# Maritime Journalist of the Year 2024

## Runner Up Submission

## Michelle Wiese Bockmann

We use cookies to improve your website experience. To learn about our use of cookies and how you can manage your cookie settings, please see our Cookie Policy. By continuing to use the website, you consent to our use of cookies.

*This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use. For high-quality copies or electronic reprints for distribution to colleagues or customers, please call UK support at +44 (0)20 3377 3996 / APAC support at +65 6508 2430*

Printed By **Michelle Bockmann**

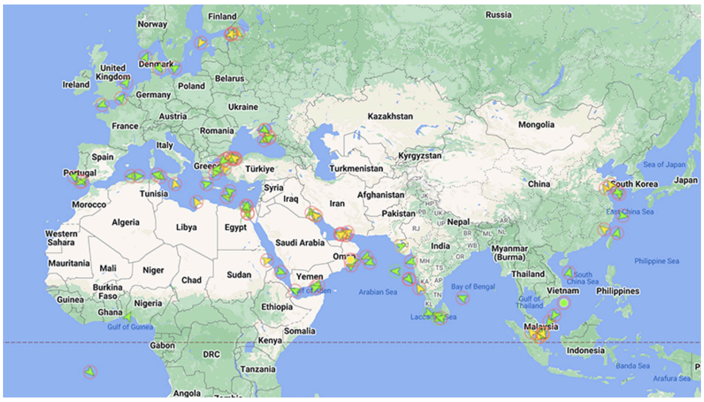
# Cook Islands flags more tanker tonnage than registries 30 times larger as it embraces ‘dark fleet' niche

*Pacific island nation is the fastest growing registry in 2024, flagging more tankers than registries that are 30 times its size as it targets Russia-trading ships*

25 Jul 2024 | **ANALYSIS**

**by Michelle Wiese Bockmann** | @Michellewb_ | michelle.bockmann@lloydslistintelligence.com

Shipowners behind elderly tonnage used to ship Russian, Venezuelan and Iranian oil are choosing small registries that specialise in this niche area




THERE ARE 93 COOK ISLANDS-FLAGGED TANKERS OVER 20,000 DWT WITH AN AVERAGE AGE OF 21 YEARS TRADING WORLDWIDE, WITH ALL BUT A DOZEN DEPLOYED IN SHIPPING RUSSIAN CRUDE AND REFINED PRODUCTS.

*Source: Lloyd’s List Intelligence / Seasearcher*

THE Cook Islands has surpassed Gabon to become the world’s fastest growing registry in 2024, as the Pacific island nation embraces the rapidly expanding business niche of flagging elderly, anonymously owned Russia-trading tankers amid tighter sanctions scrutiny from Western regulators.

Once best known for flagging yachts, the Cook Islands has added more tankers over 20,000 dwt this year to its fleet than the Liberia and Marshall Islands, the world’s largest- and third-largest registries, and is only surpassed by Panama, the second-largest.

## Cook Islands added 50 tankers over 20,000 dwt th year, more than doubling its size in seven months

| Flag state | No of tankers (above 20,000 dwt) flagged Jan 1–July 23, 2024 |
|---|---|
| Panama | 87 |
| Cook Islands | 50 |
| Marshall Islands | 42 |
| Liberia | 71 |
| Gabon | 73 |
| Palau | 12 |
| Antigua & Barbuda | 25 |
| Guinea-Bissau | 15 |

Source: Lloyd’s List Intelligence / Seasearcher

Fifty tankers over 20,000 dwt, totalling 7.2m dwt, joined the Cook Islands registry between January 1-July 23, Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows, more than doubling its size in seven months.

By comparison, 42 tankers of 7.2m dwt joined the Marshall Islands this year, while Liberia added 71 tankers over 6.2m dwt for the same period.

At nearly 12.5m dwt, the Cook Islands' total tonnage is only a fraction of the size of the Liberian and Marshall Islands registries, which are 30 times larger.

The statistics underscore the prominent role that smaller, lesser-known registries are undertaking in flagging tankers deployed in Iranian, Venezuelan and Russian oil trades that now account for 17% of seaborne crude shipments.

Maritime Cook Islands, which runs the open register, did not respond to multiple Lloyd's List requests for comment.

Shipowners that have purchased tonnage exclusively for Russia trading have also found this niche market serviced by other smaller registries, including Antigua and Barbuda, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau and Palau.

