

## Steady growth for IRClass

The Indian Register of Shipping (IRClass) continues to record steady growth in its classed fleet, flag recognition and geographical presence, mirroring the shipping industry's ongoing recovery.

During 2018 the classification society saw its fleet grow with tankers and bulk carriers continuing to dominate in tonnage. The classed fleet has grown more than 4% in the past year, with the foreign flag fleet seeing a particularly impressive growth of 22% which is 16% in tonnage terms and indicative of strong overseas growth.

IRClass is now recognised by 41 flag states globally, seeing recent additions in 2018 from the Netherlands, Vietnam, Jordan and Bahrain.

Early in 2018, the class society started issuing electronic certificates giving shipowners, regulators and charterers real-time online access to the latest class and statutory certificates.

The implementation of e-Certificates

is expected to reduce the administrative burden and document handling costs for ship owners, coupled with increasing operational efficiency from the Indian Register of Shipping, leading to better service delivery.

Towards the end of last year, it also received approval from Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), strengthening its offshore portfolio in the Middle East and opened an office in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to better service its customers in the region.

On the domestic front, Defence continues to be a growth area with key project wins for the provision of its classification services for four large survey vessels and two support vessels for the Indian Navy.

During 2019, IRClass will be focusing more on the emergence of new trends, delivering value to its customers through digitalisation, as well as further strengthening its footprint in Europe, Asia



Arun Sharma

Pacific and the Middle East.

Mid-year will also see the Indian Register of Shipping take over the chairmanship of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS), with IRClass executive chairman Arun Sharma the IACS chairman-in-waiting, where it will continue the good work of the Association in promoting maritime safety and cleaner seas.

Its forthcoming Chairmanship comes at a time of significant regulatory upheaval for the maritime industry with the global sulphur cap becoming mandatory in 2020, a challenge that IRClass is ready to embrace.