Waves

Ice navigation · Shore leave · Mental health at sea
My first ship · Poetry · Painting · And so much more!

Asst. Eng. Sumanth Shyamanna on shore leave at Texas Aquarium

View from the chartering desk

by Arend-Jan Jeswiet

Tanker Market Recap: Three Months of Tight Tonnage and Shifting Trade Winds

The last three months have been defined by complexity, volatility, and transformation across all segments of the tanker market. Whether in the clean product trades (MR and LR2), crude transport (Aframax), or gas logistics (VLGC), our industry has seen an interplay of geopolitical risk, regulatory tightening, and shifting global energy patterns, all still set against a backdrop of ageing fleets and constrained newbuilding supply. As we pass the midpoint of 2025, it is worth taking stock of where we stand and what lies ahead.

Middle East Tensions Continue to Reshape Global Routes

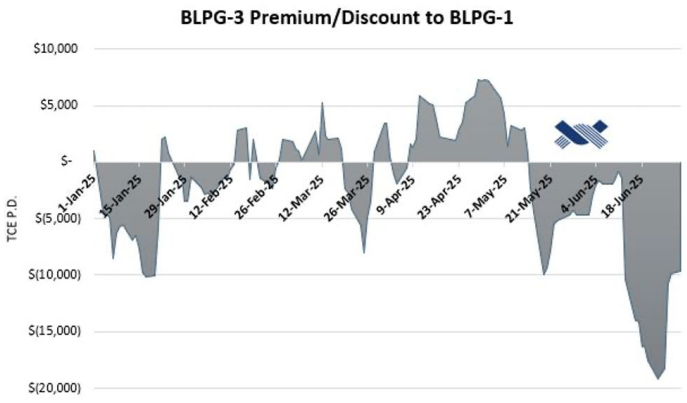
What is being referred to by some as the "12 Day War" ended after the US declared a ceasefire on 24 June. It started when Israel attacked various military and other strategic targets in Iran on 13 June in the midst of an ongoing war in Gaza and its surrounding areas. Iran retaliated by firing an estimated 550 ballistic missiles and over 1,000 explosive drones at Israel. The Iran-aligned Houthis in Yemen also fired ballistic missiles at Israel. The US had assisted the defence of Israel and further entered the fray by bombing targets deep into Iran linked to its nuclear enrichment and missile programs on 22 June. Iran retaliated the next day by firing a barrage of ballistic missiles at a US base in Qatar, though this was seen by most as being symbolic. On the morning of 24 June, President Trump declared a ceasefire agreement accepted by both Israel and Iran, ending 12 days of escalation in the Middle East. Iran did threaten to close the Strait of Hormuz, but nothing came of it in the end. During the period of increased hostility, some Owners left the Middle East Gulf or stopped and drifted outside the area while awaiting improvement of the situation, though most continued to trade as before. Additional War Risk Premiums did not increase, likely due to the relatively short nature of the hostilities and the time it usually takes for insurance markets to assess and apply changes in rates. There was, however, a short spike in freight rates (as illustrated in the figure below showing WS freight rates for LR2 and MR tankers out of the MEG going East), but it was so short-lived that the majority of vessels that repositioned to the area to try to capitalise missed out and ended up missing the boat.

The persistent threat to shipping from the Houthis in Yemen in the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb Strait has continued to fundamentally reshape voyage planning and regional availability across tanker classes. For Aframax crude tankers and LR2 product carriers, the detour around the Cape of Good Hope has added weeks to voyages connecting Asia with Europe or the Mediterranean. This rerouting inflates ton-miles, tightening vessel supply globally. It has particularly impacted the MR and LR2 segments, which were previously heavily involved in cross-Red Sea trade of clean petroleum products (CPP) from the Middle East and India to Europe and East Africa. VLGCs carrying LPG cargoes from the US Gulf and the Middle East to Asia have also been affected, as many shippers continue to opt to avoid the Suez Canal and transiting the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb Straits. Though this has prolonged voyages, it has also driven freight rates higher, especially on the US-Asia route, where rates have held firm through May and June.

Freight Rates: All Segments Stay Strong

In terms of earnings, MR tankers have seen healthy TCEs thanks to resilient transatlantic gasoline demand and new export flows from the Middle East and India. The seasonal spike in US gasoline consumption during the driving season has supported MR demand across the Atlantic, while also creating repositioning opportunities in the Caribbean and Latin America.

LR2s, meanwhile, benefitted from growing middle distillate demand in Asia and arbitrage opportunities out of the Middle East. However, volatility remains a factor. Spot earnings spiked in late May and again in June during the hostilities between Israel and Iran, but have since moderated as refining margins narrowed and inventories rebounded. »



Aframax rates have remained acceptable though not very high, particularly in the Mediterranean and North Sea where short-haul crude trades saw steady demand amid OPEC+ production strategies and ongoing reshuffling of Russian barrels. The ongoing presence of Russian crude exports, largely moved by a parallel shadow tanker fleet, has reduced effective supply, giving compliant Aframax owners more pricing power in Atlantic markets.

In the gas sector, VLGCs have outperformed expectations at very healthy returns. US LPG exports to Asia remain at record highs, supported by stable demand from petrochemical sectors in China and Korea. Panama Canal delays in Q2 pushed more ships via the Cape of Good Hope, tightening vessel availability. The war-like escalation of hostilities in the Middle East led to a massive spike in the discount of BLPG-3 (Houston-Chiba) to BLPG-1 (Ras Tanura-Chiba) as shown in the graph above.

Regulatory Compliance and Commercial Complexity

A key theme affecting all tanker segments continues to be compliance with the expanding regulatory framework. The IMO's Carbon Intensity Indicator (CII) and the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) and FuelEU Maritime framework are no longer theoretical, they are daily considerations in voyage planning and commercial strategy.

For MRs and LR2s, which tend to operate at higher speeds on shorter voyages, slow steaming to optimize CII ratings or reduce EU ETS and FuelEU Maritime exposure poses operational trade-offs. Aframaxes are similarly impacted, especially when frequent port calls and idle time in congested terminals on shorter-haul trades such as cross-UK/Continent or cross-Mediterranean voyages reduce their carbon efficiency scores.