The smaller registries also offered safe harbour after larger flags purged tonnage as regulators, including the US Office of Foreign Asset Control, increased scrutiny of tankers engaged in Russian trades.

Until July, Gabon had the title of the fastest-growing flag registry after it took on the highest number of Russia-trading ships, including those from Russia government-controlled shipowner Sovcomflot when it reflagged from Liberia late last year, ending a 20-year relationship with US-based registry management.

The Gabon registry, managed by United Arab Emirates-based Intershipping Services on behalf of the African country, flags 125 tankers over 20,000 dwt. It has flagged 73 tankers totalling 6m dwt so far in 2024.

**Price cap**

Like the Cook Islands, many of Gabon's tanker fleet are elderly and used for shipping oil from Russia, which has been subject to import bans alongside a G7 oil price cap for the past 19 months.

Under the price cap, Western marine service providers including registries, insurers, banks, shipowners, charterers and oil traders cannot ship Russian oil to third countries unless the cargo is sold below a capped price.

What makes these smaller registries unique is that this tanker tonnage comprises most of their business. In the case of the Cook Islands, 93% of all tonnage flagged with the country are tankers.

The same numbers are seen for Gabon, at around 95%, although more established registries such as Palau, have lower percentages. Palau flags 44 tankers over 4m dwt, which comprises 45% of the registry's business, Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows.

Since 2022, some 93 tankers over 20,000 dwt have joined the Cook Islands registry, Lloyd's List Intelligence data shows, with an average age 21 years.

All but nine are part of the so-called dark fleet* of 650 elderly, anonymously owned tankers that has more than doubled in size since Russia invaded Ukraine, and are solely deployed in shipping oil from Russia, Venezuela or Iran.

Seven of these Cook Islands-flagged ships have been sanctioned for breaching either US, UK or EU27 sanctions on Russia's oil and shipping sector, data shows. An eighth tanker reflagged from the Cook Islands to Tanzania this week, after being listed by the EU on June 24.

Among the Cook Islands flagged fleet are 14 very large crude carriers, 11 suezmax tankers and 33 aframax tankers, data shows.

All but five of the 93 tankers over 20,000 dwt flagged with Cook Islands do not have insurance with the International Group of P&I Clubs that cover 86% of the global fleet. Vessel-tracking shows that all bar a dozen are engaged in shipping Russian crude and refined products.

* Lloyd's List defines a tanker as part of the dark fleet if it is aged 15 years or over, anonymously owned and/or has a corporate structure designed to obfuscate beneficial ownership discovery, solely deployed in sanctioned oil trades, and engaged in one or more of the deceptive shipping practices outlined in US State Department guidance issued in May 2020. The figures exclude tankers tracked to government-controlled shipping entities such as Russia's Sovcomflot, or Iran's National Iranian Tanker Co, and those already sanctioned.

Download our explainer on the different risk profiles of the dark fleet here


Lloyd’s List Intelligence
Identify and validate sanctions risk faster with Seasearcher Advanced Risk & Compliance
Learn more

We use cookies to improve your website experience. To learn about our use of cookies and how you can manage your cookie settings, please see our Cookie Policy. By continuing to use the website, you consent to our use of cookies.

Lloyd's List

*This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use. For high-quality copies or electronic reprints for distribution to colleagues or customers, please call UK support at +44 (0)20 3377 3996 / APAC support at +65 6508 2430*

Printed By **Michelle Bockmann**

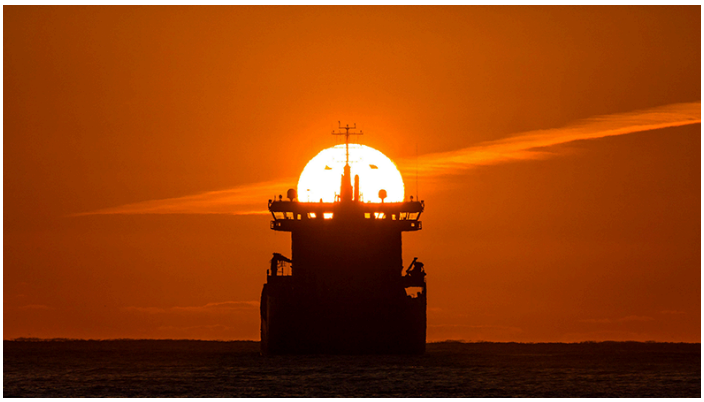
# Tanker vetting report reveals dark fleet safety concerns

