

# Will the seas of the future be dominated by autonomous ships?

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### Maritime industry and automation

"The application of technology, programs, robotics or processes to achieve outcomes with minimal human input"

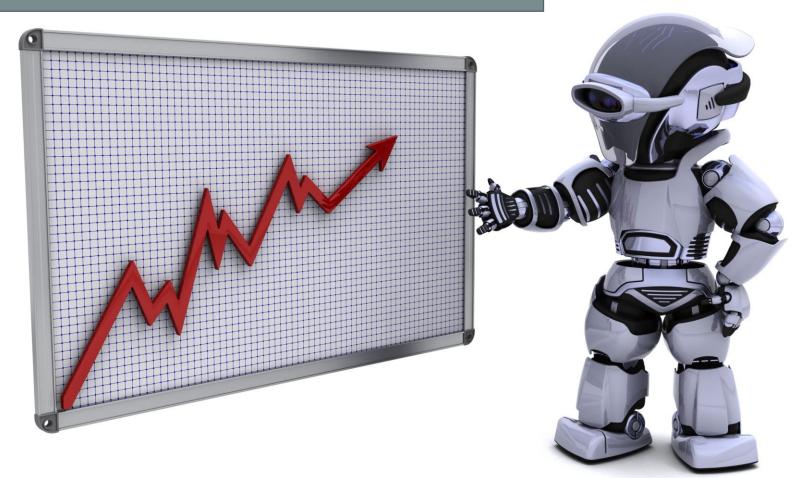
**IBM** 

"[...] the more advanced a control system is, so the more crucial may be the contribution of the human operator"

(Bainbridge, 1983)

"Automation changes the task it was meant to support; it creates new error pathways, shifts consequences of error further into the future and delays opportunities for error detection and recovery."

(Lützhöft and Dekker, 2002)



## What is an autonomous ship anyway?

Maritime Autonomous Surface Ship (MASS) is defined as a ship which, to a varying degree, can operate independent of human interaction (MSC. 100/5)

#### Degrees of automation and human presence (MSC 101/5/4)

- 1: Ship with automated processes and decision support
- 2: Remotely controlled ship with seafarers on board
- 3: Remotely controlled ship without seafarers on board
- 4: Fully autonomous ship

#### **Automation:**

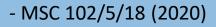
the implementation of processes by automatic means, under specified conditions can function without human intervention

#### **Autonomous ship:**

uses automation to operate without human intervention (on one or more ship processes), for the full duration or in limited periods of the ship's operations or voyage

