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# Journal



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[www.sunderlandmarine.com](http://www.sunderlandmarine.com)

# Welcome to Polaris

In uncertain times, the fishing industry looks to "Adaptation, Diversification and Collaboration"



**We sit in the midst of summer, with a cautiously optimistic outlook for the future after the majority of the UK population has been vaccinated and looking forward to a return to something resembling normal life.**

What is clear, and backed up by recently released Seafish statistics for 2020, is that the fishing industry has suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic toll is revealed by the numbers; the total operating profit for the UK fleet was down 19% in 2020 from 2019 and that includes £18.6m of grants paid out to fishing business by the UK government.

Many sectors saw both landings and income down significantly due to reduced activity and lower prices. However as Seafish chief economist, Arina Motiva, said "2020 has again shown the resilience of the UK fishing fleet in extremely challenging times. Most vessels could not avoid tying up or reducing their activity for a period. That said, adaptation, diversification, and collaboration have kept vessels fishing and the supply chain moving."

It has been heartening to see the resilience of the industry over the last year and looking ahead we're excited to see the newest wave of crew and trainees bringing

fresh enthusiasm and making a positive impact.

Like you, Sunderland Marine follows the fortunes of the fishing industry and if we can assist in any way during these uncertain times please don't hesitate to contact us.

## In This Edition

Sunderland Marine sponsored the Trainee Fisherman of the Year award at the Fishing News Awards in June, read on to find out more about the winner and why we're passionate about supporting trainees.

In this edition of Polaris we also bring you advice on safety management, helping you develop a safety strategy which is effective as well as easy for your crew to understand and follow.

## Find out more

Read the Seafish report on the economic performance of the fishing industry in 2020 here: [www.seafish.org/about-us/news-blogs/profit-and-turnover-down-as-uk-fishing-fleet-weathers-a-challenging-year/](http://www.seafish.org/about-us/news-blogs/profit-and-turnover-down-as-uk-fishing-fleet-weathers-a-challenging-year/)

## New vessels in 2021



**Onward Star II SH2** is a recently built vivier crabber for a Bridlington owner Michael Sayer.



Orkney based Marcus Fishing Company celebrated the launch of their new 28 metre whitefish twin-rig trawler **Westra Fjord**, from Danish yard Vestvaerftet in July.



In March 2021, Eastbourne based Britannia Fishing Ltd celebrated the launch of their new 9.9 metre Gemini catamaran. The **SAINT GEORGE NN7** was built by Anderson Marine in Peterhead and works as a netter and potter from Sovereign Harbour.

**Sunderland Marine**

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**Polaris is a Loss Prevention publication by Sunderland Marine**

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## HOW HAVE WE DONE?

Let us know what you think of the latest edition. Contact us at: [sally.bettinson@nepia.com](mailto:sally.bettinson@nepia.com)

# Keeping it simple on safety management



As an insurer of fishing vessels, a significant proportion of Sunderland Marine's claims relate to crew injuries (most commonly due to being struck, falling or becoming entangled) and hull claims that include engine failures, groundings and foundering.

In many cases, an effective system of safety management would have prevented these incidents from happening at all. Indeed, the ILO c.188 Work in Fishing Convention brought recognition that safety management systems are key not only in establishing how to react when things go wrong but to preventing them from going wrong in the first place.

Put simply, safety management is about safe working practices in a safe working environment on a safe vessel. But safety management needs a structure, and this is where the 'Safety Management System' ('SMS' for short) comes into play.

The SMS provides information on how things are to be done on the vessel: Who does what; how to do it; when to do it; and how to record it.

Safety management systems are a relatively new concept in the fishing industry, despite the extensive and admirable work behind existing initiatives such as the free-to-use 'Safety Folder'.

At Sunderland Marine we have extensive experience in safety management through our work with merchant vessels. But before we go any further, it's important to stress that we are not going to say "copy the ISM Code" as used in commercial shipping. What we will say however is: "Don't make the same mistakes!".

