



The Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change

Overcoming the Seafarer Crisis: Enabling Crew Changes and Repatriation

The Covid-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented crew change crisis which has led to hundreds of thousands of seafarers being impacted and in many instances left stranded on ships¹, beyond the expiry of their contracts. Despite significant efforts by international organizations, governments, industry associations, labor unions, NGOs and individual companies including the adoption on 1 December 2020 by the UN General Assembly of a resolution on *International cooperation to address challenges faced by seafarers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support global supply chains*², the issue is still far from resolved.

This is not an acceptable way to treat seafarers, who are the frontline workers of the maritime industry carrying 90% of global trade. Fatigue after extended periods at sea has significant consequences on the physical and mental wellbeing of seafarers. It also increases the risk of maritime incidents and environmental disasters, and poses a wider threat to the integrity of global supply chains, which depend on safe and reliable maritime transport.

This is why a taskforce of stakeholders from across the maritime value chain has identified the following key issues preventing crew changes, that require urgent action:

- While high-quality health protocols have been adopted internationally, they have not been consistently implemented in practice. This has led authorities to perceive seafarers as a Covid-19 risk, which has limited the possibilities of crew changes.
- Implementing high-quality crew change protocols will reduce the economic risk of disrupted supply chains but will lead to increased short-term costs.
- The disruption of international air travel has reduced the number of flights, causing connectivity issues between major crew change hubs and major seafaring nations, which has complicated crew changeovers.

Taking action to deliver on our shared responsibility

We, the signatories to The Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change, recognize that we have a shared responsibility to ensure that the current crew change crisis is resolved as soon as possible and to use the learnings from the crisis as an opportunity to build a more resilient maritime supply chain.

We believe that the most effective way of addressing the crew change challenge and building a more resilient maritime logistics chain, is by working together across the value chain with industry stakeholders, organizations and with governments to implement solutions that work in practice.

Therefore, we commit to take action to resolve the crew change crisis, based on our position and role in the value-chain, thereby ensuring the rights and wellbeing of the seafarers supporting global supply chains. We call on our peers and other stakeholders, in particular relevant government bodies, to join us in our efforts.

1 http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_755390/lang--en/index.htm

2 <https://www.undocs.org/en/A/75/L.37>

To make tangible improvements, the following actions should be implemented:

- **Recognize seafarers as key workers and give them priority access to Covid-19 vaccines**

Seafarers should be recognized as key workers by all governments in line with the UN General Assembly resolution adopted on 1 December 2020 and the transition of seafarers across borders should be facilitated based on internationally agreed, high-quality health protocols.

Governments and other stakeholders should work together with the maritime industry to ensure that seafarers, irrespective of their nationality, get priority access to Covid-19 vaccines alongside other key workers and health care professionals in recognition of their critical role in global supply chains and trade. This should include developing protocols that ensure vaccinations are correctly certified and effectively administered to seafarers as well as establishing a standardized format for health passes that contain tamper proof information about vaccination and testing status to facilitate crew changes.

- **Establish and implement gold standard health protocols based on existing best practice**

The maritime industry and governments should implement *The Recommended Framework of Protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic*³ which has been recognized by the International Maritime Organization.

To minimize the risk of Covid-19, to build trust that crew changes can be carried out in a safe manner, and to ensure that the measures taken can be universally accepted, the implementation of the Framework of Protocols should be based on the highest practicable standards. The STAR Crew Change Protocols⁴, which are based on existing best practice, are thus recommended for industry-wide adoption.

- **Increase collaboration between ship operators and charterers to facilitate crew changes**

Facilitating crew changes based on high-quality health protocols is a shared responsibility which will create benefits for all by minimizing the risk of Covid-19 spread on vessels, minimizing the risk of disruptions to global supply chains, while contributing to maritime safety and the wellbeing of seafarers.

Ship owners and charterers should share relevant information transparently and collaborate to ensure that necessary crew changes can be carried out with the least impact possible in terms of cost and delays. The owner should provide the charterer with as much notice as possible on intended crew changes, while the charterer should make all reasonable efforts to accommodate crew changes including when the vessel has to make a reasonable deviation.

No charter contracts should contain clauses preventing necessary crew changes from being carried out, as the aggregate effect of such clauses could be a serious obstacle to the safe operation of maritime trade and the protection of the wellbeing and rights of seafarers.

By implementing high-quality health protocols, ship owners can reduce the risk of trade disruption due to Covid-19, which also creates benefits to charterers. These benefits should be reflected in chartering decisions to create incentives for shipowners to implement high-quality health protocols and be transparent about actions taken as well as costs incurred.

