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 ships, 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, 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.

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 Protocols[^4], 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.

[^4]: [http://www.globalmaritimeforum.org/content/2020/12/The-Neptune-Declaration-STAR-protocols.pdf](http://www.globalmaritimeforum.org/content/2020/12/The-Neptune-Declaration-STAR-protocols.pdf)
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Signatories

Capital - Executive Ship Management
Capital Gas Ship Management
Capital Ship Management
Caralb Marítima
Caravel Group
Cardinal Maritime Limited
Cargill Ocean Transportation
Carisbrooke Shipping
Celsius Shipping
Centrum Marine Consultancy
CF Sharp Crew Management
Channel Bunker Services
Charles Taylor Investment Management Company
Chevron Shipping Company
China LNG Shipping (International)
China Merchants Energy Shipping (Singapore)
Chios Navigation (Hellas)
Chugoku Marine Paints
CIS Karkont Inspection Services – Turkey
Citi
Cluster Maritime Français
CMA CGM Group
CMAF - Comité Marseillais des Armateurs de France
CNMAR Shipping
Coastal Shipping Limited
Coaster Ship Owners and Operators Association (KOSDER)
Columbia Cruise Services
Columbia Shipmanagement
Compagnie Maritime Nantaise - MN
Concordia Maritime
Confidence Shipping Company
CONFITARMA - Italian Shipowners’ Association
Contship Management
Corpus Christi International Seamen’s Center
Cosmos Agency
CPO Containerschifffreuderei
COSCO SHIPPING Lines
CoShip
Crowley Maritime Corporation
Cymona Shipping Management
Cyprus Shipping Chamber
Cyrus

D

D’Amico Soc. di Navigazione
D. Oltmann Reederei
Daihatsu Diesel
Daikin MR Engineering
Daiwa Kisen
Danaos Shipping
Donica Crewing Specialists
Danz & Tietjens Schiffsahrtsguppe
Dee4 Capital Partners
DEFMED - D.E.U. MARITIME FACULTY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION IZMIR TURKEY
Demurrage Desk
Denholm Group
Deutsche Seemannsmissin
DFDS
DHT Holdings
Diamond S Shipping
Diana Shipping Services
Döhle Seafront Crewing (Manila)
Donnelly Tanker Management
Dorian LPG Management
Doun Kisen
Drew Marine USA
Dromon Bureau of Shipping
dship Carriers
Dufferin Maritime
Dynarep Shipping Consultants

E

Eagle Bulk Shipping
Eagle Industry
Eastern Pacific Shipping
EDT Offshore Group
Element Shipmanagement
Elettra
Elvictor Group
Emarat Maritime
Emirates Group
EMS-Fehn-Group
ENESER Group
ENL Services
Enterprises Shipping and Trading
EP Resources
EPI Group Holdings
Epic Gas
EPSCO Group
Ernst Jacob
Esenyel Partners - Lawyers & Consultants
ESGPlus
Esvagt
Euronav
European Community Shipowners’ Associations
Evergas
Evergreen Marine Corp
EveryWay Travel
Excelerate Technical Management
Executive Ship Management
EXMAR
Exporters Competitive Maritime Council

F

F. Laeisz
Fednav
Fidelity International
Filipino Association for Mariners’ Employment (FAME)
Signatories

Filipino Shipowners’ Association (FSA)
Filistos ASCOT
First Ship Lease Trust
Flagship Ship Agencies
Fleet Management
FLEX LNG
FONASBA
Foreign Owners Representatives and Ship Managers Association
Foremost Group
Foresight Group
Frontline
FrontM Limited
Fugro
France LNG Shipping
Fratelli Cosulich
Fukujin Kisen
FUKUSHIMA
FURUNO ELECTRIC

G
G Travel
G2 Ocean
GAC
GasLog
Gazocean
Gearbulk Norway
Genco Shipping & Trading
Genid Shipping & Logistics
GERMAN MARINE AGENCIES
German Nautical Association founded 1868
GFS Ship Management
Global Marine Group
Global Maritime Consultants Group
Global Maritime Forum
Global Seaways
Golar LNG
Gram Car Carriers
Golden Ocean

Gorrissen Federspiel
Grieg Star
Grieg Maritime Group
Grimaldi Group
Grindrod Shipping
Grup Stier
Gulf Energy Maritime (GEM)
Gungen Denizcilik ve Ticaret
Gunvor