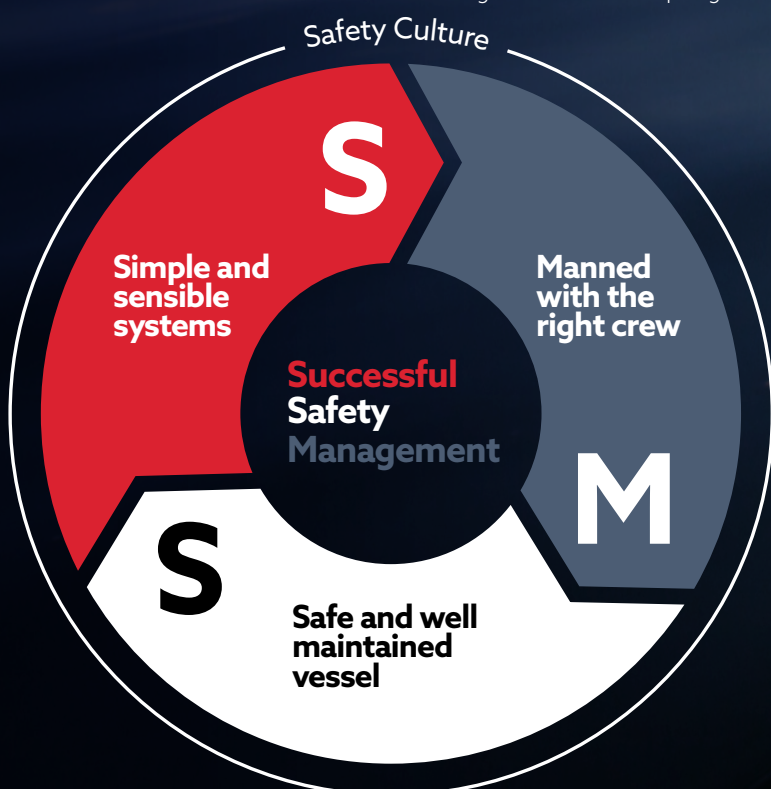
"A safety management system must be simple but there is no one-size-fits-all solution"

On merchant vessels, safety management systems have been in place for almost 25 years. In that time, we believe that some of these systems have become bloated, unwieldy, disorganised, and over-complicated. Instead of being a useful guide for those working on board, the SMS has become something that is sometimes ignored and even disparaged.

Worse still, the SMS can end up being used to pin the blame on the crew when something goes wrong. A manager could say that someone on board messed up because the procedure in the safety management manual wasn't followed, even though the procedure may have been unworkable or unrealistic in the circumstances, or so well-hidden that no-one knew where to look for it.

So, if you're looking to introduce a safety management system for a vessel, or perhaps wanting to improve an existing system, we hope you find the following pointers useful:

- The system must be workable - keep it concise and relevant. A simple and sensible system is more likely to be understood and followed. Complex or confusing systems will be ignored, followed incorrectly, or worked around.
- Keep the language simple, clear and methodical - people are less likely to use a checklist or understand a procedure if it's full of waffle.
- There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Different vessels present different risks. For example, the risks when working on the deck of a pelagic trawler differ from those on a crab catcher or potter. The SMS should be vessel specific.
- Get the crew involved - they are the people carrying out the work and perhaps best understand the risks. Seek their input when creating and reviewing policies and procedures: this will help ensure the procedures reflect the reality of onboard working.
- Take time to explain to the crew why a policy or procedure is in place. If they do not appreciate the need or understand the reasons for its inclusion, there is less chance of them following it.
- The system should encourage proper planning of work - in some cases this may require a formal written risk assessment or simply an informal undocumented 'toolbox talk' just before starting the task.