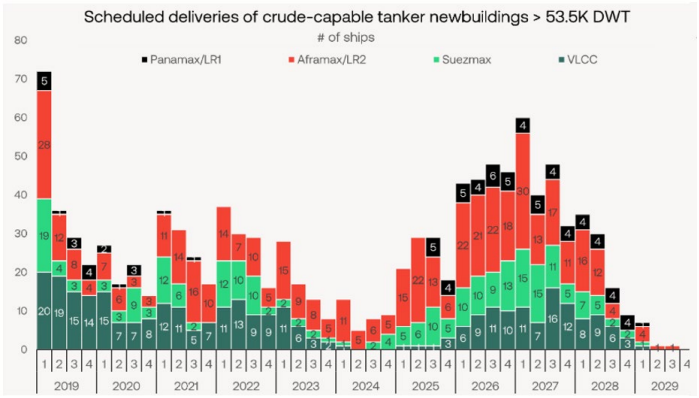
VLGCs, which trade on longer-haul voyages and sail at higher speeds, tend to be better able to optimise fuel efficiency under these frameworks, but as the impact of especially the EU ETS and FuelEU Maritime frameworks starts to ramp up, we expect to see Charterers focus on the more fuel-efficient vessels while the older tonnage perhaps will focus on those trades that take them less into and out of the EU, especially on long-haul trades such as that of VLGCs.

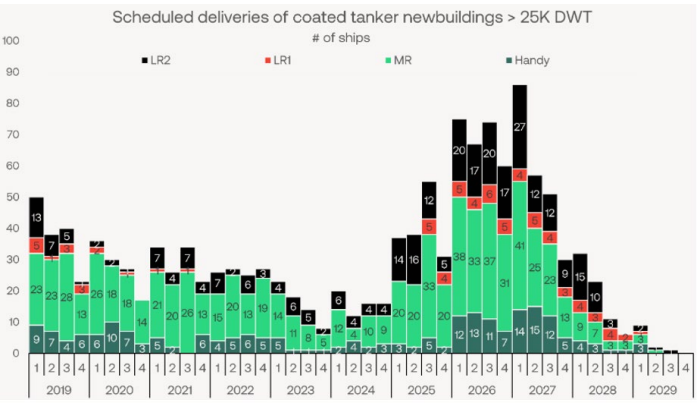
Fuel choices are another area of divergence. While most of the existing tanker fleets still run on VLSFO and LSMGO, dual-fuel LNG- and LPG-capable (VLGC) newbuilds are increasingly entering the market, albeit slowly. Designs of vessels that could in the future burn Ammonia or Methanol are also increasingly being studied and ordered, though the adoption of those fuels does feel much farther out. Owners remain cautious about committing capital towards less-proven future fuels, especially in a fragmented fuel infrastructure landscape. Pricing of these alternative fuels will of course be crucial in their adoption, as the commercial considerations will be decisive.

Fleet Supply: Ageing Vessels and Limited Ordering

Across all tanker segments the fleet is ageing. Over 48% of the current tanker fleet are now 15 years or older, and this figure is climbing in most tanker sizes. These older ships face not just compliance and regulatory costs but increasingly difficult commercial vetting. »

	>19 YRS	15-19 YRS	10-14 YRS	5-9 YRS	<5 YRS	IN SERVICE
VLCC/ULCC	188	168	198	238	114	906
SUEZMAX	157	117	150	159	113	696
AFRAMAX	237	169	97	106	79	688
LR2	48	108	84	134	117	491
PANAMAX	48	8	1	10	2	69
LR1	95	149	71	62	4	381
MR2	365	461	377	385	288	1876
MR1	236	150	62	50	10	508
	1374	1330	1040	1144	727	5615
	48.16%					





Despite this, scrapping has remained limited, largely due to firm secondhand prices and steady earnings and, of course, the aforementioned "dark fleet". Newbuilding activity is selective. Owners are hesitant to place orders without clarity on future fuels and regulatory frameworks. Across tanker segments, the large majority of orders are scheduled for delivery in 2026 and 2027 (graphs above).

This supply tightness, particularly in LR2 and Aframax segments, has been instrumental in maintaining floor-level support for freight rates, even during demand lulls.

Market Outlook: Divergent Paths for Tanker Segments

Looking ahead to the second half of 2025, the outlook is cautiously constructive. For MRs and LR2s, regional trade dynamics and refining output will be key, particularly in Asia and the Middle East. Aframax owners will continue to benefit from disrupted Black Sea and short-haul Atlantic trades, especially if Russian flows remain stable and OPEC+ holds firm. In the VLGC segment, new US export capacity and Asian petrochemical demand will likely sustain chartering momentum, though rates could soften as fleet additions arrive in 2026. Overall, we expect continued volatility, but as things look today this will be within a range that remains manageable for all ends of the chartering chain. The tightness in supply, persistent trade inefficiencies, and growing regulatory barriers all act as rate stabilizers.

Final Thoughts

Across MR, LR2, Aframax, and VLGC segments, one theme is clear: the age of easy forecasting is over. Owners, Operators, and Charterers alike must navigate a complex matrix of risk and opportunity. Whether it is regulatory compliance, geopolitical shocks, or shifting trade flows, the coming months will reward those who stay agile, data-driven, and forward-looking.

And in closing, an update on the chartering of the TP fleet over the last couple of months. *TP Endeavour* completed her drydock in Singapore towards the end of May, after having been redelivered from Exxon, and has since delivered into her 11-14 months BP TC. In drydock, *TP Endeavour* received a high-spec silicone anti-fouling system, Propeller Boss Cap Fins (PBCF), and upgraded LED lighting, amongst others, which will ensure a step towards greater fuel efficiency. *TP Endurance* has been redelivered from Exxon in Peru and is currently ballasting via Gladstone for bunkering on her way to Singapore for her drydock, where she will receive the same upgrades as *TP Endeavour*. Upon completion of her drydock she will deliver into her 11-15 months BP TC. Finally, *TP Spirit* has been fixed on a three-year TC with Union Maritime and will deliver to them upon completion of her current voyage discharging in Rotterdam for orders.

