



# How TORM balances safety and efficiency with SPOS & FleetGuard

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Lajos Holmslykke, TORM

Sailing the optimal route is a balancing act. Choose routes that avoid heavy weather entirely, and it can result in longer, less efficient voyages. However, sailing too close to the edge is a safety risk for the crew, vessel, and cargo.

It's a scenario that leading pure-play product tanker company TORM knows well. As a highly experienced shipping company (TORM celebrated its 130th anniversary in 2019), it's very familiar with keeping the balance between operational efficiency and safety. Both safety and performance are two of the core tenets of TORM's leadership philosophy.

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## Maintaining core values, even in severe weather conditions

When Hurricane Dorian hit the Bahamas in September 2019, the widespread damage caused by the category five storm was reported around the world. Its powerful winds, rain, and surges of seawater pummeled the islands for three days as it slowly edged towards the country.

At the time, there were TORM vessels in the region, transporting customer consignments worth millions. The company thrives on data, relying on data-driven methodologies for its shipping routing operations.

SPOS, the real-time onboard route optimization solution, triggered warnings of high winds over 100mph/160kph and storm surges for affected vessels in the TORM fleet. As a result, weather routing decisions needed to be made to maintain safety and minimize efficiency impacts.

When severe weather strikes, one of the biggest challenges project operations teams face is seasoned seafarers choosing to use their jurisdiction to override decisions. Captains rely on their instincts and opt for longer, less efficient routes despite the availability of optimum routes for the conditions.

## Supporting both onboard and onshore teams

In addition to SPOS, TORM uses FleetGuard, which monitors and helps improve fleet performance with aggregated weather data and routing insights. This paired approach means TORM can effectively feed valuable insights to seafarers. Onboard, SPOS allows captains to see routing information firsthand. As a result, they can make better-informed go/no-go decisions while en route. FleetGuard also supports onshore project operations teams by helping to navigate seafarers back to the optimum sea route.

A single person does not make routing decisions. Decisions are shaped and supported by a united TORM team. Different teams provide input into the systems to ensure voyages are both safe and efficient. The operations team puts the numbers into the system; the commercial team checks on the financial aspects. Technical experts will check on possible routes, the route the captain is expected to take, and the route taken by the seafarer.

## Recognizing the input of experts

As a shipping expert, TORM is not afraid to recognize the value of experts in other fields. Lajos Holmslykke, performance manager at TORM, understands the importance of meteorological expertise in routing decisions. He said, "If one captain is making 7-8 voyages in a year and has a life expectancy of 30 years experience, he is not wise. Meteorologists support 6-8 vessels in a day and work every day with different seafarers, meaning they have over 220 years of experience. So, extensive knowledge always adds value in the decision-making process."

## Optimized routes = valuable savings

For TORM, this weather routing approach has resulted in a 10% savings over at least 50% of all voyages. In terms of numbers, TORM has five Pacific and Atlantic sailings per week. They can save 10% overall, per sailing minimum, by opting for an optimum sea route on those sailings, especially when encountering bad weather.

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