H
H. Vogeumann Group
Hachiuma Steamship
Hadley Shipping Group
Hafnia Pools
Halcyon Recruitment
Hamanaka Chain Manufacturing
Hammonia CrewCo
Hammonia Reederei
Hapag-Lloyd
HarpainGas
Harren & Partner
Hartmann Dry Cargo Germany
Hartmann Gas Carriers Germany
Hellespont Ship Management
HelM Specialist Recruitment
Hempel
HMM
Hoegh Autoliners
Hoegh LNG
Honda Heavy Industries
Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association
Hong Kong Shipowners Association
Hong-Kong Maritime Museum
Horizon Maritime Offshore
Horizon Maritime Services
Houston International Seafarers’ Center
Human Rights at Sea
Hunterlink EAP

I
Ibamari Shipbuilding
ID Shipping Agency
IDWAL
Ignazio Messina & C.
IHI Power Systems
IMC Shipping
INCARGO
Ince
Inchcape Shipping Services
Indeets Consulting
ING
Inmarsat
Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology
Indian Maritime Foundation
INTERCARGO - International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners
InterManager - International Association of Ship and Crew Managers
International Association of Classification Societies (IACS)
International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC)
International Association of Ports and Harbours
International Bunker Industry Association
International Chamber of Shipping
International Christian Maritime Association
International Federation of Shipmasters’ Associations
International Harbour Masters’ Association
International Life-saving Appliance Manufacturers’ Association (ILAMA)
International Marine Contractors Association
International Marine Purchasing Association (IMPA)
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International Maritime Association of the Philippines (INTERMAP)
International Maritime Employers’ Council
International Parcel Tankers Association
International Seafarers’ Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN)
International Seaways
International Ship-Owners Alliance of Canada (ISAC)
International Support Vessel Owners’ Association
International Transport Workers’ Federation
International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI)
Internavis
Internship Navigation
Interorient Shipmanagement
INTERTANKO
Ionic
IQrew Management (IQM)
IRIS Security
Irish Institute of Master Mariners
IS Container
ISGAM
Island Navigation Corporation International Limited
Island Sailors Maldives
Isle of Man Maritime
ISM Shipping Solutions
ITF Seafarers’ Trust
ITU Maritime Faculty Alumni Association (ITU Denizcilik Fakultesi Mezunları Derneği)

J

J&J Denholm
Japan Marine United Corporation
Japan Radio
JBG Shipping Agency

JCRS
Jebesen PTC
Jebesen PTC Maritime
JIFMAR OFFSHORE SERVICES
John T. Essberger
Joint Ship Manning Group (JMG)
Junge & Co. Versicherungsmakler

K

K Line Ship Management (Singapore)
KAMER Marine Denizcilik
Kaptanoglu Shipping
Kawasaki Heavy Industries
Kawasaki Kisenn Kaisa (“K” LINE)
KOTUG group of companies
Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Skipsrederi
KTU Maritime Transportation and Management Engineering Alumni Association (KTU ĐUIM MD)
Kumiai Navigation
Kumiai Senpaku
Kykladès Maritime
Kyla Shipping
Kyoei Tanker

L

LADOL Free Zone
Lampe & Schwartz Marine Underwriting
Landbridge Ship Management (HK)
Latsco Marine Management
Lauritzen Bulkers
Lauritzen Kosan
Lemissolos
Leonhardt & Blumberg Shipmanagement
Leth Agencies
Let’s Talk Supply Chain
Liberian Registry
Lighthouse Shipmanagement Phils
Lindholm Shipping
LLC Novikontas Kaliningrad

Lloyds’ Register
Lloyd’s Register Foundation
Load Line Marine
Logbridge (UK Southampton)
Lomar Shipping
London Ship Managers
Louis Dreyfus Armateurs
Louis Dreyfus Company
Lubeca Marine Management
Lucent Global Ship Services

M

M.T. Maritime Management (USA)
MAC Equity Maritime Services
Maersk Drilling
Maersk Supply Service
Maersk Tankers
Maestro Shipmanagement
Magsaysay MOL Ship Management
Magsaysay People Resources Corporation (MPRC) / Magsaysay Maritime Corporation (MMC)
Manabe Zaki
Monaco Marine
MarCoPay
More Supply & Services
Marfin Management Monaco, Managers for Topic Fleet
Marin Shipmanagement
Marine & Offshore Div., Bureau Veritas Japan
Marine Benefits
Marine Capital
Marine One (Private) Limited
Marine Services Group
Marine Tours
Marine Transport Workers Trade Union of Ukraine
Marine Underwriting Services
MARINO Party-List
Maritima
Signatories