For our company, success lies in embracing digital optimization, investing in future-ready tonnage and technology, and maintaining a disciplined commercial approach to achieve fuel efficiency wherever and as best we can. Every single one of you, on shore and especially aboard, contributes to this, and we will continue to count on you all to make the difference!

Take care of yourselves, look after each other, and good seas to you all!

Sources:

MR + LR2 WS freight rates graph: Clarksons SIN

VLGC graphs: Fearnleys VLGC Quarterly Report – Q2 2025: https://fearnpulse.com/gas-report/vlgc-quarterly-market-report-q2-2025

Tanker Fleet Age Profile: BRS Tanker Fleet Statistics (Carl's Monthly Management Report June 2025)

NB delivery schedule: Braemar Tanker Monthly Statistical Review 07/07/2025: https://braemarmarkets.com/Braemar/web/report.htm?reportId=7036

Notes from Marine and HSEQ

by Cato Kristensen

Campaign

On 15 July we will start a campaign with a focus on our hands.

The **Safe Hands Campaign** aims to raise awareness and promote safer habits through observation, feedback and shared responsibility. By assessing how tasks are performed and identifying both safe practices and areas for improvement, we shall work together to:

- Prevent hand injuries before they happen
- Encourage the use of appropriate tools and PPE
- Encourage a safety-first mindset across all teams
- Support open and respectful peer feedback from shipmates

The aim is for both the assessor and the assessed to get a better understanding of hazards. These assessments are not about assigning blame - they are about learning, improving and looking out for one another. Every observation is a chance to make our work environment safer.
In this campaign we want feedback from the ratings. This is because the ratings are the most exposed to hand injuries as they spend more time doing physical work than officers.

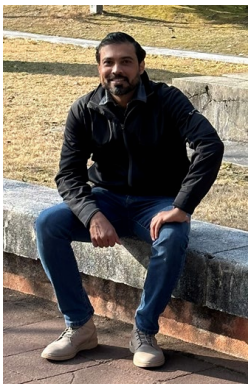
Vetting

Below is the vetting overview for our fleet. SIRE 2.0 is in an early phase and it is still not clear to us how the various oil majors interpret the result.

SIRE 2.0 vetting results for Q2 2025

TP SPIRIT	23/Jun/25	Rotterdam	2
TP ENDEAVOUR	07/Jun/25	Dampier	6
TP ENDEAVOUR	29/May/25	Singapore	9
TP AFFINITY	13/May/25	Donges	3
TP RESOLVE	08/Apr/25	Vuda Point	12

A chilling experience:
navigating within the ice limits aboard M.T. Turmoil



By Captain Fabius Rebello

SOMEWHERE IN CANADA, where icy seas conceal both stark beauty and silent peril, *Turmoil* carved a determined path through treacherous waters. On 21 May 2025, *Turmoil* was tasked with a daunting mission: proceed to Quebec and then Lewisporte, Newfoundland, for cargo discharge. Lewisporte, lying within ice limits, presented a formidable challenge. Our experience with the ex-*Alpine Eternity*, which suffered heavy ice damage in the same port and around the same time of the year, stood as a stark reminder of what lay ahead.

Determined not to repeat that fate, Transpetrol took no chances. They ensured that an experienced ice advisor would join the vessel, stipulating that navigation within the ice limits would only be attempted in daylight and good visibility and always at a safe speed.

Yet for all of us on board, this was uncharted territory. None had navigated ice-infested waters before. We were grateful, then, to have the expertise of Ice Advisor Captain James Raymond Pierce, better known as 'Captain Jim'. This man is no stranger to ice. He fell in love with the Arctic on his first trip there in 1987. He has since built a career out of ice and Arctic shipping. Some highlights include working offshore in the Arctic, pioneering ice seismic, contributing to the development of ice navigation systems, serving as ice navigator for the Canada C3 expedition, as an ice breaker captain, and overseeing marine operations at a high Arctic port. These days he helms his own company, Polar-Grizz Marine Ltd., which provides Arctic shipping consulting services, general ice operations, and ice pilot support to Arctic and other waters.

And then the day of departure from Quebec eventually arrived. Weather predictions painted a picture of moderate to rough seas, and on the bridge anticipation mingled with uncertainty. With detailed ice charts, near-constant weather updates, a steadfast ice advisor on board and careful passage plan in place, on the afternoon of 12 June *Turmoil* departed Quebec for Lewisporte.

Two days later, in the early hours of 14 June, *Turmoil* entered the ice limits. Conditions were calm and visibility was good. No ice was spotted initially, but we knew it was coming. That night, *Turmoil* paused to drift just before the Straits of Belle Isle, a narrow and notoriously iceberg-laden stretch of water. Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) also confirmed at least 30 icebergs in the vicinity.

At sunrise on 15 June, *Turmoil* resumed her approach into the straits. Within an hour, we sighted our first iceberg—an awe-inspiring yet intimidating experience for everyone on board. It was the first iceberg we had ever seen. »

By early afternoon, we had counted 15 icebergs. Then, we stopped counting - not because the icebergs vanished but because attention shifted to more elusive threats: growlers and bergy bits.

Unlike their grand, majestic cousins, these smaller ice fragments are far more difficult to detect. Growlers, often no larger than a small car, ride low in the water, partially submerged, and are frequently covered in dark seawater, making them nearly invisible. Growlers are almost impossible to detect by radar. They pose an immense threat to vessels.

Bergy bits, slightly larger, can cause serious structural damage if struck. Neither reliably appears on radar. Properly tuned radars, sharp eyes, binoculars, and caution were our best defence. These small but deadly ice fragments forced us into slow, deliberate navigation. At times, we had to stop completely to avoid them. With vigilance and teamwork, we safely exited the Straits of Belle Isle that night.

On 16 June, we resumed our passage. Fewer icebergs appeared, but we stayed on guard. Another night of safe drifting passed before our final leg into port.

At dawn on 17 June, we approached Lewisporte. As expected, icebergs loomed near the port entrance. One large bergy bit sat dead centre in our approach path - an obstacle we negotiated with the utmost care. After two-and-a-half intense days of calculated progress through treacherous waters, we finally arrived at Lewisporte, safe and sound.

