to Panama. This category allows benefits in the issuance of long term visas, business transactions, financial investment, work permits for the citizens who fulfill the requirements.

What are the views of Panama Maritime Authority in a series of environmental & safety issues into force such as ship's air emissions and ballast water treatment?

The Republic of Panama through the Panama Maritime Authority has been actively cooperating with IMO initiatives towards reduction of the Green House Gases Emission, proof of that is the commitment made by our country as one of the Lead Pilot Countries of the GLOMEEP Project "Transforming the Global Maritime Transport Industry towards a Low Carbon Future through Improved Energy Efficiency" where a series of activities will be carried out in order to enhance the capacity building on Energy Efficiency and as well motivate the users of our registry on implementing the Maritime Energy Efficiency Framework (MEEF). Regarding the ballast water treatment we are preparing the accession process to be a Party State of the BWM Convention and also we are beginning the implementation process of the national regulations to fulfill the Convention requirements.

Do you believe that the Panama Canal's development & expansion plans will promote the image of the Panamanian Registry?

We are positive that the Panama Canal expansion and the further development of the country's logistics hub will definitely promote the image of all Panama-related assets and position the country as the ideal place to concentrate maritime-related businesses and transactions.

What is the role of Segumar, established in 2007 for the Panamanian flag?

Segumar Panama (Head Office) has played an important role for our Registry since its creation in 2007, considering our main purpose which is to provide efficient quality service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nowadays our SEGUMAR Global Network is composed of our Head Office and eight International Technical Offices duly ISO 9001:2008 Certified by LRQA. SEGUMAR International Technical Offices offer about forty different types of Technical Services and Support, and the majority of the Technical Officers In-Charge are authorized to take immediate decisions or actions. Additionally, SEGUMAR International Technical Offices have been assigned with specific duties of other Merchant Marine Departments (ISPS, Casualty, PSC, FSI, among others) in order to assist our customers in extreme urgency or emergency cases as well as to act as liaison with other Departments of the Merchant Marine Directorate and the Seafarers Directorate. Through our continuous services, our main goal is to guide our users on the best way to maintain safety onboard our flagged vessels and marine environmental protection.

Solving day to day issues for liner shipping sector

Mr. Lars Fischer, Managing Director of Softship Data Processing Ltd, Singapore

The liner shipping sector continues to lack automation to handle many routine processes. Lars Fischer, Managing Director of Softship Data Processing Ltd, Singapore, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Softship AG and the leading provider of software solutions to the international liner shipping sector responds to ELNAVI's questions regarding IT challenges and the company's software solutions.

Can you refer to your company's tested and matured software solutions that can improve the vessel's operation and efficiency?

Our core software suite is LIMA - line management solution for carriers. This comprises a range of modules that can be taken individually or as an entire package. Data is only entered once and information flows across the modules to eliminate duplication and enhance communications. Processes that LIMA automates include commercial, cost control, vessel operations, equipment management and more. Efficient vessel scheduling is the first step to creating a reliable shipping service and a module within LIMA – called VOYCES – takes company data, distance tables and other information to create long-term schedules for a carrier's entire fleet. Before publishing the vessels' programme to its global agency network, VOYCES will run and compare a series of options to identify the optimum schedule. As each voyage progresses, VOYCES accepts vessel reports and arrival/departure messages and automatically updates the schedule and highlights any deviations. If a delay is identified, the software will simulate a range of options to bring the ship back into line with the minimum of customer disruption.

Bunker management is another function managed by VOYCES. As vessel schedules are being created, VOYCES incorporates ECAs to give an accurate assessment of the amount, types and cost of bunkers required to complete a voyage. This allows bunker consumption to be forecast and profitability calculated. If unplanned changes to the schedule are required, the software will then assess the impact on bunker consumption for each alternative solution.

Other functions delivered by VOYCES includes:
Vessel reporting: Onboard software to translate and transmit standard vessel reports directly to shore-side applications allowing operators to update and

amend schedules accordingly.
Capacity planning: This links with the carrier's booking software to give operators an at-a-glance view of load factors and capacity availability for an entire voyage.
Sea map: The ability to map and compare real AIS positions of vessels alongside their scheduled position and highlight differences.
Statement of facts: Reporting of port call events, confirmation of cargo loaded/discharged and bunkers received. All corresponding port costs are automatically calculated.
Checklist: A facility to ensure all common tasks required whilst a vessel is in port are authorised, completed and checked.

Have you developed applications that make life easier for port agents?

On 31 March we launched the industry's first cloud-based, comprehensive solution designed specifically for port agents. Softship Advanced Port Agency Solution – or SAPAS – is a unique pay-as-you-go tool that manages all port agency and husbandry activities in a single on-line solution.
Key functions of SAPAS include:
Master data: A user defined database to store and retrieve the huge amounts of information required to service the ships when in port
Tariffs: Port tariffs can be extremely complex. SAPAS stores this information and calculates accurate costs.
Offers: This facility combines vessel information with external costs such as pilotage, berthing and bunkering to accurately estimate the cost of a port call. SAPAS generates a professional estimate that can be presented by the agent.
Port calls: SAPAS manages all activities (vessel, crew, port authorities, customers, suppliers and more) required while the ship is in port. It creates a checklist, statement of facts and a disbursement account that can be presented when the vessel departs.
We listened carefully to the needs of port agents when we were designing SAPAS and we are confident that this tool will go a long way to help them manage their daily activities and present a professional image to their customers. We have ensured it is easy-to-use and requires no training or software installation. There is no upfront cost and agents only pay for what they use, when they use it.

Can you refer to the future plans of your company and the expectations in shipping Information Technology sector?

We must ensure that our solutions remain fit-for-purpose against the backdrop of a changing technology landscape. This means we must utilise cloud-based computing and we must make our software responsive for use on tablets and smartphones. In addition, we stay in close dialogue with our clients to ensure that we find solutions to their business challenges plus we closely monitor the industry and ensure that changes to regulations (such as the SOLAS regulations) are properly addressed by our systems.
All these things are high on our agenda.