*An inspection report on a panamax tanker linked to other dark fleet vessels, many of them sanctioned, reveals the extent of safety risks currently being investigated by Denmark and Sweden*

11 Jul 2024 | **ANALYSIS**

**by Michelle Wiese Bockmann** | @Michellewb_ | michelle.bockmann@lloydslistintelligence.com

A string of deficiencies revealed in a recent vetting report of a tanker that regularly carries Russian oil through environmentally sensitive waters and trade chokepoints underscores widespread fears about safety standards across the so-called dark fleet



THERE ARE 26 ELDERLY, COOK ISLANDS-FLAGGED TANKERS LINKED VIA ANONYMOUS MUTUAL SHELL COMPANIES THAT REGULARLY TRAVERSE ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE WATERS AND TRADE CHOKEPOINTS.

*Source: David Creedon / Alamy Live News*

A DARK fleet* tanker that regularly ships Russian oil through the Danish straits and English Channel was last month revealed to have a string of serious deficiencies compromising environmental and crew safety.

The safety concerns were recorded during a tanker vetting inspection of the panamax long range one tanker *Eagle S* (IMO: 9329760) off Skagen, Denmark.

*Eagle S* is part of a cluster of 26 elderly, Cook Islands-flagged tankers linked via anonymous mutual shell companies that regularly traverse environmentally sensitive waters and trade chokepoints. At least four of the related fleet have been sanctioned by UK and European regulators.

Lloyd's List has reviewed a copy of the vetting report, which provided a rare insight into the condition of tankers used by oil traders to ship Russian oil, which is subject to Western sanctions and a G7 price cap.

The ship's condition underscores widespread fears about the poor maintenance and consequential safety and environmental risks posed by the elderly tankers that comprise the dark fleet of some 640 tankers shipping Iranian, Venezuelan and Russian oil.

News of the risk comes as Danish and Swedish governments work with allies to evaluate measures to exclude tankers that pose environmental risks when passing through its straits, while still protecting ships' legal right to innocent passage.

"It is quite clear that the subject vessel is really in bad condition," said Rajesh Madusudanan, an independent marine consultant who reviewed the vetting inspection report for Lloyd's List.

"The list of deficiencies raised by the vetting inspector indicates that some of the important requirements of Solas [the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea] and Marpol [the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships] were not complied [with].

"In my opinion, this is a high-risk vessel with respect to the safety of the crew, cargo and environment."

Madusudanan is a qualified marine engineer and naval architect undertaking surveys and inspections.

The vetting reported detailed 20-plus observations or technical deficiencies.

Officers of the watch failed to plot warnings of navigational hazards or check messages.

The inert gas system generator was out of order and the system modified to operate from the boiler without any class approval letter, with numerous meters and internal alarms out of order and sensors removed.

# Eagle S (IMO 9329760): Tanker vetting report finding

Inspection undertaken June 18, 2024, at Skagen OPL

| |
|---|
| |
| The type of vessel recorded in IOPP Form 8 was stated: 1.11.1 Crude Oil. The vessel was involved in the carriage of produ |
| Both forward anchor lights were busted |
| Navarea messages were not plotted by OOWs (few messages were checked within 15nm from the track). Also Navtex m station India where the ship was located (in force IA65, 67,64/2024) were never received by the Navtex receiver. Same wa stations J and L |
| Eyewash was not available in the paint store |
| No span gas 'Butane' was available for the calibration of the HC sense. No toxic gas tubes were on board |
| The air hose of the compressed air system inside the s/s lifeboat burst during the test |
| The connection ropes for MOB and smoke&signal were of the size 20 cm and 40 cm. however minimum length of orop w 1.6 meters |
| Flammable gas was used to test the smoke detctors on board |
| Two fire stations were available and located on one deck (within 15 meters) and not widely apart. |
| The pilot ladder in use was found in poor condition with numerous step fixing pieces missed. |
| Constant alarm 'FO24 Sludge valve position fault' was noted at the BWTS panel |
| COP No. 2 local panel in CCR indicted 'Mechanical Seal alarm' |
| Remote pressure gauge for cargo manifold No. 4S indicated 12 Bar pressure |
| The Overfill cargo alarm (98%) external siren was not operational during the test on deck |
| The heating system was decommissioned during the dry dock; however no Class letter or record was available |
| Isolating valves for IG supply lines to individual cargo tanks were not locked (waiting for the padlocks and chains supply) |
| Low level of water alarm for the Deck Seal was noted at the IGS panel. Both supply pumps were stopped. As reported, the water was done via ER common seawater system |
| The T/C heater was not isolated from the system in the pump room |
| Mooring winches – adjustment screws for brake linings were missing on two winches |
| The vessel was certified for UMS operations; however due to defects listed in 10:32* the vessel was operated in manned |
| Deu to a recent software update of the PMS, the list of critical spare parts and recent maintenance completed was not sh system was installed on one bridge computer. |
| |
| *** The following technical defects were noted during the visit:** |
| IGS generator was out of order, the system was modified to operate from the boiler (flue gas); however no Class approval demonstrated for the modification |
| EDG low voltage alarm (self-made charger was installed) |
| DG No. 2 & 3 t/c exhaust gas sensors were out of order |
| ME fuel viscosity meter out of order |
| Internal alarms of the communications system within the computers in the net; |
| No. 2 FW generator salinity meter out of order; |
| HFO tanker No. 2S level sensor removed |
| COP3 local panel: bearing sensors and temperature sensors out of order |