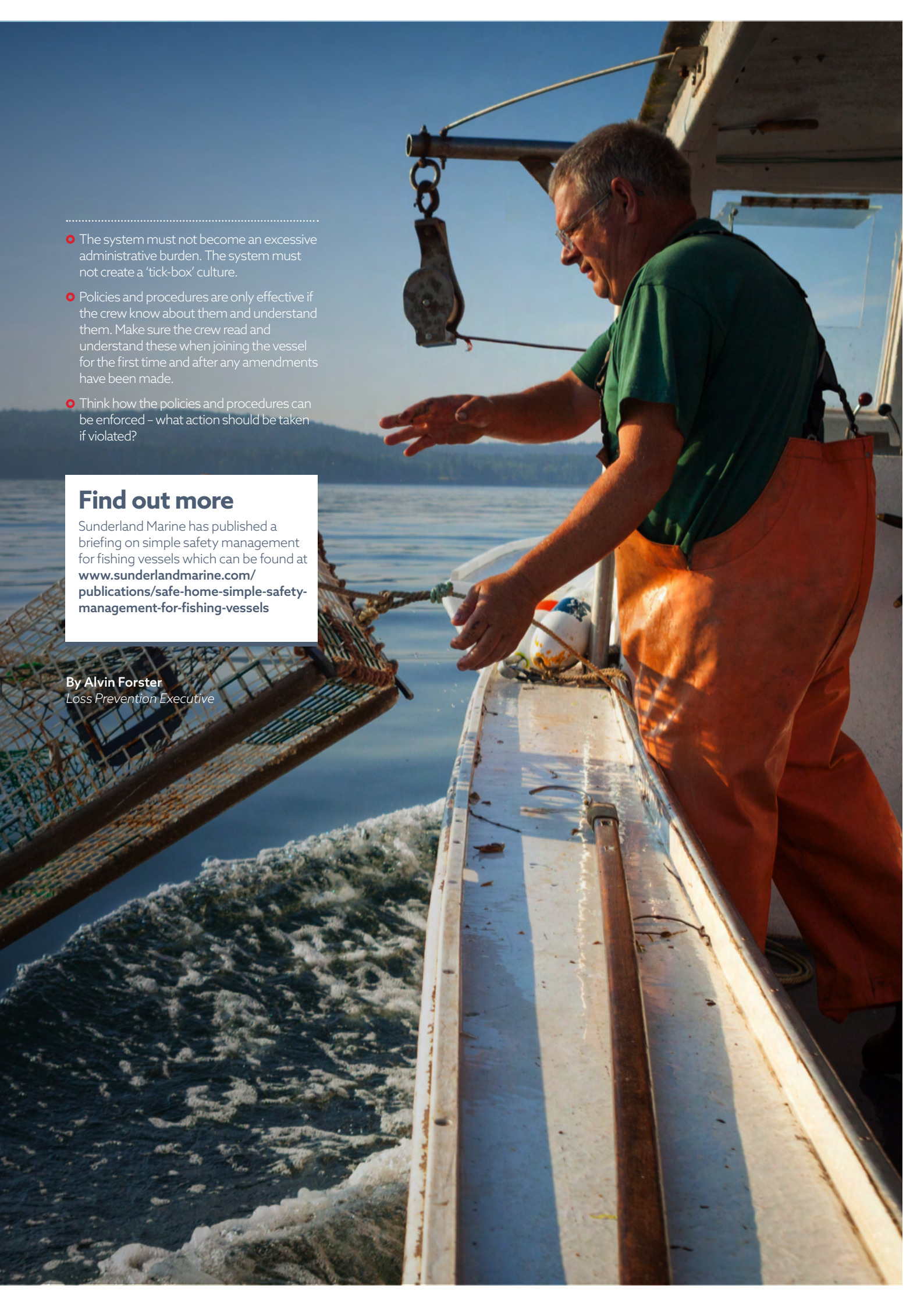


- The system must not become an excessive administrative burden. The system must not create a 'tick-box' culture.
- Policies and procedures are only effective if the crew know about them and understand them. Make sure the crew read and understand these when joining the vessel for the first time and after any amendments have been made.
- Think how the policies and procedures can be enforced – what action should be taken if violated?

