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TANKER | INDUSTRY LEADERS

SHIPPING & TRADE



Anil Sharma

President and chief executive,
Global Marketing Systems (GMS)



As the president and chief executive of Global Marketing Systems (GMS), the world's largest cash buyer of ships for recycling, Anil Sharma could choose to narrowly focus on the business at hand. He makes our pioneer section because of the huge personal commitment he has shown to elevating safety standards and bringing much-needed visibility to this vital part of the industry.

The question of where to recycle a tanker remains highly charged. "There is a myth that

responsible ship recycling can only be done in Turkey, China or in the western world. Then there is another myth: If you beach a vessel it can't be considered responsible recycling," asserts Dr Sharma. "Turkey also beaches vessels. The Hong Kong Convention is not against beaching. It says responsible recycling can be done in various ways: drydock, alongside or beaching."

In contrast, the European Union is creating a shortlist of approved yards for recycling European-flagged tonnage and is using criteria likely to exclude beaching yards.

A recent example of GMS' industry leadership has been the creation of the industry's first guidelines for cleaning tankers for hot works prior to delivery to recycling yards. GMS' policy is that any tankers purchased on an 'as is where is' basis will be cleaned according to these guidelines.

Dr Sharma told our sister title *Tanker Shipping & Trade* that the guidelines were partly motivated by recent fatal accidents aboard vessels in Pakistan. "This should serve as a serious wake up call to tanker owners that their vessels must be totally cleaned of all cargo residues, slops and sludges in all cargo and slop tanks in order to mitigate risks of an accident at recycling yards.

"Regrettably, we have noticed a few shipowners are shying away from such an important and fundamental responsibility."

Dr Sharma says that GMS – as the market leader – has to be in the vanguard of correcting these misconceptions. "The ship recycling industry does not have an international trade association that can represent it in any organised way. We would love one."