| |
|---|
| COP2 local panel: bearing sensors and temperature sensors out of order |
| DO purifier out of order, LO No. 1 purifier sensors out of order/ HFO no 2 purifier overhauled |
| Emergency air compressor was set to manual mode and operated at over 30 bar pressure (overheated) |
| Leaks of oil under all three DGs, leaks of oil inside the hydraulic valve room. |
| The fire door between the S/G room and the ER space was noted to be missing the lower part of the packing. Two doors accommodation block were fitted with self-closing devices but they can't be closed once resleaed from the open conditic were not adjusted) |
| The doors to the meat and fish rooms were dead frozen, the packing was leaking and the accumulation of ice was noted. |

| |
|---|
| Under the section "Master's Comments", the master, noted as Capt Gagen had handwritten "no comment". |

Lloyd's List

The inspection was undertaken on June 18, 2024 at Skagen OPL.

The tanker had earlier spent between April 12 and May 24 at drydock in Yalova, Türkiye, according to vessel tracking.

The registered owner of *Eagle S* is United Arab Emirates-based Caravella LLC FZ, a single-ship entity, while the ISM manager is Peninsular Maritime India Private Limited, which manages 12 other ships. Eight of these ships are tankers, and all are defined as being part of the dark fleet under Lloyd's List methodology and are involved in shipping Russian oil.

Neither company could be contacted, with the address for Mumbai-based Peninsular traced to a non-descript grey building of about 12 stories in a suburban setting.

"The vessel remains in ABS class but … there are a number of outstanding recommendations that are required to be closed," ABS said in a statement to Lloyd's List.

"To this end, the vessel is subject to an unscheduled survey [as] per the ABS rules within the next few weeks."

The statement added that there had been a number of findings and outstanding recommendations involving "class, statutory and ISM" after recent surveys of the tanker that required follow-up.

Outstanding recommendations are a common form of noting deficiencies that allow the owner time to correct them unless immediate rectification is required, the statement said.

"The pending unscheduled survey will be utilised to confirm that the outstanding recommendations have been addressed. At that time, ABS will also re-examine the findings of the third-party vetting inspection report that has been presented," ABS said.

"With respect to *Eagle S*, as with all classed vessels, ABS is following its rules and processes."

*Eagle S* is linked to four UK and EU sanctioned tankers, *Canis Power* (IMO: 9289520), *Galian 2* (IMO: 9331153), *Ocean Amz* (IMO: 9394935) and *Vela Rain* (IMO: 9331141). Its registered owner, Caravella, was briefly listed as the registered owner of the *Sinar G* (IMO: 9323364) for two weeks between July and August 2023, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence. *Sinar G* is also managed by Peninsula Maritime.

Some 3.3m barrels per day of crude, fuel oil, diesel and gasoline is shipped daily from Russian Baltic ports through the Danish straits and often via the English Channel.

In May, only 37% of those tankers, measured by deadweight had known protection and indemnity insurance for liability for casualties, accidents or oil spills.

After its inspection in June, *Eagle S* sailed to Vysotsk, where it loaded a cargo of naphtha on June 28. It is now sailing past Portugal bound for Mundra, India, according to data analytics provider Vortexa.

Port state control records for *Eagle S* show that many of the issues flagged up in the most recent vetting inspection have been longstanding problems for the ship.