We continued to Conception Bay so that Captain Jim could disembark. Though ice analysis showed potential iceberg sightings en route, we encountered none. Still, we navigated with the same care and attention. After parting ways with our trusted advisor, with new knowledge, hard-won experience and a deepened respect for ice navigation, we continued and safely completed our passage to the exit of the ice limits.

Turmoil's passage through the ice limits is a reminder that while technology continues to evolve, there is no substitute for human vigilance and no greater test than nature itself. That is the seafarer's way: facing the unknown, not with fear - but with resolve!

Iran-Israel Conflict 2025: What Seafarers Need to Know

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND ISRAEL in 2025 has captured global attention. But for those of us at sea, it is more than just a geopolitical headline - it directly affects maritime routes, safety protocols, and fuel costs. Understanding the current situation is essential for staying informed and prepared while navigating affected regions.

Background: Rising Tensions in the Middle East
Tensions between Iran and Israel have been simmering for years, but 2025 marked a sharp escalation. A series of proxy confrontations, cyberattacks, and cross-border strikes erupted into open hostilities in the first half of the year. What began as covert operations and regional posturing quickly evolved into direct military engagement. Israel launched targeted airstrikes on Iranian facilities, while Iran retaliated with coordinated missile and drone attacks - some reportedly aimed near strategic infrastructure in the region.

Recent Developments
April-May 2025: Heightened military activity, including missile strikes and cyberattacks on energy and communication networks.
June 2025: Increased naval patrols and drone sightings in the Strait of Hormuz, raising concerns about maritime safety.
Shipping companies rerouted vessels to avoid high-risk zones in the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman.
The conflict has prompted global powers to issue maritime advisories, warning of potential threats to merchant shipping in the region.

Why It Matters to Seafarers
As a seafarer, understanding how this conflict affects our profession is crucial. Here are the key implications.

Strait of Hormuz Vulnerability: Approximately 20% of global oil passes through this narrow chokepoint. Any disruption could spike fuel prices, affect chartering decisions and impact voyage planning.

Maritime Security Risks: The threat of attacks on commercial vessels in or near conflict zones has increased. Some shipping companies have implemented heightened security measures, including re-routing and the use of armed guards.

Operational Delays and Port Disruptions: Port operations in nearby countries may be slowed due to increased security checks or reduced staff. This can cause congestion and logistical delays.

Crew Fatigue and Safety Concerns: Longer routes and increased watchkeeping can lead to higher fatigue levels. Staying vigilant and well-rested is more important than ever.

Staying Informed and Prepared
Monitor Trusted Sources: Follow updates from UKMTO, IMB Piracy Reporting Centre, and your company's safety department.
Review Vessel SOPs: Ensure you and your crew are familiar with emergency protocols, especially when passing through sensitive waters.
Avoid Misinformation: Onboard rumours can spread quickly - always verify facts with official channels.

Conclusion
The Iran-Israel conflict highlights how international tensions can ripple into the maritime industry. For seafarers, this is a time for increased awareness, teamwork, and professionalism. While we hope for a swift de-escalation, it is essential to stay prepared and informed.

Our strength lies not just in navigating the oceans - but also in adapting to the challenges they bring.

By 3rd Engineer Shakeeb Mukadam

Mental health's integrity during extended periods on board a ship

Navigating the Challenges of Extended Voyages
Sailing on board a ship for almost a year can be a thrilling adventure, but it also poses significant mental health challenges. Prolonged periods at sea, isolation from loved ones, and the demands of maritime work can take a toll on seafarers' mental well-being.

The Unique Challenges of Life at Sea
1. Isolation and Confinement: Living in close quarters with limited access to communication and entertainment can lead to feelings of loneliness and disconnection.
2. Unpredictable Schedules: Irregular work hours, long shifts, and unpredictable weather conditions can disrupt sleep patterns and cause fatigue.
3. Limited Access to Support: Seafarers may face barriers in seeking mental health support due to limited internet connectivity, lack of confidentiality, or stigma surrounding mental health issues.
4. Physical health concerns: The maritime environment can be hazardous, and seafarers may worry about injuries, illnesses, or the risk of accidents.

Common Mental Health Concerns On Board
1. Depression: Feeling of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in activities can be exacerbated by the isolation and confinement of life at sea.
2. Anxiety: Worries about work, family or personal safety can lead to anxiety, which can manifest as fear, apprehension, or physical symptoms like rapid heartbeat or sweating.
3. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Traumatic events such as pirate attacks or accidents can lead to PTSD, characterized by flashbacks, nightmares, and avoidance of triggers.

Strategies for Maintaining Mental Health On Board
1. Stay Connected: Regular communication with loved ones through phone calls, video chats, messaging apps can help alleviate the feelings of loneliness.
2. Establish Routines: Maintaining a regular sleep schedule, exercise routine, and healthy eating habits can help regulate mental health.
3. Seek Support: Confidential support from crew members, ship counsellors or online resources can provide a safe space to discuss mental health concerns.
4. Engage in Hobbies: Participating in activities like reading, writing or creative pursuits can help reduce stress and improve mood.
5. Prioritize Self-care: Taking breaks, practicing relaxation techniques like meditation or deep breathing, taking enough rest can help mitigate the effect of stress.

Extended periods on board a ship can pose a significant mental health challenge. However, by acknowledging these challenges, implementing these strategies for maintaining mental health, and seeking support when needed, seafarers can navigate the demands of life at sea with greater resilience.

Remember, mental health matters, and seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health concerns on board, do not hesitate to reach out to the resources that can help you, for example your head of department, or seek support from a trusted crew member or mental health professional.

Stay safe and stay healthy! Your family needs you!

By Bosun John Vinnel A. Hungay

Navy Ship Museum in Corpus Christi

By Junior 3rd Engineer Arpith Kunder

The Navy Ship Museum in Corpus Christi features the historic USS Lexington aircraft carrier, offering visitors a chance to explore its decks and learn about naval history. The museum showcases exhibits on naval warfare, ship technology and military history. It is a family-friendly destination that honours those who served in the navy and provides an educational, immersive experience. A great place to discover America's maritime legacy along the Texas coast.














