

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited Shree Ram Group to respond to the concerns raised in the following Danwatch report and article:

- [Maersk and the hazardous water](#), Claus Nordahl and Louise Maria Skotte, Danwatch, 13 October 2016.
- [Maersk maintains beaching mantra and choses to ignore facts revealed by Danwatch](#), NGO shipbreaking Platform, 21 October 2016

In response, Shree Ram Group sent the following statement:

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The ShreeRam Group currently operates four ship-recycling facilities at Alang. All facilities are compliant with the national law and have necessary operational approvals in place. I have over the past several years invested substantially in improving conditions on my facilities, especially ShreeRam (Plot 78), because I firmly believe that ship-recycling in Alang should improve from what it has been in the past.

In Dec '15, ShreeRam (Plot 78) was granted Statement of Compliance to the Hong Kong Convention (HKC) from ClassNK, a reputable international classification society. This year, we entered into close collaboration with Maersk Group, related to responsible recycling of Maersk Wyoming and Maersk Georgia, with the purpose of further improving the conditions and live up to the Maersk Responsible ship recycling standards, which are both higher and wider than the HKC.

Achieving full compliance is a journey that we have embarked upon and been progressing well. In the last 6 months, we have managed to improve and bring the no. of audit findings down from 78 to 12. This has meant that all workers on ShreeRam (Plot 78), where Maersk's ships are undergoing recycling have contracts, receive minimum wages, 200% overtime payment, are enrolled under Provident fund and Employee State insurance schemes. Furthermore, we have invested in carrying out substantial worker safety training majorly provided by Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance and other reputable organizations.

Danwatch has documented non-compliance situations related to personal protective equipment's (PPE) which Maersk's audits already point out to. This is always regrettable and we do not deny that in a few instances requirements have been breached, but we are making a constant effort. These were exceptions at Plot 78 and we are working every day to make sure this does not re-occur. Gas-cutters have always worn flame retardant clothes and all workers at Plot 78 work in coveralls at all times. Additionally, gas-cutters and helpers now wear double cartridge filter masks, safety goggles and ear plugs. As for the gas-cutting hose handling finding, this again was documented in the Maersk audit and today, in the front-yard and back-yard, we have commissioned U-stands to hang-off the hoses and also conducted additional worker-specific training on the subject.

We target 100% compliance and are working towards achieving it.

Mr. Chetan M. Patel,  
Director, ShreeRam Group