Ghanaian port state inspectors detained *Eagle S* in September last year on the basis of 24 deficiencies, including serious failings in its emergency systems, fire safety equipment and maintenance issues. It was also pulled up on concerns about the working and living conditions on board and had four separate issues with safety of navigation requirements.

*Eagle S* was subject to an expanded inspection in Antwerp only three months before that detention, on the basis of nine separate deficiencies.

Allianz, an insurer, said in its May annual report that shadow fleet tankers were linked to more than 50 accidents. It cited their elderly age, poor maintenance and dangerous and deceptive shipping practices.

* Lloyd's List defines a tanker as part of the dark fleet if it is aged 15 years or over, anonymously owned and/or has a corporate structure designed to obfuscate beneficial ownership discovery, solely deployed in sanctioned oil trades, and engaged in one or more of the deceptive shipping practices outlined by US State Department guidance issued in May 2020. The figures exclude tankers tracked to government-controlled

shipping entities such as Russia's Sovcomflot, or Iran's National Iranian Tanker Co, and those already sanctioned. Download our explainer on the different risk profiles of the dark fleet here

Lloyd's List Intelligence Seasearcher subscribers can add the Lloyd's List dark fleet to their watchlists here


Watch our full webinar on demand by registering via the link in the banner below:

We use cookies to improve your website experience. To learn about our use of cookies and how you can manage your cookie settings, please see our Cookie Policy. By continuing to use the website, you consent to our use of cookies.

Lloyd's List

*This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use. For high-quality copies or electronic reprints for distribution to colleagues or customers, please call UK support at +44 (0)20 3377 3996 / APAC support at +65 6508 2430*

Printed By **Michelle Bockmann**

# Lloyd's-backed Maritime Mutual revealed as insurer of Iran-linked tanker Ceres I

*São Tomé and Príncipe flag registry confirmed P&I cover for the dark fleet tanker involved in a collision off Malaysia last month*

20 Aug 2024 | **NEWS**

**by Michelle Wiese Bockmann** | @Michellewb_ | michelle.bockmann@lloydslistintelligence.com

Lloyd's of London's involvement in underwriting risk arising from the casualty remains undisclosed, with Maritime Mutual declining to respond to questions about Ceres I claim and how it is being handled

MARITIME MUTUAL INSURANCE ASSOCIATION (NZ) LTD ISSUED THE BLUE CARD FOR TANKER CERES I, WHICH SHIPPED IRANIAN OIL AND WAS INVOLVED IN A COLLISION WITH HAFNIA NILE.

*Source: Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency*

A MARINE insurer backed by syndicates at Lloyd’s of London provided cover to tanker *Ceres I* (IMO: 9229439), the 23-year-old vessel shipping Iranian oil that was involved in a collision with another vessel in July.

Cyprus-based São Tomé and Principe International Ship Registry confirmed that Maritime Mutual Insurance Association (NZ) Ltd issued the Blue Card for the very large crude carrier, which regularly shipped and stored Iranian crude over the past 18 months.

*Ceres I* reflagged to São Tomé and Principe in April 2024 — its third flag in four years — and is one of the 640 elderly tankers that form part of the so-called dark fleet* of anonymously owned vessels solely deployed in shipping sanctioned Russian, Iranian or Venezuelan oil.

Lloyd’s of London’s involvement in underwriting risk underscores the dilemmas arising from marine contracts undertaken in “utmost good faith” as details of the *Ceres I* claim and how syndicates have handled it remain undisclosed.

Since July 31, *Ceres I* has been detained for further investigation by the Malaysia Marine Department in Tanjung Sedili waters along with Singapore-flagged *Hafnia Nile* (IMO: 9766217), the product tanker involved in the collision.

*Ceres I* was in ballast, while *Hafnia Nile* was laden with 55,000 tonnes of naphtha.

A preliminary investigation found *Hafnia Nile* collided with the starboard side bulbous bow of *Ceres I*, which was anchored in international waters off eastern Malaysia on July 19 due to unspecified technical problems, the department said in a statement issued July 31.

*Ceres I*’s beneficial owner remains unknown. Shipping database Equasis lists its ISM manager since September as a single-ship company in Singapore, Blueshark Shipping Private Limited and registered owner and commercial operator since 2019, another brass plate company in Hong Kong, Ceres Shipping Limited.

Two days after the collision, Malaysia’s coast guard reported that its patrol boat had intercepted *Ceres I* with injured crew on board when the tanker switched off its Automatic Identification Signal shortly after the incident and sailed north in an attempt to leave the area.

