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Synergy Marine Group – Driving innovation and operational excellence

Synergy Marine Group provides comprehensive ship management solutions, covering technical management, crew management, commercial management and fleet performance optimization. “Our holistic services ensure that vessels operate safely, efficiently and sustainably, delivering long-term value to shipowners and charterers,” says Mr Ajay Chaudhry, Co-CEO of Ship Management at Synergy Marine Group.

Synergy Marine Group manages around 700 vessels, operating from 30 offices worldwide, which places it as the world’s second-largest ship manager.

Approximately 55% of this fleet consists of dry bulk carriers, ranging from Handysize to Capesize vessels and VLOCs (Very Large Ore Carriers), serving global trade routes.

“With approximately 170 global port calls every day, our operations are undeniably complex,” explains Chaudhry. “On average, 300 Synergy seafarers and shore-based staff travel daily to key global maritime hubs with excellent connectivity, and also to remote ports, often with multiple stopovers, to join or attend vessels that are in port for a specific and limited duration. Ship management has evolved, and the industry now recognizes IT as a differentiator rather than just an enabler. As ever, the challenge is to find ways to make the best use of technology in order to enhance efficiency and improve operational outcomes.”

THE CORE ASPECTS OF SYNERGY’S SERVICES:

- ❖ **Technical management** – overseeing vessel maintenance, dry docking, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency in order to minimize downtime and optimize asset performance;
- ❖ **Crew management** – with about 28,000 seafarers under their care, they focus on recruitment, training, and overall wellbeing, ensuring operational excellence and a high level of retention.

TRAINING

Synergy Marine Group is at the very forefront of dual fuel vessel management, supported by state-of-the-art training centres that prepare its seafarers for the complexities of advanced propulsion systems.

“Our Marine Advanced Simulation and Training (MAST) facility, established in 2014 as a joint venture with MOL, offers a blend

of classroom and simulator-based training” says Chaudhry. “This includes ship-specific familiarization on a self-learning platform, ensuring that our crews are adept at handling modern maritime challenges”. The centre features a Full Mission Integrated Bridge Simulator capable of recreating any navigational scenario, enabling officers to master ship handling skills. Additionally, an advanced Engine Room simulator trains engineers in efficient and safe operations, also enhancing their emergency response capabilities.

EXPERTISE IN NEW BUILDS, CONVERSIONS, AND RETROFITS

Synergy Marine Group has extensive experience, having managed nearly 350 new builds, conversions, and retrofits across leading shipyards in Japan, Korea, China, Turkey, and Vietnam. “Our expertise spans the entire vessel lifecycle, from initial design concept to final delivery and later on green recycling,” adds Chaudhry.

By leveraging economies of scale, optimising construction processes, and coordinating seamlessly with shipyard and owner partners, the company ensures that projects are completed safely, on time, and within budget. Chaudhry also points out that, “We are committed to pioneering innovative concept ships that align with evolving market demands in both the maritime and offshore sectors, with substantial and developing offshore expertise.”

ROLE OF SHIP MANAGERS IN DECARBONIZATION

Synergy Marine Group regards decarbonization as a collective responsibility, a view that was further substantiated by the landmark development at COP29, where the IMO, ICAO, and UNECE aligned for the first time on reducing greenhouse gas emissions across maritime, aviation, and inland transport. The journey toward lower emissions along global supply chains has already progressed significantly, and Synergy remains at the forefront of implementing practical measures for both immediate and long-term sustainability.

“Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, we embrace the principles of a circular economy – optimizing resources, promoting collaborative innovation, and integrating scalable low-carbon technologies to create a truly sustainable maritime ecosystem.” comments Chaudhry.

“From a ship management perspective,”



Ajay Chaudhry addressing crew during a ship visit — engaging with seafarers to strengthen safety culture, teamwork, and operational best practices.

continues Chaudhry, “we also view decarbonization as an opportunity to drive operational excellence while supporting owners in achieving compliance with evolving environmental regulations. By proactively integrating low-carbon technologies and leveraging data-driven decision-making, we help shipowners navigate this complex regulatory landscape and remain competitive. Our initiatives reinforce sustainable practices that not only meet current standards but also future-proof fleets for upcoming environmental requirements.”

THE SYNERGY DIFFERENCE

Synergy Marine Group operates in a highly competitive landscape, and what differentiates the Group is its fundamental shift from a cost-based ship management model to a value-based technical partnership outlook.

This evolution has driven its remarkable growth over two decades by creating long-term linkage with shipowners and charterers. Synergy goes beyond transactional management to deliver tangible operational value, promote asset longevity, ensure regulatory compliance, and maintain a future-ready position.

A key force behind this major change is the vision of the company’s founder and Chairman, Captain Rajesh Unni, whose foresight in embracing innovation, technology, and sustainability has positioned Synergy as a leader in the ship management sector.