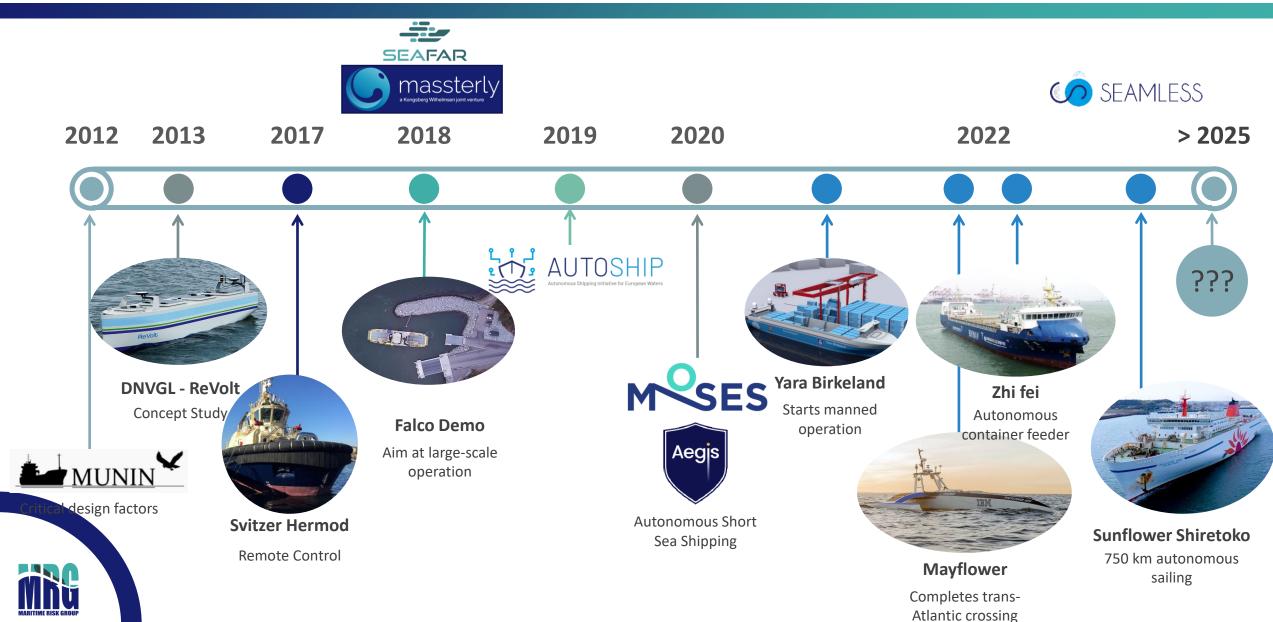
#### **Crewless ship:**

a ship with no crew on board





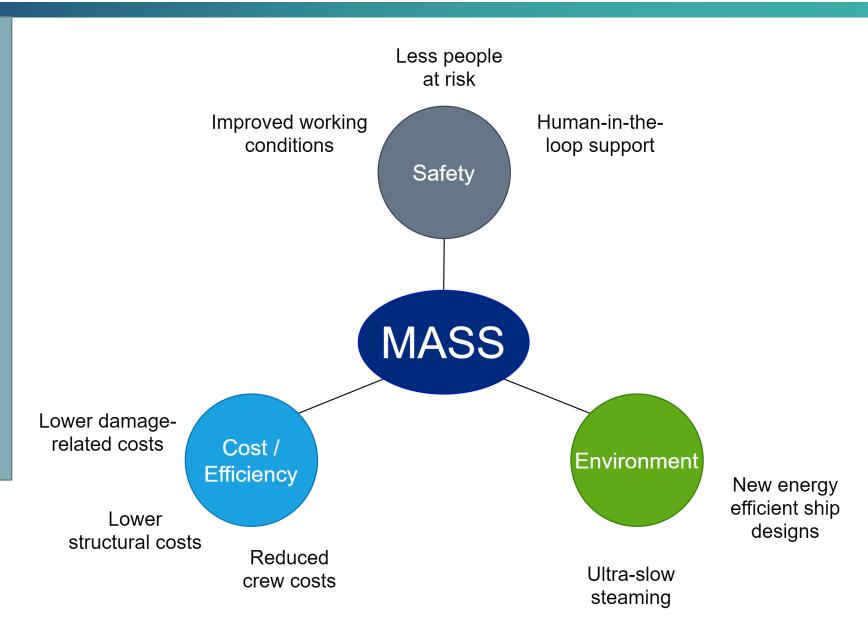
## Where are we with autonomous ships?



## Why do we need autonomous ships?

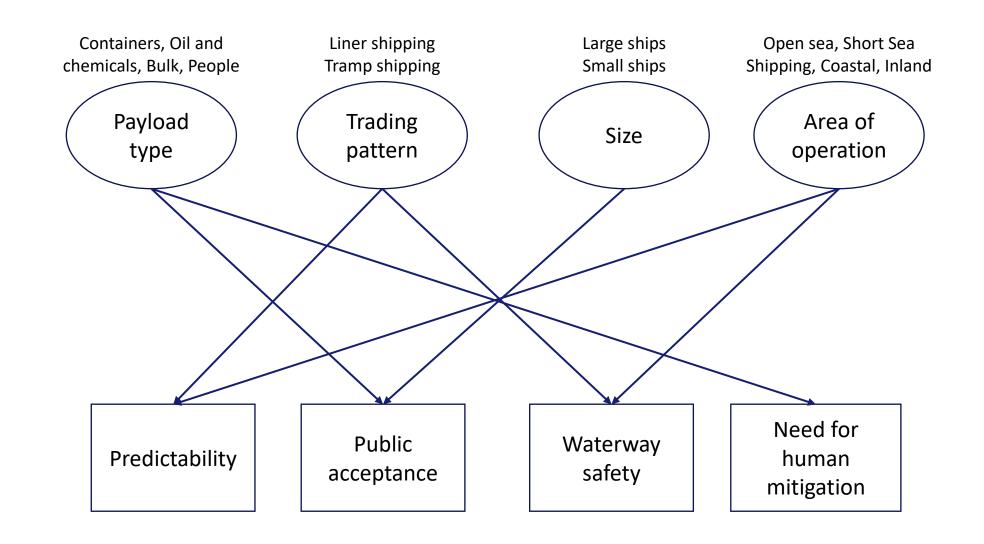
**58%** (EMSA, 2018) **to 75%** (Allianz, 2017) of marine accidents are caused by human error.