Maritime Mutual, headquartered in New Zealand, but with executives or directors working from Liechtenstein, Guernsey, Singapore and London, declined to respond to numerous emails and phone calls requesting confirmation it issued the Blue Card for *Ceres I*.

The Blue Card is the international certificate verifying protection and indemnity insurance is in place and that the marine insurer is liable for costs relating to pollution and oil spills, collisions and crew injuries.

The Maritime Mutual P&I Club were "providers of member-focused and cost-effective marine insurance coverage secured by A+ rated Lloyd's syndicates", according to its website.

One insurance company reported by sources at Lloyd's to be involved in the claim has not responded to emails and calls from Lloyd's List seeking further information.

The sensitivity is underscored by *Ceres I's* long history in shipping US-sanctioned Iranian and Venezuelan oil over the past three years, according to data from London-based commodities provider Vortexa, investigations by Lloyd's List, Tankertracker.com and United Against Nuclear Iran.

Maritime Mutual said it limited liability to the first $250,000 of any claim for its members, with the remainder reinsured "through a high quality programme created by renowned London market reinsurance brokers".

Its retained exposure and layered insurance programme was up to $1bn according to its website.

Unlike the 12 clubs that form the International Group of P&I Clubs, Maritime Mutual does not publish details about the tankers that it insures but has long provided cover to the 14% of tankers in the global fleet that operate outside group.

Lloyd's List first reported in February 2021 that Maritime Mutual insured six tankers shipping Iranian oil.

At the time, its Liechtenstein-based director Paul Rankin said that it had contacted the members involved after learning of the vessels' links but had not heard back from them.

"No system is flawless and is therefore vulnerable to a certain extent," he said at the time.

That was the first and last time Maritime Mutual responded to questions from Lloyd's List. For the past three years, Rankin has declined to answer emails or calls about cover for dark fleet tankers as and when details of Blue Cards emerged.

Last week, Maritime Mutual was also revealed as the P&I providers for four newly acquired, anonymously-owned LNG carriers deployed to ship LNG from a US-sanctioned LNG project in the Arctic.

Two of the cargoes were loaded by LNG carriers *Pioneer* (IMO: 9180140) and *Asya Energy* (IMO: 9216298) when the gas carriers were mis-declaring their location in the Barents Sea. This deceptive practice is commonly used by the dark fleet of tankers shipping Venezuelan and Iranian oil when AIS receivers are manipulated to make the vessel appear in one place when they are in another.

The Palau-flagged tankers are now under investigation by that country's flag registry.

Sources at Lloyd's said Maritime Mutual has rapidly expanded in the past three years alongside the growth of the dark fleet.

Despite this, the company's presence in the City of London is limited. The Maritime Mutual website lists its London address as 8 Bishopsgate London, a 51-storey, distinctive City building that houses many insurance companies.

When Lloyd's List visited the address, two staff members at the reception desk said that a company by the name of Maritime Mutual or Maritime Pacific Insurance Services Ltd was not based there and they had not heard of them.

A Maritime Mutual receptionist then contacted by telephone at the time said that the address on the website was a "correspondence address only" and that the physical office was based in Chelmsford. Chelmsford is a city in Essex, a county near London. She declined to provide an address.

The 8 Bishopsgate reception staff told Lloyd's List that they were not aware of 8 Bishopsgate offering correspondence address services.

The London-based director of Maritime Pacific Insurance Services Ltd, Phillip Murrant didn't respond to emails or calls about this or the *Ceres I* Blue Card.

The UK-incorporated company of which he is a director, lists New Zealand-incorporated Crystal Holdings (New Zealand) Ltd as having an interest of 75% or more.

That entity lists Steven Joyce as one of the directors, based in Guernsey, and appointed in May 2023. Murrant did not return calls or emails. Steven Joyce's LinkedIn profile identifies him as the company's group IT director.

New Zealand-incorporated Maritime Mutual Insurance Association (NZ) Ltd also lists Guernsey-based Paul Rankin as one of the six directors, alongside others based in Switzerland, South Africa, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

* Lloyd’s List defines a tanker as part of the dark fleet if it is aged 15 years or over, anonymously owned and/or has a corporate structure designed to obfuscate beneficial ownership discovery, solely deployed in sanctioned oil trades, and engaged in one or more of the deceptive shipping practices outlined in US State Department guidance issued in May 2020. The figures exclude tankers tracked to government-controlled shipping entities such as Russia’s Sovcomflot, or Iran’s National Iranian Tanker Co, and those already sanctioned.