Off the ship and into Texas: the great escape from Affinity

By Assistant Engineer Sumanth Shyamanna

LIFE AT SEA CAN BE A THRILLING adventure, but it can also be physically and mentally demanding. After weeks of navigating the open waters, the anticipation of shore leave is a welcome respite. My first shore leave was an exciting experience that allowed me to explore new surroundings, recharge, and gain a fresh perspective. Shore leave was a chance to break free from the routine of life at sea and experience the world beyond the ship. I had heard great things about Corpus Christi, and was eager to explore its culture, history and attractions.

As I stepped off the ship with the 2nd Engineer, 4th Engineer, and Fitter, I was struck by the vibrant atmosphere of the city. 2nd Engineer, being the seasoned sailor, took the lead in planning our itinerary.

Our day kicked off with a splash at the iconic Texas Aquarium! The Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi is an iconic destination that showcases the wonders of the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. As the largest aquarium in Texas, it features over 13,000 animals from around the world.

We started off visiting **Dolphin Bay**: a 400,000-gallon saltwater exhibit home to four Atlantic bottlenose dolphins: Liko, Schooner, Shadow and Kai.

Caribbean Journey: an expansion that doubled the aquarium's size, adding new exhibits like a jungle aviary and a 4D theatre.

H-E-B Caribbean Sea: a 400,000-gallon aquatic exhibit containing sandbar sharks, stingrays and Atlantic tarpon.

Stingray Lagoon: an outdoor touch pool where visitors can interact with Atlantic and cownose stingrays.

Otter Creek: an exhibit featuring North American river otters.

And we finished off with **Tortuga Cay**: a sea turtle exhibit with rehabilitated and unimaginable sea turtles.

A day at the Texas Aquarium is an unforgettable experience that offers something for everyone. Whether you are a marine life enthusiast, a family looking for a fun day out, or simply someone who loves the ocean, the Texas Aquarium is a must-visit destination. »

Next up, we boarded the historic USS Lexington Museum! Here we discovered the rich heritage of this aircraft carrier, which is also known as “Blue ghost” due its ability to return to action quickly after being damaged. The USS Lexington (CV-16) was commissioned during World War II and played a significant role in several battles, including the Battle of the Philippine Sea and the Battle of Okinawa.

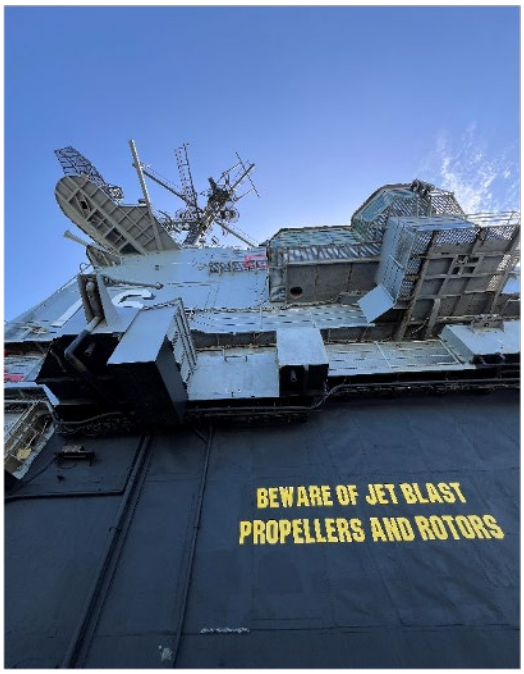
The Museum Exhibits

Flight Deck: the museum's flight deck offers stunning views of Corpus Christi Bay and aircrafts.

Hangar Deck: the hangar deck showcases a collection of historic aircraft, including planes used during World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

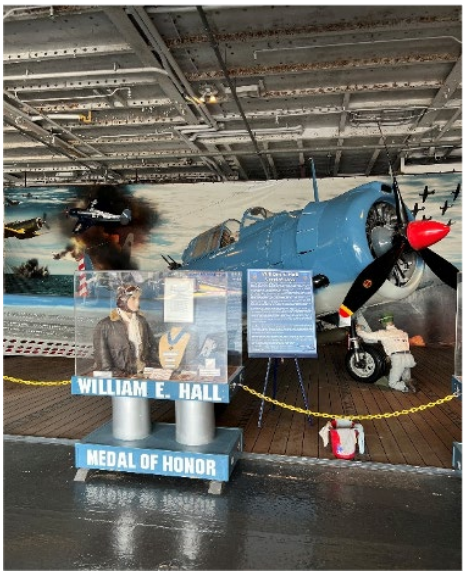
Ship's Interior: we explored the ship's interior, including the bridge, engine rooms, and living quarters.

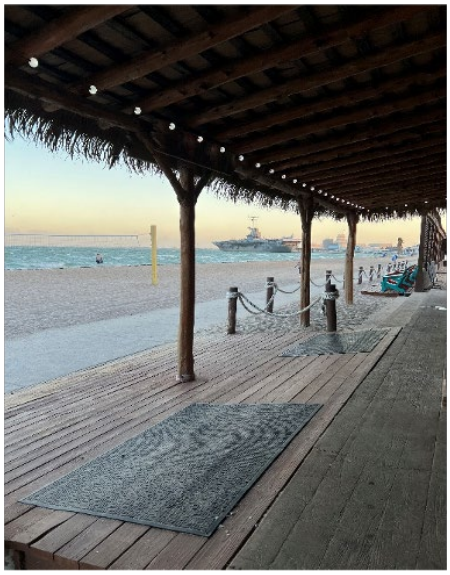
Memorials and Artifacts: the museum features various memorials and artifacts, including a memorial to the crew members who lost their lives during the ship's service. Taking in the sights and stories at the museum I gained a new-found respect for the history and bravery that shaped our world.