- **Ensure air connectivity between key maritime hubs for seafarers**

The aviation industry should work together with the maritime industry to ensure that airlift capacity is established between major crew changing hubs and seafaring nations.

Additionally, the aviation and maritime industries as well as governments – involving all relevant ministries and agencies – should work together to establish a universally accepted and harmonized framework of standards for the validation of trusted health data for seafarers to facilitate border crossing and ensure the long-term resilience of air connectivity.

3 <https://wwwcdn.imo.org/localresources/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Documents/COVID%20CL%204204%20adds/Circular%20Letter%20No.4204-Add.14%20-%20Coronavirus%20%28Covid-19%29%20-%20Recommended%20Framework%20of%20Protocols.pdf>

4 <http://www.globalmaritimeforum.org/content/2020/12/The-Neptune-Declaration-STAR-protocols.pdf>

Signatories

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Asahi Shipping	Crowley Maritime Corporation	Fukujin Kisen
Alfa Laval	CSM Baltija	FUKUSHIMA
Alfa Ship & Crew Management	Charles Taylor Investment Management Company	FURUNO ELECTRIC
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Anglo-American	Chugoku Marine Paints	G2 Ocean
Anglo-Eastern Univan Group	D	Gac
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Ardmore Shipping	Daiwa Kisen	Gearbulk Norway
Asiatic/Atlantic Lloyd Group	Danaos Shipping	Global Maritime Forum
Atlantska Plovidba	Danica Crewing Specialists	Gram Car Carriers
Avance Gas Holding	Denholm Group	Golden Ocean
B	DFDS	Grieg Star
Bahri Ship Management	Dorian LPG Management	Grieg Maritime Group
BAO-NYK Shipping	Doun Kisen	Grimaldi Group
BEMAC Corporation	E	Gunvor
Berge Bulk	Eagle Bulk Shipping	H
Bibby Marine	Eagle Industry	Hachiuma Steamship
BIMCO	Eastern Pacific Shipping	Hafnia Pools
Borealis Maritime	Emirates Ship Investment Company	Halcyon Recruitment
BP	ESGPlus	Hamanaka Chain Manufacturing
BW Group	Euronav	Hapag-Lloyd
C	Evergreen Marina Corp	Harren & Partner
Camellia Line	Executive Ship Management	Hempel
Cape Shipping	F	HMM
Caravel Group	F. Laeisz	Honda Heavy Industries
Cargill Ocean Transportation	Fednav	Hong-Kong Maritime Museum
Carisbrooke Shipping	Fidelity International	Human Rights at Sea
Celsius Shipping	Filipino Association for Mariners' Employment (FAME)	I
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		IMC Shipping
		ING
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Signatories

InterManager - - International Association of Ship and Crew Managers

International Association of Ports and Harbours

International Chamber of Shipping

International Christian Maritime Association

International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations

International Harbour Masters' Association

International Maritime Association of the Philippines (INTERMAP)

International Maritime Employers' Council

International Seaways

International Transport Workers' Federation

International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI)

INTERTANKO

Ionic

IQrew Management (IQM)

IS Container

ISGAM

ITF Seafarers' Trust

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Japan Marine United Corporation

Japan Radio

JCRS

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Jebsen PTC Maritime

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Joint Ship Manning Group (JMG)

K

K Line Ship Management (Singapore)

Kaptanoglu Shipping

Kawasaki Heavy Industries

Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha ["K" LINE]

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Kyoei Tanker

L

LADOL Free Zone

Lauritzen Kosan

Lighthouse Shipmanagement Phils

LLC Novikontas Kaliningrad

Lloyds' Register

Logbridge (UK Southampton)

Louis Dreyfus Company

Lubeca Marine Management

M

M.T. Maritime Management (USA)

Mærsk Tankers

Magsaysay MOL Ship Management

Magsaysay People Resources Corporation (MPRC) / Magsaysay Maritime Corporation (MMC)

Manabe Zoki

MarCoPay

Marine & Offshore Div., Bureau Veritas Japan

Maritime Association of Shipowners, Shipmanagers & Agents

McNeal Law Firm

HURTWORRINGOFFSHORE.com

Merchant Navy Welfare Board

MINSHIP Shipmanagement

MISC Group comprising MISC Bhd, AET and Eaglestar Marine Holdings (L)

Mitsubishi Ore Transport

Mitsubishi Shipbuilding

Mitsui E&S Shipbuilding Company

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines

MK Centennial Maritime (Netherlands)