Download our explainer on the different risk profiles of the dark fleet here

We use cookies to improve your website experience. To learn about our use of cookies and how you can manage your cookie settings, please see our Cookie Policy. By continuing to use the website, you consent to our use of cookies.

*This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use. For high-quality copies or electronic reprints for distribution to colleagues or customers, please call UK support at +44 (0)20 3377 3996 / APAC support at +65 6508 2430*

Printed By **Michelle Bockmann**

# ‘High-risk’ dark fleet tanker leaves ABS class as unscheduled survey into condition looms

*Class officials are trying to get on board a tanker that regularly carries Russian oil through environmentally sensitive waters and trade chokepoints to asses the vessel’s condition. However, the vessel’s owners are seeking to move classification societies*

18 Jul 2024 | **NEWS**

**by Michelle Wiese Bockmann** | @Michellewb_ | michelle.bockmann@lloydslistintelligence.com

A product tanker carrying Russian naptha is transferring class a month after a tanker vetting inspection report found 20 separate deficiencies

THERE IS GREATER SCRUTINY OF SHIPS AS THE BACKDROP OF SANCTIONS BECOMES MORE INTENSE.

*Source: David Creedon / Alamy Stock Photo*

A LADEN dark fleet* tanker with a string of deficiencies that compromised the safety of crew and the environment is transferring from classification society ABS mid-voyage, and as an unscheduled survey into condition looms.

Initial safety concerns about 20-year-old long-range product tanker *Eagle S* (IMO: 9329760) first emerged during a tanker vetting inspection off Skagen, Denmark, on June 16, following up from its dry dock at a Turkish shipyard three weeks earlier.

Since inspection details were first published in Lloyd's List on July 11, the unknown owners began transferring class away from ABS.

Cook Islands-flagged *Eagle S* was found to be in poor condition by the vetting inspector, with more than 20 technical deficiencies.

"Eagle S is currently at sea and we are seeking to get on board to survey these and other issues at the first opportunity," a spokesman for ABS told Lloyd's List.

"The owner, Peninsular Maritime, is currently in the process of transferring this and two other vessels out of ABS Class."

There were a number of outstanding class and statutory items that required attention, he said, prompting the pending unscheduled survey.

"After meeting with Peninsular Maritime the decision was made to move forward with transferring each of their three ABS-classed vessels out of ABS class," he said.

"The receiving society for two vessels is the Indian Register of Shipping, and we anticipate *Eagle S* will follow."
On July 11, when reports first emerged about the *Eagle S*, ABS said that the tanker remained in class would be subject to an unscheduled inspection "within the next few