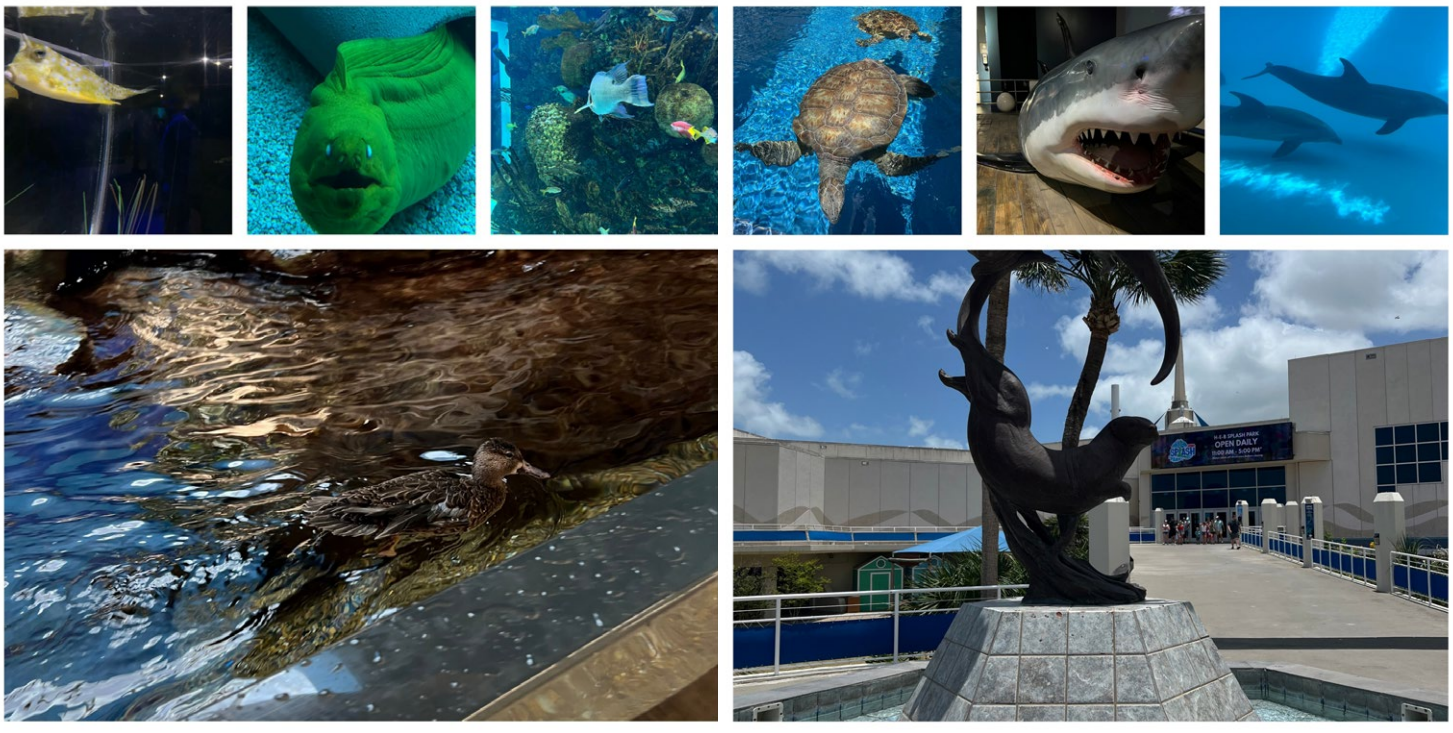
After a day of exploring, we satisfied our hunger with fresh sea food at a local restaurant accompanied by some great live music. The flavours and aromas were a welcome change from the ship’s galley. We laughed and chatted, enjoying each other's company, and the Fitter kept us in stitches with his nonstop comedy and banter throughout the day. As the day ended, we enjoyed a sunset stroll at Corpus Christi Beach and then headed back to the vessel.

Shore leave is an essential part of life at sea, offering a chance to rest, recharge and explore new surroundings. My first shore leave with my colleagues was an unforgettable experience that I will always cherish. Whether you are a seasoned sailor or just starting your maritime career, shore leave is an experience you will not want to miss. As we boarded the ship again, we felt refreshed, revitalized and ready to take on the challenges of life at sea. Shore leave had given us a new perspective and we were eager to apply the lessons we had learned to our work on the ship.





Photos of Texas Aquarium by 2nd Engineer Mario Stolarczyk



This is where I belong

By Junior 2nd Officer Anant Sharma

AS I WRITE THIS, the waves gently rock the vessel beneath me, the vast ocean stretching endlessly in every direction. The sea has been my home - sometimes kind, sometimes cruel - but always humbling. There is a silence at the heart of the sea that speaks louder than words. It is in the way the waves kiss the hull, in the way the salt spray clings to your skin, and in the way the endless horizon dares you to chase it.

This love is not the fleeting kind. It is not born of romantic sunsets or smooth sailings alone, though those have their place. It is a love forged in solitude, in storms, in the quiet rhythm of a ship cutting through the swells at dawn. It is a love that tests and tempers, that humbles even the strongest soul.

To love the sea is to understand that you are never fully in control, and yet you are never truly lost. Each voyage is a chapter. Each port a new page. She is unpredictable yet honest. Harsh but fair. Many ask how we endure the months away, the distance from home, the isolation. They see the ocean as a barrier, but for us it is a bridge — to self-discovery, to adventure, to a world that lives beyond the land.

Life aboard is simple, but it is never easy. The sea teaches discipline, patience, respect. It reminds you that nature is vast, and we are only guests in her kingdom. And yet, with every sunrise over calm waters, with every successful crossing through stormy straits, she whispers that you belong - that you are one of her own.

So yes, I am in love with the sea. Not blindly, but deeply. For she is not just where I work - she is where I live, where I grow, and where I feel most alive.

Navigating risks with focus and teamwork

By Junior 2nd Officer Onkar Patil

SAFETY AT SEA is always the top priority. When you are out on the open water, facing unpredictable weather and complex machinery, there is no room for mistakes. That is why every crew member, from officers to engineers, has a responsibility to follow safety procedures and be prepared for anything.

