the flag market both for ships that have been deleted, and shipowners who do not wish, or who are unable to cover the costs of increased regulation. It is this very space at the rock bottom of the market that these new registers enter and fight for against international conventions – if they may actually be called that – to make it plain that this is a matter for the shipowners themselves and that they, the “administrators”, are in practice making different levels of compliance international conventions.

This practice of passing responsibility for regulatory compliance has, of course, been common among open registers but, as we have seen, the larger registries have begun to place higher expectations upon their shipowner clients. This regulatory squeeze has driven out the smaller flag states, and the new arrivals.

The SIRC column

How the squeeze on standards enables small flags to flourish

Nik Winchester of the Seafarers’ International Research Centre looks at the difference between the established open registers and some of the new arrivals on the scene