



**Duke Austin**  
Making energy safer

# Duke Austin and Company Newsletter

## View from the Observatory

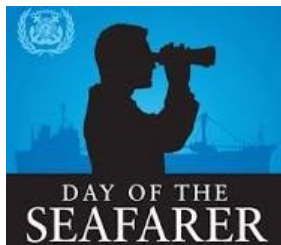
Quoting Paul McCartney “The Long and Winding Road”, we see the transition to SIRE 2.0 on Monday 2 September 2024, and the industry can benefit from the safety management and commercial potential of this groundbreaking process; in doing so, we hope that the dedication, commitment, trust and forbearance of everyone involved – from OCIMF and its members to the developers, inspectors and inspection companies like ourselves – will be recognised and remembered.

But challenges remain! Following a five-year moratorium on inspector training, there is an urgent need for a new generation of SIRE inspectors to fulfil the needs of the vetting community. Behind the scenes, we have been assessing prospective candidates against assumed criteria, and we have seen the wealth of expertise and enthusiasm that can be unleashed at the ‘coalface’ of the vetting system; managed correctly, this will secure and support the value and integrity of the system at its very heart. However, we need the support of OCIMF members to sponsor suitable candidates during the training process and the SIRE 2.0 inspector training and accreditation process to ‘kick off’ as soon as possible with adequate capacity to meet the undoubted need.

Outside SIRE and other inspection work, we are very pleased to promote our audit service for users of any OCIMF management and self-assessment process, including for tankers and barges (TMSA), offshore (OVMSA), terminals (MTMSA) and STS providers (SPMSA). Working alongside a client’s team, our respected audit team brings a wealth of industry intelligence and vetting experience to the table, allowing incisive reviews and concise reporting. We are proud that this brings savings in time and money to our valued clients for routine auditing and major projects, such as operator technical reviews.

In an uncertain world, the safety and security of today’s seafarers must be paramount; we commit to work alongside our clients, forums, service providers and inspectors to this end.

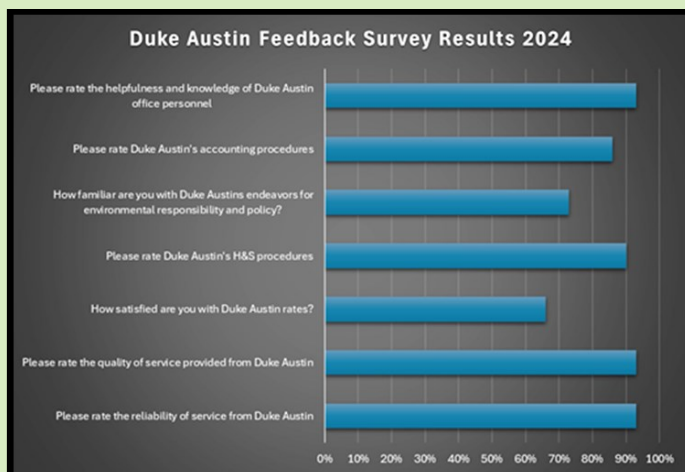
Wishing you all peace.



Day of the Seafarer, 25 June 2024

## Feedback

We are always pleased to receive feedback from our clients and have recently conducted a feedback survey. Thank you to everyone who participated. The results are shown below .



We are also grateful for the following feedback: “It has been a pleasure working with Duke Austin and we find the staff and management to be extremely helpful and accommodating.”  
Client, April 2024

## For a greener future

Duke Austin continues its commitment to the SME Climate Hub. In making this commitment, we have pledged to halve our carbon emissions by 2030, achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and to regularly report on progress towards these aims.



## The future of shipping

The International Maritime Organization pledged in 2018 to halve the shipping sector’s emissions by 2050. As a result, the shipping industry is trialling alternative fuels, biogas, ammonia and methanol to seek decarbonization solutions; the shipping industry accounts for 3 percent of global emissions so the world cannot become carbon-neutral without removing these.

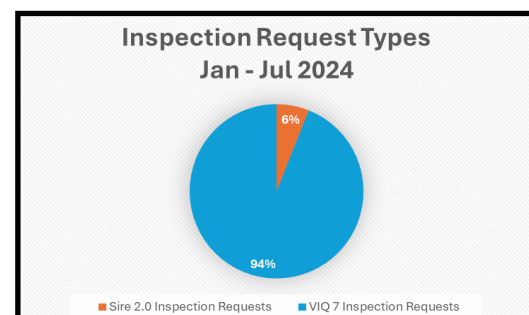
During the transition, ships can also simply sail more slowly (slow steaming) – reducing ship speed by 10 percent can lead to a 27 percent reduction in an individual ship’s emissions.