Maritima Del Estrecho Gib
Maritime Association of Shipowners, Shipmanagers & Agents
Maritime Industry Australia
Maritime Trainer
Marlow Navigation
Marsh
Marshal Ship Management
Martracon Group
MarTrust Corporation
MarynarzSwiata.pl - The Polish Seafarer Blog
MasOceans
Mastermind Shipmanagement
Mastership [MASTER MARITIME AGENCIES]
Matrix Ship Management
MCC Maritime Competence Center
McNeal Law Firm
HURTWORKINGOFFSHORE.com
Memisoglu Kurun Law Firm
Mental Health Support Solutions
Merchant Navy Welfare Board
Metrostar Management
MF Shipping Group
MH Bland Group
Michele Bottiglieri Armatore
Ministry to Seafarers Vancouver
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
MMA Offshore Limited
MOL LNG Transport
MOL LNG Transport (Europe)
MOL LNG Transport (Asia)
MOL Ship Management
MOL Ship Management (S)
MOL Tankship Management
MPC Container Ships
MR Marine Group
MRM Philippines
MSC Crewing Services Philippines
MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company
MSea Management
MTM Ship Management
Multiport Ship Agency Network
Munich Re Syndicate
MURELOIL
N
Naftomar Shipping and Trading
Nagasaki Sempaku Sobi
Nakakita Seisakusho
Namura Shipbuilding
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
Nautilus Labs
Naviera Ultranav
Navig8 Chemical Tankers
Navigator Gas
Neda Maritime Agency
Neptune Dry Management
Neptune Lines Shipping & Managing Enterprises
NET Ship Management
Netvision
Nihon Shipyard
Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK)
Nippon Pusnes
Nissen Kaun
Nitta Kisen Kaisha
Norbulk Shipping UK
Norden
Nordic Bulk Carriers
Nordic Hamburg Shipmanagement
Nordic P&I Group
Norse Shipholding
Norstar Ship Management
North American Maritime Ministry Association
Northern Lighthouse Board
Norwegian Coastal Shipowners
Northern Marine Group
Norwegian Shipowners’ Association
Nova Marine Carriers
NRP Finans
NRP Maritime Asset Management
NSB Group
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
O
OBT Shipping Group
Ocean Networks Express
Ocean Technologies Group
Oceanwide Expeditions
Odfjell SE
Olympic Shipping & Management
OMA Group West Africa
Oman Shipping Company
OMS Group
Signatories

OneLearn Global Limited
Orange Marine
Orient Overseas Container Line
ORION Reederei
Ortaköy Maritime Alumni Association
Oshima Shipbuilding
Osiris Consultants
OSM Maritime
OSPR - The Offshore Safe Professionals Register

P
P&O Maritime Logistics
Pacific Basin Shipping
Pacific Carriers Limited
PACIFIC GAS
Pacific International Lines
Pangaea Logistics Solutions
Petredec
PetroStrat
Philippine Association of Manning Agencies and Ship Managers (PAMAS)
Philippine Transmarine Carriers
Philippine-Japan Manning Consultative Council [PJMCC]
Phoenix Shipping Group
Pleiades Shipping Agents
Pole Star
Polski Związek Przedsiębiorców Zeglugowych [Polish Shipping Companies Association]
Pontant
Port Arthur International Seafarers’ Center
POSH Fleet Services
POSH Saudi
Potentia Unleash The Power of People
Precious Shipping PCL
PREVENTION at Sea
probunkers
Promar
Promare | Rabb Carvalho Advogados
PROPEL Social
PSA International
Q88
Q
Qatar Gas Transport (Nakilat)
Queensway Navigation
Queensway Services

R
Rederiet Stenersen
Reederei Bernd Sibum
Reederei Hamburger Lloyd
“Reederei Nord Shipmanagement on behalf of REEDEREI NORD Group”
Reederei Zurich
Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator
Ridgebury Tankers
RightShip
Rio Tinto
Rocktree Logistics
Roll Group
Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners (KVNR)

S
S5 Agency World
Safe Bulkers
Safe Bulkers Management
Safebridge
Safety Management Overseas
Saga Shipholding (Norway)
Saga Welco
Sailors’ Society
Samudera Indonesia
Santoku Senpaku
Sarikaya + Sahin Law Firm
Scalabrin Center for People on the Move
Scalabrin Development Office
Scalabrin International Migration Network (SIMN)
Scorpio
Sea Culture Association of Turkey
Sea Globe Management & Trading
Sea Trade Holdings
Sea Wellbeing
Sea World Management & Trading
Seacor Marine
Seafarers UK
Seamar Management
Seamen’s Church Institute
Seaenergy
Searock Marine Insurance Brokers
Sea-Side Shipping Agency Brazil
Seaspan Ship Management
SeaTankers Services (UK)
Senator Crewing (Manila)
SFG Engineering Services
SFL Corporation
Shell Shipping & Maritime
Shin Kurushima Dockyard
Shinko
Shinkoh
Shinyang NF Shipping
ShipMoney
ShipParts.com
Shipping Australia
Shipping Professional Network in Hamburg
Shipz
Shunzan Kaiun
SimaMarine (India)
Singhai Marine Services (Shanghai)
Sirius Marine Services
Sitara Shipping
Signatories