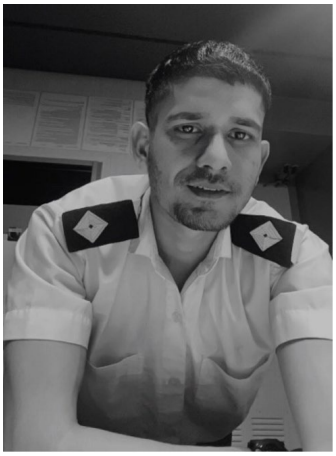
Managing risks on board is not just about checking equipment or watching the radar. It is about being alert and ready to act quickly. This means regular safety drills, careful planning before and during the voyage, and using technology like GPS and electronic charts to avoid hazards. It also means knowing your limits and working as a team to keep the ship running smoothly.

But safety does not happen in isolation. Being away from home for long stretches can sometimes wear on a person's focus and energy. When we are tired or distracted, even the smallest oversight can lead to bigger problems. To help reduce distractions and maintain focus there are some proven steps that can make a big difference. Keeping a regular sleep schedule as much as possible on board helps avoid fatigue. Taking short breaks during long shifts can refresh the mind and improve concentration. Staying organized by keeping watch logs and checklists up to date also reduces mental clutter. And practicing mindfulness or simple breathing exercises can help calm the mind during stressful moments.

At the end of the day, a safe ship is the result of good teamwork, strong procedures, and a clear head. By taking safety seriously in every aspect — from the physical to the mental — the crew can make sure every journey ends well. It is about doing your part and looking out for those around you, so everyone can come home safe.

Setting sail: the story of my first ship

By Deck Cadet
Ashutosh Kumar Ray



THE DAY I STEPPED ABOARD MY FIRST SHIP AS A DECK CADET FELT UNREAL - a mix of excitement, nerves, and something extraordinary. The massive vessel towered above me, its steel hull gleaming under the morning sun, the sound of waves crashing against it like a powerful heartbeat. Onboard, everything was new: the scent of the salty sea air mixed with engine oil, the constant hum of machinery, and the endless expanse of the ocean surrounding us. My uniform felt stiff, but I wore it proudly - this was the start of my maritime career.

The senior officers greeted me with a firm handshake and quick advice: 'Stay sharp, ask questions, and never be afraid to learn.' I quickly realized that every day on board would be a school of its own. From learning how to properly tie knots and handle lines to standing watch on the bridge, every task felt important.

My first watch was nail-biting. Standing on the bridge, looking out at the endless horizon, I was responsible for helping to safely navigate this massive ship. I fumbled through the radio calls, but the officers were patient, guiding me gently.

The nights on board were something else - the stars lit the sky in ways I had never seen before, and the gentle rocking of the ship made sleep both comforting and elusive.

One unforgettable moment was when we had to respond to rough weather. The waves crashed against the hull, and I learned first-hand how teamwork and discipline kept the ship -and us - safe.

After a few months I was no longer a nervous cadet, I was part of a crew, a small but essential part of a great machine that sailed the vast oceans.

That first ship taught me more than textbooks ever could - about responsibility, resilience, and the endless adventure that is life at sea.

Crew photos

From Left to Right : Top Row – AB John, D. Cadet Rohan, Jr. 2Off. Om, 2Off. Vaibhav, Ch.Off. Dinu, Cpt. Konrad, MTM Jesus, Ch. Eng. Lucky, 2nd Eng. Mario, ETO Devdasan, 3rd Eng. Yatin, E. Cadet Sumanth, AB Andrew, Ch. Cook Mark, Jr. 3rd Eng. Arpith, **From Left to Right: Bottom Row** – Fitter Atta, Bosun Jerico, AB Efren, OS Mark , MSM Arjie, MTM Cristobal, Pumpman Junaid, Tr. OS Suhas .

Standing from Left to Right: Tr.OS Jagadeesh, Ftr Vidana, MTM Vishak, MTM Dave, BSN Volteir, AB June, MSM Marlon, Ch Cook Mark , AB Ericson, OS Chinna, AB Gerry, Tr.OS Prakash, RPFW Sekhar, Tr.OS Prathamesh, Tr.OS Rajakullayappa **Sitting from Left to Right**: Jr. Eng Sandeep, Eoff. Sobuj, Gas Eng Nithin, 2/O Sagar, 2/E Vasudevan, Capt. Dolreich, Ch Eng Apurv, Ch Off Pawan, 3/E Shan, Jr 2/O Ashish, Dk. Cdt. Ayush

Safety drills

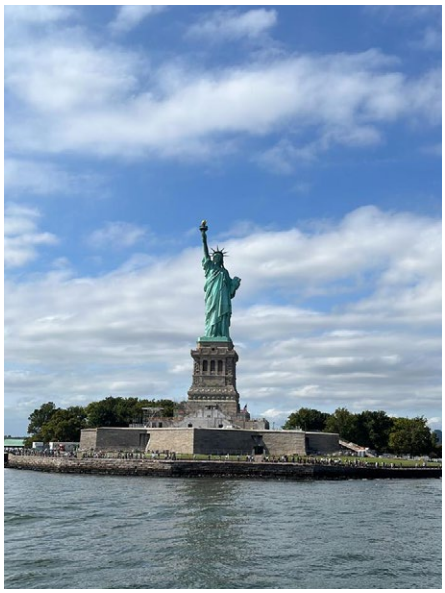
Not an invasion of the Teletubbies, but the crew of TP Tenacity wearing immersion suits

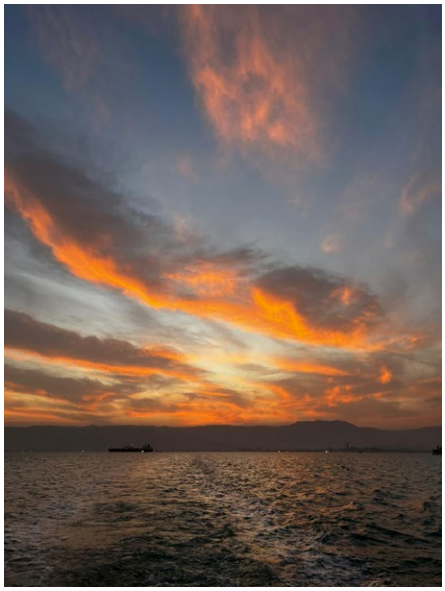
TP Perseverance's lifeboat displaying her manoeuvrability

Artwork by AB Valasayya Pukkalla

Between Tide And Towns:
A Seafarer's Life At Sea And Shore

By Jr. 3rd Engineer Rohit Viegas





BEING A SEAFARER IS LIVING A LIFE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS - one of endless water, and one of ever-changing lands. At sea, days are dictated by tides, work duties, and the non-stop hum of the engine. The horizon is a constant companion holding your hand at the end of every day, stretching far beyond sight, promising freedom and mystery. Life on the ship demands discipline, resilience and trust among crew, who become like family for the long months we spend in the vast blue.