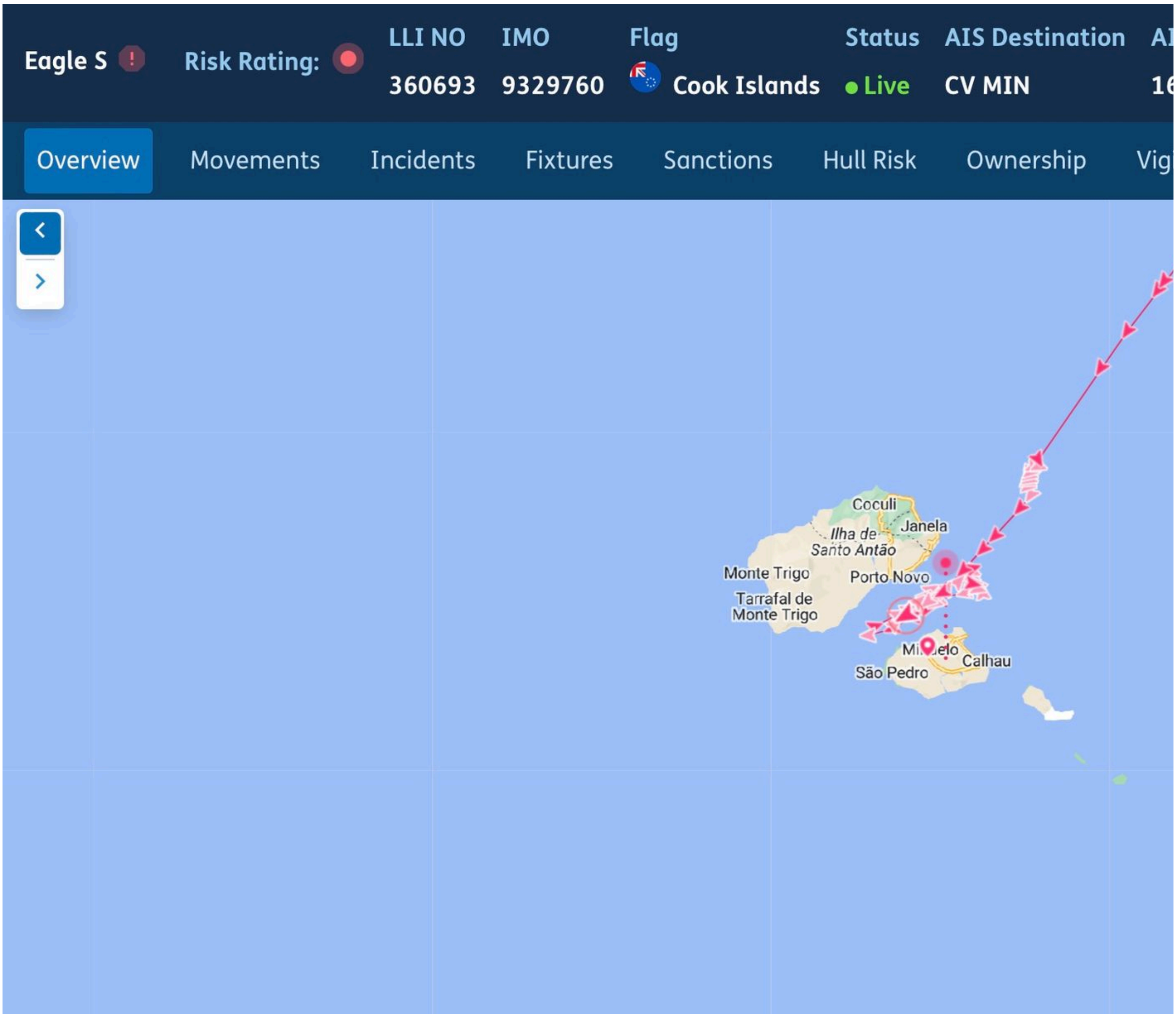
weeks” and it would re-examine the tanker vetting report.

After the initial inspection in Denmark waters, *Eagle S* loaded a 70,000-tonne cargo of naphtha at Vysotsk on June 28.

The tanker then sailed through the Danish straits and English Channel but has been anchored in waters off Cape Verde in the Atlantic since July 16. It is unclear whether the interruption to its voyage was related to any onboarding survey.

# Spotlight on LR1 tanker Eagle S

LR1 tanker Eagle S, laden with 70,000 tonnes of naphtha loaded in Russia on June 28, ha
anchor in waters of Cape Verde for several days, ahead of an unscheduled survey by cla
ABS after vetting inspectors found numerous technical deficiencies and false details ab
renewal carried out during dry dock in April and May




Source: Lloyd’s List Intelligence / Seasearcher

Lloyd’s List

The registered owner of *Eagle S* is United Arab Emirates-based Caravella LLC FZ a single-ship entity, while the ISM manager is Peninsular Maritime India Private Limited, which manages 12 other ships. Eight of these ships are tankers, and all are defined as being part of the dark fleet under Lloyd’s List methodology and are involved in shipping Russian oil.

Peninsular-managed LR product tankers *Agile* (IMO: 9374844) and *Troy* (IMO: 9329758) are also classed with ABS alongside *Eagle S*, according to the Lloyd’s List Intelligence database.

*Agile* is now at anchorage in waters of Skagen, and has been for three days, while *Troy* has been alongside at Sharjah port for two weeks.

Peninsular Maritime is linked to a 26-tanker fleet all flagged in Cook Islands and operating in Russian oil trades.

* Lloyd’s List defines a tanker as part of the dark fleet if it is aged 15 years or over, anonymously owned and/or has a corporate structure designed to obfuscate beneficial ownership discovery, solely deployed in sanctioned oil trades, and engaged in one or more of the deceptive shipping practices outlined in US State Department guidance issued in May 2020. The figures exclude tankers tracked to government-controlled shipping entities such as Russia’s Sovcomflot, or Iran’s National Iranian Tanker Co, and those already sanctioned.

Download our explainer on the different risk profiles of the dark fleet here