## SIRE 2.0 experience

The Duke Austin team has been fully committed for over four years to facilitating the progress and implementation of SIRE 2.0 – a new, modernised vessel inspection process.

All inspectors have undergone training, conducted trial inspections and shared their experiences during the phasing periods. However, as demonstrated in the chart, SIRE 2.0 inspection requests have been minimal. The Duke Austin team feels well prepared for the full launch on Monday 2 September 2024.

By working closely with our clients and inspectors, we have been able to navigate the challenges faced so far without major issue. It is with great anticipation that we await launch and continue to play our part in the future of marine assurance.



# Staff news

**Mel**, Finance and Operations Director of 18 years, spent the first part of the year collating the necessary data to produce the *Duke Austin Sustainability Report*. This is available on the company website at [www.dukeaustin.com](http://www.dukeaustin.com). This process has encouraged the team at Duke Austin to reassess data collection and procedures to ensure that our responsibilities as a business are met and that we play our part in a 'greener' future. Mel has also been scheduling client and inspector meetings, liaising with our software developers to make the necessary changes for SIRE 2.0 inspection allocation and management. Other tasks have been feedback collation and reporting.

Personally, Mel would like to thank all current and trainee inspectors for their continued patience and support during the phasing periods of SIRE 2.0 and their participation in feedback exercises. This has been vital to the success of the trial inspections conducted by the team so far and sets us in good stead for the full launch on Monday 2 September 2024.

During August, Mel is looking forward to a Mediterranean family holiday with her husband and three young sons. Busy days on the beach building sandcastles and relaxing evenings with an ice-cold glass are on the agenda once the 'out of office' has been set!



**Pam**, Inspection Co-ordinator, celebrated 16 years at Duke Austin earlier this year. Pam's wealth of experience and knowledge in her role as expeditor is invaluable to the business, inspector team and her colleagues. Pam has been successfully dealing with correspondence from potential inspectors, collating their information for consideration and seeking OCIMF member sponsorship where required.

Day-to-day business administration tasks have been ongoing for Pam, including the management of office energy contracts, co-ordination of non-SIRE inspection requests and associate networking.

Pam has set some valuable time aside over the summer to spend with her two young grandsons and is excited about the countdown to a family getaway to a Greek island later in the year. In the meantime, there are homemade pizzas and Sangria to be enjoyed on her garden terrace most weekends!



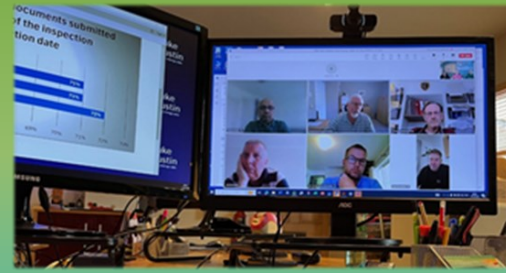
## What's new with SIRE 2.0?

The SIRE 2.0 inspection gives the inspector the opportunity to observe the ship's documentation and photographs before setting foot on the vessel.

As a result, the inspector can focus on certain elements if they find any irregularities or missing certification – a new experience for the attending inspector. No doubt by keeping an 'open mind' throughout the inspection, the inspector will be able to judge any discrepancies found beforehand.

# Inspectors' news

During May, all Duke Austin inspectors were invited to take part in a group video forum. It was great to see the event so well attended and represented. Items on the agenda were the group's KPI results over the last 18-month period, including aspects for improvement, and recognition of the professionalism and safety-first approach demonstrated by our inspectors.



Prior to the meeting, we asked team members for feedback on their experiences with the trial phasing periods of SIRE 2.0. The participation results were summarised by the administration team and shared for open discussion within the group. Interesting and worthwhile conversations were had to share ideas and advice and ask questions.

It was agreed that the **inspector forum** is a great place for communal information sharing and that going forward, these opportunities will be scheduled regularly to support inspectors to navigate the new system.

## Inspector photos

These photos from one of our inspectors definitely show a lack of health and safety in the workplace!

The first is of a workshop grinder without safety glass.



The second shows an unsecured steel plate that slipped through the engine room floor into the auxiliary engine exhaust pipe/insulation and thankfully not into a crew member's head!



## New adventures

The Duke Austin team would like to wish heartfelt congratulations to our long-standing Shell colleague Annette Maer on her retirement at the end of this month. We hope she gets some well-deserved rest.

We admire and respect how hard she has worked over her long career. She has not only made a huge difference to the marine assurance industry but also touched a lot of lives along the way. Happy retirement!



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