Initially, autonomous ships would be meant to reduce these accidents





## Should all ships be autonomous?





## Should all ships be autonomous?



#### Risk and autonomous ships



**Perceived safety** is one of the most significant concerns and is inversely proportional to autonomy levels!

Survey for autonomous urban ferries (Goerlandt and Pulsifer, 2022)



Identifying (credible) accident scenarios





Hazardous events



Accident



Loss

Risk as the expected consequences

$$R = \langle s_i, p_i, x_i \rangle$$







#### Risk and autonomous ships

Conventional and autonomous ships may not be exposed to the same risks!

Knowledge

(Ventikos and Louzis, 2019)

Experience from other industries (e.g. automotive, aviation, nuclear)

#### **Unknown-Knowns**

Mixed traffic interactions
Response capacity of remote
operators (complacency)

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**Awareness** 

**Known-Knowns** 

How fires on ships develop Factors that affect grounding accidents

•••

Risks we cannot yet imagine!

**Unknown-Unknowns** 

How routine maintenance will be conducted without crew onboard

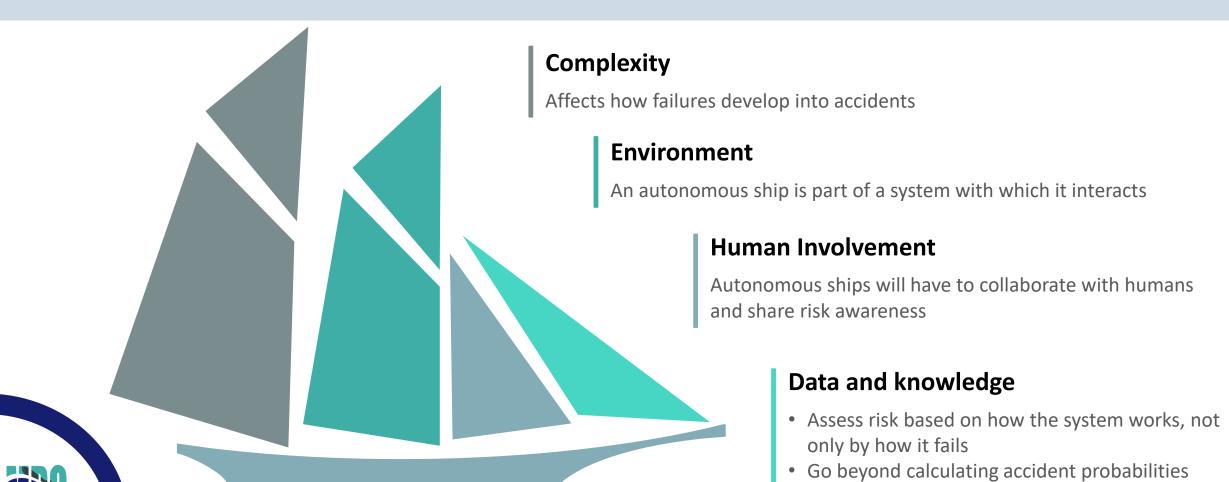
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**Known-Unknowns** 



#### Risk and autonomous ships

We cannot only rely on trying to identify scenarios for accidents that have not yet happened!



## Will the seas of the future be dominated by autonomous ships?



Most likely no...the consensus is that autonomy will be application-specific, but in any case it needs to be safe!





## Thank you very much for your attention!

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#### Thank you for your attention!

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