## Find out more

Sunderland Marine has published a briefing on simple safety management for fishing vessels which can be found at [www.sunderlandmarine.com/publications/safe-home-simple-safety-management-for-fishing-vessels](http://www.sunderlandmarine.com/publications/safe-home-simple-safety-management-for-fishing-vessels)

By **Alvin Forster**  
*Loss Prevention Executive*



# Fishing News Awards 2021

Sunderland Marine is proud to have sponsored the Fishing News Awards again this year, celebrating the achievements and innovations of the fishing industry.



Congratulations to Sam Birt who won the Trainee Fisherman of the Year award, sponsored by Sunderland Marine. This category is important to Sunderland Marine, trainees are quite literally the future of the fishing industry and in the past year they have needed support more than ever.

Sam, 17, has been involved in fishing since the age of 10 and has passed his Seafish skippers' ticket. He has experience working with nets, on his father's boat 'KT-SAM' and the day-boat trawler 'New Seeker' as well as helping with processing at his parents' fish shop.

## In Memory of David Linkie

We note the sad loss of Fishing News editor, David Linkie, who passed away recently. An enthusiastic supporter of the fishing industry where his encyclopaedic knowledge was known to all. Our thoughts are with his family and many friends. Sunderland Marine has made a donation to The Fishermen's Mission charity in his memory.

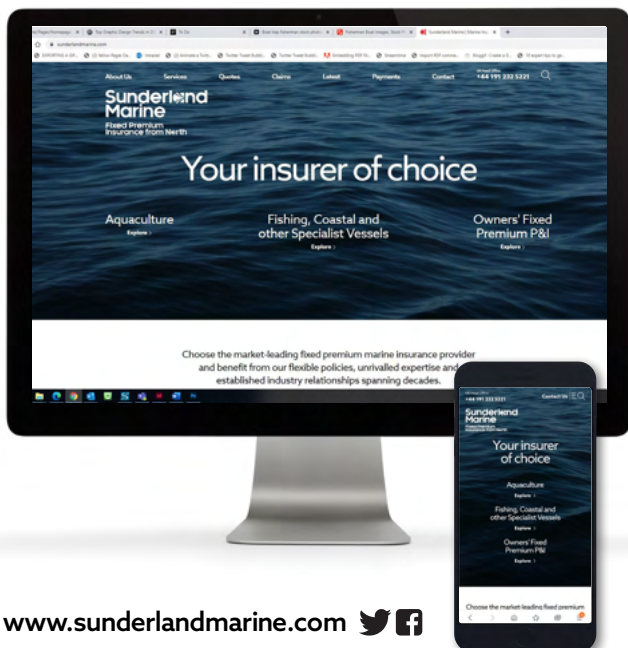
"We're incredibly proud to be able to recognise and celebrate the many and varied achievements of those within the industry throughout the UK and Ireland over the past difficult year.

"We would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the putting together of this event, the people who nominated and voted for the entries, the nominees themselves and our expert judges who have verified and chosen winners."

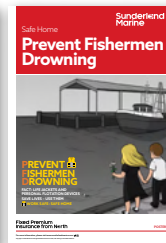
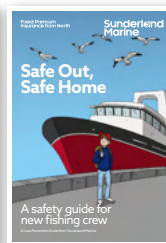
Fishing News

## sunderlandmarine.com

It's been over a year since we launched the revamped version of our website and we hope you have found the news and resources useful. Here is a reminder of what you can access on our website.



- Industry News
- Sunderland Marine Updates and Publications
- Health & Safety Guides and Briefings
- Health & Safety Posters
- Team Information and Contact Details



What do you want to see more of on our site?  
Please get in touch to let us know via  
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# Your team

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