Among the main factors driving Synergy’s leadership are:

- ❖ **Scalability and Growth:** with

continuous expansion in vessel management, Synergy is strengthening our capabilities in order to support greater scale and efficiency, ensuring a structured and sustainable approach to growth;

- ❖ **Technology Leadership:** investment in proprietary digital platforms, real-time fleet analytics, and AI-driven insights for optimal efficiency, proactive risk mitigation, and absolute compliance;
- ❖ **Decarbonization Expertise:** through its decarbonization arm, Azolla, Synergy pioneers fuel efficiency initiatives, alternative fuel adoption, and carbon reduction strategies;
- ❖ **Seafarer Wellbeing and Diversity:** Synergy is deeply committed to crew welfare programmes, mental health initiatives, and gender diversity efforts, recognizing that seafarers are the foundation of safe and efficient ship operations.

SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE

Synergy Marine Group has extensive experience in managing specialized dry bulk cargoes, including:

- ❖ **Coal, bauxite, and iron ore** – implementing all cargo safety and handling procedures daily;
- ❖ **Grain and other agricultural commodities** – ensuring appropriate fumigation, aeration, and hold cleaning compliance;
- ❖ **Hazardous cargoes** – developing robust procedures for the safe handling of any dangerous or potentially dangerous cargo, ensuring strict compliance with IMDG and IMSBC regulations while mitigating associated risks;
- ❖ **Project and break bulk cargoes** – providing bespoke and customized solutions for oversized, heavy-lift, and non-containerized loads.

Synergy has cultivated strong relationships with leading miners, shippers, and charterers worldwide. This deep understanding of industry requirements allows the Group to leverage its expertise in ship management, delivering a distinct advantage to vessel owners.

DRY BULK STRATEGY: FUTURE-PROOFING FLEET EXPANSION

The dry bulk shipping market is poised for steady growth, driven by the increasing transportation of minerals, steel, grain, and other essential commodities. Rising global trade volumes, infrastructure development, and shifts in energy demand are reinforcing

the need for modern, efficient, and sustainable bulk carriers.

Chaudhry explain, “With shifting global trade patterns and evolving newbuilding trends, Synergy Marine Group is strengthening its position as the world’s foremost dry bulk ship manager, ensuring alignment with long-term industry demands. The surge in bulk commodity transport, combined with a growing emphasis on fuel efficiency and decarbonisation, has made adaptability a key priority for ship managers. Synergy’s proactive and data-driven approach ensures that the vessels under its management operate at peak efficiency, comply with evolving regulations, and remain optimized for future market shifts.”

CORE ASPECTS ARE:

- ❖ Digitalization and operational optimization, leveraging real-time data through Synergy’s remote operations optimization centre in order to enhance efficiency, reduce downtime, and improve vessel performance;
- ❖ Sustainability-driven fleet growth, integrating Azolla’s decarbonization solutions so as to improve fuel efficiency and ensure compliance with IMO and EU sustainability mandates;
- ❖ Targeted fleet expansion, strengthening Synergy’s dry bulk segment to meet the rising demand for bulk cargo transport, and so positioning the company as a leader in managing fuel-efficient, next-generation vessels.

By embracing digitalization, sustainability, and fleet modernization, Synergy Marine Group continues to set new standards for future-ready ship management, ensuring that its fleet remains adaptable in a dynamic global trade environment.

OPTIMIZING OPERATIONS: “REMOTE OPERATIONS OPTIMISATION CENTRE”

Synergy’s “Remote Operations Optimisation Centre” is redefining efficiency, safety, and sustainability in ship management. By consolidating vast amounts of real-time data through Synergy’s digital desk, this facility empowers both shore-based and onboard teams to enhance decision-making. This proactive, technology-driven approach enables:

- ❖ Predictive maintenance and reliability through continuous monitoring that helps identify potential issues before they escalate, reducing unplanned downtime;

- ❖ Enhanced fuel efficiency and cost optimization using advanced analytics to drive energy savings and emissions reductions;
- ❖ Regulatory compliance by ensuring that vessels exceed IMO decarbonization goals and evolving sustainability mandates.

DECARBONIZATION AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE: AZOLLA AND CASPER

Synergy’s decarbonization arm, Azolla, leads efforts in alternative fuels, energy transition, and efficiency improvements. A key development is CASPER (compliance and sustainability performance evaluation and reporting), a cutting-edge platform designed to simplify FuelEU Maritime and EU Emissions Trading System compliance. CASPER offers:

- ❖ automated calculation of emissions allowances and penalty cost estimation;
- ❖ real-time tracking of carbon intensity performance;
- ❖ access to a digital marketplace for trading in compliance surpluses.

By integrating sustainability into every aspect of operations, Synergy ensures that its fleet remains ahead of regulatory and market demands.

SEAFARER WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Long recognizing the increasing importance of mental health in the maritime industry, Synergy has introduced WeTeam 2.0, a 24/7 global mental health support system available to all seafarers and their families.

This initiative provides confidential access to mental health professionals across multiple platforms, alongside a wellbeing champions program that trains crew members in peer support, fostering a stronger onboard community.

DRIVING DIVERSITY AT SEA

Synergy is a very active participant in the Diversity@Sea initiative, a pilot program under the Global Maritime Forum All Aboard Alliance, aimed at improving diversity, equity, and inclusion across the seagoing workforce.

The Synergy-managed vessel *Southern Reverence* is pioneering this approach, sailing with a diverse crew – including a minimum of four women on board – and implementing inclusive workplace standards such as Wi-Fi access, PPE tailored for women, and enhanced workplace policies.