MK Centennial Maritime (Singapore)

MM Marine

MOL Energy Transport

MOL LNG Transport

MOL LNG Transport (Europe)

MOL LNG Transport (Asia)

MOL Ship Management

MOL Ship Management (S)

MOL Tankship Management

MPC Container Ships

MSC Crewing Services Philippines

MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company

MSea Management

MTM Ship Management

N

Naftomar Shipping and Trading

Nagasaki Sempaku Sobi

Nakakita Seisakusho

Namura Shipbuilding

Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK)

Nippon Pusnes

Nissen Kaiun

Nitta Kisen Kaisha

Norden

Nordic Bulk Carriers

Nordic Hamburg Shipmanagement

Norse Shipholding

North American Maritime Ministry Association

Northern Marine Group

Norwegian Shipowners' Association

NYK Bulk & Projects Carriers

NYK Bulkship (Asia)

NYK Bulkship (ATLANTIC)

NYK Bulkship (Korea)

NYK Cruises

NYK Energy Transport (Atlantic)

NYK Energy Transport (USA)

NYK FIL Maritime E-Training

NYK Line

NYK LNG Shipmanagement (UK)

NYK LNG Shipmanagement

NYK Shipmanagement

NYK-FIL Ship Management

NYK-TDG Maritime Academy

Signatories

O

Odfjell SE
Oman Shipping Company
Ocean Networks Express
ORION Reederei
Oshima Shipbuilding
OSM Maritime

P

Pacific Basin Shipping
Pacific Carriers
Pacific International Lines
Pangaea Logistics Solutions
Petredec
Philippine Association of Manning
Agencies and Ship Managers
(PAMAS)
Philippine Transmarine Carriers
Philippine-Japan Manning
Consultative Council (PJMCC)
Pleiades Shipping Agents
Port Arthur International Seafarers'
Center
Precious Shipping PCL
Promar
PSA International

Q

Qatar Gas Transport (Nakilat)

R

"Reederei Nord Shipmanagement
on behalf of
REEDEREI NORD Group"
Ridgebury Tankers
Rio Tinto

S

Saga Shipholding (Norway)
Saga Welco
Samudera Indonesia
Santoku Senpaku
Seamen's Church Institute
SeaTankers Services (UK)
Seanergy

Senator Crewing (Manila)
SFL Corporation
Shell Shipping & Maritime
Shin Kurushima Dockyard
Shinko
Shinkoh
Shipping Australia
Shunzan Kaiun
Sirius Ship Management
Sitara Shipping
Sonangol Marine Services
South32
Southfield Agencies
Starbulk Carriers
Stealth Maritime
Stella Maris
Stella Maris - Catholic Diocese of
Beaumont, Texas USA
Stena Bulk
Stena Shipping and Ferries
Sunrui Marine Environment
Engineering
Sustainable Shipping Initiative
Swire Pacific Offshore
Swire Shipping
Swiss Ocean Yacht Management
Swiss Reinsurance Company
Synergy Marine Group

T

Tagashira Kaiun
Taiheiyo Kisen Kaisa
Taihua Ship Management
TAIKO KIKAI INDUSTRIES
Tankerska plovdba
Tata NYK Shipping
Team Tankers International
Technomar Shipping
Teekay Group
The China Navigation Company
The CSL Group
The Dow Chemical Company

The Mission to Seafarers
The Nautical Institute - US Gulf
Branch
The Shipping Corporation of India
The Standard Club
Thomas Miller Holdings
Thome Group
Tohmei Shipping
Tokyo Keiki Inc. Marine Systems
Company
Tomini Shipping
Torm
Tortoise Engineering
Torvald Klaveness
Trafigura
Transocean Shipmanagement
(Phils)
Tsuneishi shipbuilding

U

U Ming Marine Transport
UK Club
Unicrew Management
Unifeeder
Unilever
United European Car Carriers

V

V. Group
Vale
Vanmar Shipping
Vitol

W

Wallem Group
Wallenius Wilhelmsen
Wan Hai Lines
Western Shipping
Wilhelmsen Ahrenkiel Ship
Management
Wilhelmsen Ship Management
Windward
World Economic Forum
World Fuel Services Corporation

Signatories

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X-Press Feeders

XT Management

Y

YANMAR POWER TECHNOLOGY

YDK Technologies

Yokogawa Electric Corporation

Z

Zeaborn Ship Management

ZIM Integrated Shipping Services

Zodiac Maritime