

# A clean bill of health

*With its new range of test equipment, Kittiwake could help the shipping industry combat a centuries-old problem, improve system efficiency and adhere to the latest regulations*

**K**ittiwake is a company normally associated with technical engine and machinery monitoring equipment used onboard to test fuel and lubricant quality. This proactive approach to monitoring and maintaining critical systems has become a widely accepted and established addition to laboratory based testing of critical fluids. In 2001, Kittiwake extended this principle into the industrial water testing market and now supplies water quality and contamination monitoring equipment to a large number of organisations worldwide.

## Water testing onboard

Much like land-based hotels, industrial plants and water processing facilities, marine vessels use water for a multitude of applications, including showers, cooling systems, boilers, cooking, drinking, swimming pools, processing and many more. Monitoring onboard water systems will provide a vast array of benefits to the vessel and Kittiwake has launched a selection of cost effective and simple-to-use water monitoring solutions to help maintain efficiency, keep customers and employees healthy and assist ship operators in adhering to changes in legislation.

## Marine hygiene

Historically, ships have played a major role in the transmission of deadly diseases around the world. Records dating back to the fourteenth century showed that ports often denied entry to ships suspected of carrying plague, among the earliest attempts to control the spread of infectious disease.

In the nineteenth century, the spread of cholera was also widely linked to merchant shipping.

But the problem, it seems, is as real as it ever was. More recently, a **World Health Organization (WHO)** review identified over 100 disease outbreaks associated with ships between 1970 and 2000.

Worryingly, many of these diseases are just as deadly as those from years gone by.

'Recent high profile legionella scares onboard cruise ships have again highlighted the issue of passenger and crew

health and safety, especially in respect of microbiological contamination of water and air handling systems,' says Gary Rowland, Water Testing Sales Manager at **Kittiwake Developments Ltd.**

'Simple regular testing of these systems for micro-organisms like coliforms, e.coli and pseudomonas will reduce risks, help keep employees healthy and ultimately save lives,' he says.

Kittiwake Developments has created its own solution to this age-old health problem: a portable marine hygiene test kit that can quickly raise alarm bells if any nasty intruders – in the shape of killer diseases – are found on board. The tests are easy to carry out and can deliver highly accurate results more or less immediately.

The Kittiwake pack also includes a marine hygiene log book which distils current WHO health and safety guidelines for ships operating at sea.

This is not as simple as it sounds. WHO, in line with the *International Health Regulations 2005*, has drafted guidelines on ship sanitation which specifically detail the systems that require monitoring, the method and frequency of monitoring, and record-keeping requirements.

These were created in close collaboration with the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** and the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)**.

Passenger ships, general cargo vessels, fishing vessels, naval vessels, tankers and offshore oil rigs are all required to conform to these strict standards.

'The *WHO Guide to Ship Sanitation* has become the official global reference on health requirements for ship construction and operation,' says Rowland. 'The aim is to standardise the sanitary measures taken in ships, to safeguard the health of travelers and to prevent the spread of infection from one country to another.'

As well as the acute public health risks at stake, this can also lead to negative interference on both trade and travel. For a shipping company caught in a health scare it can lead to loss of reputation and potentially more serious repercussions.

A large proportion of the WHO review of 100 outbreaks was attributable to waterborne outbreaks. Most of these

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