

Abstract

Due to extensive regulations and company requirements, officers sailing on dredging vessels spend a significant amount of time on administrative workload. Logbooks such as the deck logbook, the MARPOL record books and cargo record books have traditionally been kept up to date in a paper book. However, with the increase use of digital technologies and automation in the maritime sector, the IMO has recently allowed the use of electronic record keeping for MARPOL logbooks. The electronic logbook software (ELB) has the capability to make the logging process more efficient and less time consuming by centralizing all records into one system and by logging entries automatically. This research will try to assess the relevance of the ELB software implementation on board Belgian dredging vessels by conducting a literature review to understand the benefits and limits of the ELB system for merchant vessels. For the second part, a survey was sent out to seafarers sailing on Belgian vessels in order to assess their knowledge and interest for such a system. The third part focuses on implementation on board Belgian dredging vessels by conducting interviews with maritime professionals. Although, there is little knowledge about the existence of the ELB, both operators and executive staffs appreciate the functionalities the ELB would bring to record keeping and show great interest to work with it on board. It could indeed, reduce the workload of officers if implemented correctly. However, at the moment some challenges still limit its implementation. It is still unclear which port state control inspectors will accept this method of record keeping and the Belgian flag state still has to approve its use under its flag.