

Indian seafarers are the pick of the cream: Peter Cremers



Indian seafarers are extremely good and Anglo Eastern had reached its present status only because of them, said Mr. Peter Cremers, CEO of Anglo-Eastern group in an interview with *Marine Logistics & Trade Link*. Delving on the image of the industry, he said that the industry had never felt the necessity to project its favourable image through the media but with changing times he believed that the industry should make a film projecting the life of a seafarer and how the industry was responsible for moving cargo globally and helping the world's economy. Speaking about the seminar, he said that this aided in the people meeting together for a brainstorming session to solve the company's problems.

Excerpts from the interview:

When you started did you imagine that your company would achieve such a colossus stature?

No. Even a few years ago we did not imagine that we would achieve the success that we have today.

I think the success story of our company is mainly due to the fact that we have always tried to do the job in the best possible manner. We have also been transparent with our clients.

If you are sincere in your work, progress will be a natural corollary. The number of ships has been growing. If you do a good job you will be riding the wave.

How is your company different from the others?

We have strict control over standards and strict control systems in place. The art of managing a company like ours is to give directions overseas and seeing that everyone is headed in the same direction. It is the art of finding the right people and motivating them. Giving them the freedom but within a framework.

How was the growth last year?

The growth seems to be quite stable at about 15 per cent so we have a growth of about 40-50 ships every year; and this has been consistent over the last 5 years.

Have there been any changes in your policy during the year?

We have strengthened the management team. We have brought in about 10 people to assist me in running the group.

There is a general conception that the Indian seafarers have an attitude and are difficult to manage. Do you think this is true?

I think it is all about systems. And I

believe that we have a reputation in the field. People know that we pay handsome salaries on time and the prospects of growth are bright. We are system driven company – for interviewing, selecting, etc.

People who join the army do so knowing that they have to face the bullets. Should the seafarers take up the career with the understanding that they have to face the pirates?

Of course not. People don't go to sea to face pirates. I keep repeating, piracy is no part of our business. We have to fight piracy unitedly and it has to be eradicated. My view is that there is no place for piracy in the world.

All we can do is keep on being proactive and support the ships, follow the best management practice when they are in the area. As a short term solution you could arm the ships traversing that area, but it can't be a long term solution. With the public opinion being against piracy I hope that some political solution will be found soon. Freedom of the sea is something that is fundamental and the international communities and the navies of the world have to safeguard the ships.

Why doesn't the industry use the media to project the right and favourable image of the industry?

People who join sea as a career are not really media conscious. But now with the changing times it is necessary, I think, to make a movie which depicts everything about the seafaring career and about how everything is transported through the sea

Why is there a need of the seminar and what were the highlight so the present seminar?

The seminar is a meeting place for the clients, ship managers and

seafarers. That we meet and do brainstorming over certain subjects is important!

And a seminar needs a subject to be discussed. We have put complacency high at this seminar because we felt that like in other industries complacency was the cause of several major issues.

Are you planning to diversify beyond ship management?

The company is dedicated to ship management. What we are doing seems to be proving successful so we will continue along the same route. For some people it may be boring but on the other hand that's what we are doing best. We remain dedicated to the ship management industry.

Last year, the shipping industry went through a difficult period. What are the prospects for this year?

I think we have difficult years ahead of us. The markets don't look good but we are living in a **changing** world with new developments taking place every instant. So the situation is very volatile. Happenings in the Middle East would have some effect on the oil flow and the routes to be followed.

Would you like to give some message to our readers?

Well we are proud to be associated in such a big way with India. Anglo Eastern has reached its present status because of Indians. We are fully committed to expand the region. Sky is the limit!

We are looking forward to growing worldwide specially on the back of officers from India over the next 5-10 years

Our target is not to become no.1 over the next five years, but we are growing fast. We have some trusted clients and we are growing with them.