SMT Shipping Poland
SOCATRA
Sogestran Shipping
Solstad Offshore
Someca Transport
Sonangol Marine Services
Songa Container
Songa Shipmanagement
South Trade Shipmanagement
South32
Southfield Agencies
Sovcomflot
Star Bulk Carriers Corp.
Stealth Maritime
Stella Maris
Stella Maris - Australia
Stella Maris - Cape Town
Stella Maris - Catholic Diocese of Beaumont, Texas USA
Stella Maris - Manila
STELLA MARIS Rio de Janeiro
Stella Maris Scalabrinian Network
Stella Maris/ Apostolatus Maris, Montevideo
Stena Bulk
Stena Shipping and Ferries
Stichting Pastoraat Werkers Overzee
Steward World Port
Stolt Tankers
StratumFive
Subsea Global Solutions
Suisse-Atlantique
Sunrui Marine Environment Engineering
Sunship Schifffahrtskontor
Sustainable Shipping Initiative
Swire Pacific Offshore
Swire Shipping
Swiss Ocean Yacht Management
Swiss Re Corporate Solutions
Swiss Shipowners Association
Synergy Marine Group
T
Tagashira Kaiun
Taiheiya Kisen Kaisa
Taihua Ship Management
TAIKO KIKAI INDUSTRIES
Tamar Ship Management
Ta-Na Crew Manning Agency
Tankerska plovidba
Tata NYK Shipping
Taylor Maritime
TCC Group
Team Tankers International
Technomar Shipping
Teekay Group
The China Navigation Company
The CSL Group
The Dow Chemical Company
The International Propeller Club of the United States, Port of Piraeus
The Marcura Group
The Merchant Navy Association
The Mission to Seafarers
The Nautical Institute
The Nautical Institute - US Gulf Branch
The Naval Institute
The Shipping Corporation of India
The Shipping Professional Network London
The Standard Club
Thomas Miller Holdings
Tidewater
Titanic Society of Atlantic Canada
TMS Technical Marine Solutions
TMS-Hamburg Technical Marine Services
Thome Group
Tohmei Shipping
Tokyo Keiki Inc. Marine Systems Company
Tomini Shipping
Torm
Tortoise Engineering
Torvald Klaveness
Total Marine Solutions
Tototheo Maritime
Trafignum
Trans KA Tanker
Transmed Maritime Limited
Transmed Shipping Co. Ltd.
Transocean Shipmanagement (Phils)
Transportation Institute
TriNøden Marine
Tsakos Shipping and Trading
Tsavliris Alexander G. & Sons Maritime Company
Tsuneishi shipbuilding
Tufton
Turk P&I Sigorta
Turkish Chamber of Shipping
Turkish Maritime Federation
Turkish Maritime Pilots’ Association (TUMPA)
Turkish Ocean-going Masters’ Association
Turkish Shipowners’ Association
Türkiye Denizcilik Sendikası [Seafarers’ Union of Turkey]
U
U Ming Marine Transport
UK Chamber of Shipping
UK Club
Ultranav
Uni- Tankers
Unibaltic Shipping
Unicrew Management
Signatories

Unifeeder
Unilever
Unisea Philippines
Unisea Shipping
Uniteam Marine Limited
United European Car Carriers
United Offshore Support
Unitized Ocean Transport Limited
Ushio Reinetsu
Utkilen
Uvea Marine Services

V
V. Group
Vale
Van Ameyde McAuslands
Vanmar Shipping
VENLYS Maritime Specialisation Services
Vento Shipping
Verifai
Viking Marine Services Group
ViraHaber
Viridian Maritime
Vitol
Vortexa
Vroon

W
Wah Kwong Maritime Transport Holdings Limited
Wallem Group
Wallenius Wilhelmsen
Wan Hai Lines
WaterFront Maritime Services DMCC
Wesmans
Western Shipping
Wilhelmsen Ahrenkiel Ship Management
Willis Towers Watson
Wilhelmsen Ship Management

Windward
Wisby Shipmanagement
WISTA Colombia
WISTA International
WISTA USA
World Economic Forum
World Fuel Services Corporation
World Marine Offshore

X
X-Press Feeders
Xiamen Hailong Manning Service
XT Management

Y
YANMAR POWER TECHNOLOGY
YDK Technologies
Yieldstreet Marine
Yokogawa Electric Corporation

Z
Zeaborn Ship Management
Zeymarine Gemi Acentaligi Ve Hizmetleri Ticaret
ZIM Integrated Shipping Services
Z-Mariner
Zodiac Maritime