There is solitude, yes, but also a deep connection to nature. The sunrises painted across the ocean, storms that test your spirit, and nights under stars brighter than anywhere on land. It is a life where silence is profound and reflection comes easy. It gets you thinking about family you have left behind, it also makes you realize that you are not just doing this for yourself, but for them as well. That itself brings about a sense of pride towards being a seafarer.

After weeks or months at sea, the call of the shore is strong. Going ashore feels like stepping into a new life each time. The world feels larger, more vibrant- new languages, foods, customs and faces. Every port holds a new story, a new rhythm to absorb. From the neon-lit streets of a bustling Asian city to the quiet charm of a European town, each place leaves its mark.

But even in the joy of discovery, there is always a part of the seafarer that longs for the open sea, the beautiful sunsets at the end of every hard-working day. The land offers adventure, but the ocean offers belonging and peace. For us, travel is more than a job - it is a calling. We live for the balance of motion and pause, storm and stillness, departure and return. And in every goodbye, we find the beginning of the next journey.

Poetry from TP Venture

“Back to the sea”

After miles of silence, I return once more,
To where the wild waves whisper and roar.
A horizon stretched in endless blue,
Calling my soul with a voice so true.

The salt-kissed breeze upon my face,
Brings memories time can't erase.
Footprints fade on sandy shore,
But in my heart, they reside once more.

The sea, my refuge, my ancient friend,
A place where dreams and fears blend.
Long has it beckoned, deep and wide,
Now I’m back to its gentle tide.

With every wave, a story flows,
Of distant lands and hidden groves.
Back to the sea, where I belong
In its embrace, forever strong.

Let the currents carry me
To where the endless waters roam.
For after the long, weary roam,
The sea is home - my heart's second home.

By Jr. 2nd Officer Mridul Verma

“The Watchkeeper's Musings”

As I stand on the bridge, alone and awake
The vast expanse of sea, my constant ache,
My heart a thousand miles away
With loved ones who wait night and day.

The anchor's held, the ship's at rest
But my mind's adrift, with thoughts unnest
Of family, friends, and life's delight
A distant hum, a longing sight.

My AB, a brother, from a foreign shore
We share our tales, of loved ones, evermore
Though languages differ, hearts beat the same
We bond over longing, and the ocean's claim.

We talk of home, of laughter and of tears
Of memories that calm our doubts and fears
In the stillness of the night we find a friend
A kindred spirit till the journey's end.

The sun will rise, the watch will change,
But for now we'll share our stories, and range
In the silence, we'll find a peaceful place
Where love and longing fill the empty space.

By Jr. 2nd Officer Tushar Sharma

Sweet seas and candy currents

By Junior 2nd Officer Om P. Suthar

⚠️ **A Quick Note to Readers**
This story is pure imagination - just a fun break from the serious sea life we know. The ocean remains salty, and fish definitely are not made of candy. But sometimes a silly thought can brighten a long watch or a quiet moment on board.

🌊 **When the Sea Turns Sweet: A Personal Thought**
One calm night on watch, as the stars shone bright and the ship gently rocked, my mind drifted. What if the ocean wasn't salty - but sweet?
Imagine waves of honey, syrupy tides, and rain that tasted like lemonade. The sea breeze would smell like fresh-baked cookies. It was a silly thought, but it kept me smiling until the dawn.

🐠 **Navigating the Sweet Currents: Life Under Candy Waves**
Think about the fish: gummy sharks, licorice octopuses, and jellyfish made of jelly! They would all need tiny toothbrushes to fight cavities. Maybe we would even have an underwater "Tooth Fairy Patrol" handing out minty seaweed floss.
Picture a fish complaining, "Too many jellybeans - I've got a molar ache!"

🧼 **Deck Duties in a Dessert Disaster**
Life on board would not be easy. The deck sticky with caramel, ropes made of licorice twisting in knots, and the gangway covered in fudge - you might get stuck just stepping ashore! Mooring would take longer with "excessive toffee" delays. And radar screens? Probably covered in chocolate drizzle - good luck steering straight.

☠️ **Pirates with a Sweet Tooth**
Pirates would swap gold for bubblegum coins and lollipops. Their battle cry?
"Hand over your jellybeans, or face the licorice whip!"
Their parrots would be made of chocolate - melting in the sun! The worst punishment: walking the plank into a pool of soda. Honestly, many sailors would jump in - with a straw in hand.

🚢 **Titanic 2.0: The Fudgeberg Incident**
Imagine the Titanic facing a giant fudgeberg instead of an iceberg.
Lookout: "Fudgeberg ahead!"
Captain: "How big?"
Lookout: "Melting... but still dangerous!"
The crew? Too busy munching marshmallows and caramel apples to steer clear. Slowly, the ship sinks - not from danger, but sugar overload!

⚓ **Sweet Sea Logbook: Officer's Notes**
"If the sea were made of syrup, every time you tried to raise the anchor, it would stick faster than a barnacle on a buoy. And the crew? We would all be walking around like we had stepped into a giant candy jar - sticky boots, gooey gloves, and a sweet mess everywhere! I can see it now: "Captain, we're delayed again—this time it's a toffee traffic jam!"

Final Word: Keep your spirits sweet and your mind sharp. While it is fun to imagine sweet seas, the real ocean is salty, powerful, and demands our full attention. Stay safe, keep hydrated, and save those sweets for shore leave!