



## **Neptune Indicator still confirming a 'new normal', as we transition into a new phase of the Indicator**

*The July Crew Change Indicator shows a stable crew change situation with numbers at similar levels since December 2021.*

**Copenhagen, 4 July 2022** – The latest Indicator shows that the number of seafarers onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract has decreased slightly to 4.2% from 4.3% in the last month, while the number of seafarers onboard vessels for over 11 months has remained stable at 0.3%. For the eighth consecutive month, we observe little change in the numbers reported, as we confirm the entry into a 'new normal'. The Neptune Indicator also reports a 2.8 percentage point increase in seafarer vaccines, from 86.2% in June to 89.3% in July.

Ship managers reported little new developments or difficulties in carrying out crew changes. While restrictions in some countries still persist, quarantine requirements have loosened in China and overall Covid-related crew change restrictions have eased. Seafarer vaccines have reached high numbers and ship managers continue to actively provide vaccinations to their crew, whether onshore in ports or in their home countries. There do remain some insecurities around vaccines and ship managers report a global shortage of Ukrainian and Russian crew due to the ongoing conflict.

A year after the first report was published, the ship managers providing data to the Indicator convened in early June 2022 to take stock of the past year and to discuss the need for the Indicator moving forward.

The group confirmed the value of having an Indicator providing up-to-date information on the crew change situation. In light of the easing of the Covid-related crew change crisis it was agreed to move from a monthly to a quarterly reporting with the possibility of increasing the frequency if new variants of Covid-19 and/or other crises start negatively impacting the possibility of carrying out crew changes. The group also expressed a willingness to explore how the Indicator could be developed to cover other areas of importance to seafarer wellbeing such as access to shore leave.

*"I am encouraged by the willingness and desire of ship managers to collaborate and share data that can be used to monitor and push for access to crew change. We look forward to continuing the work on the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator and develop the initiative so it continues to support seafarer wellbeing,"* says **Kasper Sogaard, Managing Director, Head of Institutional Strategy and Development, Global Maritime Forum.**

The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator builds on aggregated data from ten leading ship managers: Anglo-Eastern, Bernhard Schulte, Columbia Shipmanagement, Fleet Management (FLEET), OSM, Synergy Marine, Thome, V.Group, Wallem Ship Management, and Wilhelmsen Ship Management which collectively have about 100,000 seafarers currently onboard.

The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator builds on aggregated data provided by the ship managers to the Global Maritime Forum. The data is used to calculate a weighted average of the percentage of seafarers who have been onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract of employment, a weighted average of the percentage of seafarers who have been onboard vessels for over 11 months, and a weighted average of the percentage of seafarers who have been vaccinated. As top ship managers are making significant efforts – and are often better placed – in facilitating crew changes, the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator cannot be used directly to calculate the full numbers of seafarers impacted by the crew change crisis. Likewise, the calculated percentage of seafarers who have been vaccinated is likely to overestimate the actual proportion of vaccinated seafarers.

**The July 2022 Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator** can be found [here](#).

**For further information:** Interim Head of Communications, Sofie Rud at [rud@globalmaritimeforum.org](mailto:rud@globalmaritimeforum.org) or +45 2810 2332.

## About the Global Maritime Forum

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The Global Maritime Forum is an international not-for-profit organization committed to shaping the future of global seaborne trade to increase sustainable long-term economic development and human wellbeing.

## Contributors to the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator comment:

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### Anglo-Eastern

*“When companies work together and collaborate openly, processes and goals become more aligned, leading the group towards a higher success rate of achieving a common goal. The Neptune declaration initiative by the Global Maritime Forum has made this possible with reliable data and insights for us to take steps to resolve the crew change crisis. The situation has indeed improved but we also want to take care to improve this further. We are doing all that it takes to improve the wellbeing of our seafarers. Shore leave for seafarers is another concern which should be tackled by the industry to help seafarers. Shore leave is essential for seafarers as they spend weeks and months cooped up on vessels. They need to get ashore to seek welfare, social, medical and psychological support and to have a break from their normal routines,”* says **Rohit A. Mehrotha, Group Director - Marine HR, Anglo-Eastern.**

### Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement

*“The COVID pandemic has shown the world the vulnerability of global supply chains and the importance of seafarers as keyworkers. Despite this, many authorities have not acted on it, treating seafarers primarily as a health risk which caused an unprecedented humanitarian crisis at sea. This is not an acceptable way to treat seafarers, who are the frontline workers of the maritime industry carrying 90% of global trade. The Neptune Declaration taskforce has identified urgent actions and shared relevant data, experiences, ideas and practicable solutions e.g. for crew change protocols, access to vaccines or air travel connectivity. It has become a unique alliance in a highly competitive business. That demonstrates the strong cooperation between companies and colleagues and has the potential to open the door to new initiatives in the industry,”* says **Eva Rodriguez, Director Fleet Personnel, Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement.**

### Columbia Ship Management

*“Columbia is proud to be part of the Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change. Despite the significant improvements further to the crew change crisis caused by the pandemic of Covid-19, the group continues to advocate for the recognition of seafarers as key workers, which doesn't only support their right to access the vaccines but also their wellbeing in general when traveling from or to the ships and when in port. The cooperation between a large number of major operators and charterers has been largely enhanced via this community thanks to data and information sharing. We believe that continuing these efforts will help improving the wellbeing of the seafarers worldwide by facilitating their access to visas, flights, medical treatment ashore and shore leave in the safest way. Columbia takes this opportunity to invite national maritime authorities, ports and terminals to join these efforts and to contribute with innovative shore-based initiatives to the wellbeing of seafarers,”* says **Capt. Faouzi Fradi, Group Director Crewing and Training, Columbia Ship Management.**

### FLEET

*“At FLEET, our crew's health and wellbeing – including their mental health – is of the utmost importance to us. We're pleased that the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator has delivered strong results in crew change and vaccination rollouts through industry collaboration. We're looking forward to applying this proven approach to addressing broader crew welfare in the context of the ongoing COVID pandemic – starting with improving shore leave arrangements,”* says **Kishore Rajvanshy, Managing Director, FLEET.**

## **OSM**

*"In OSM "it's all about People" and during the COVID-19 pandemic our top priority was and ALWAYS will be the safety of our seafarers. With the excellent co-operation and TRUST from our Customers, strong support from our NMC Clinic, the processes and the monitoring tools we have implemented helped us achieve low level of infections and high vaccination rates without forcing our people but through constant support and education,"* says **Peter Burkal, Managing Director, OSM.**

## **Synergy Group**

*"In more than 850 signatories, and in the effect of such a proud alliance, we find proof that industry-wide collaboration can speak for our people, get them the priorities that they deserve and work in protecting and securing supply chains. Just to reflect on it is very moving indeed. There is now a lot of public trust in seafarers, because of supply logistics issues and people's greater awareness, as a result, so we have to capitalise on that. We should push for legislation, such as enactment of the International Labour Organization's Convention on Seafarers' Identity Documents, which would allow them free travel. The ILO Convention C185 was ratified 15 years ago, but most countries have still not implemented it,"* says **Captain Rajesh Unni, CEO and Founder, Synergy Group.**

## **Wallem Group**

*"This report continues to reiterate the absolute need for governments around the world to recognize seafarers as key workers. It further highlights the impact of the draconian restrictions that Governments put in place during the pandemic. Within the maritime industry we also must be flexible in providing opportunities for shore leave and crew changes, this is an absolute must. The work that NDCCI have done, clearly shows us the ramifications from the current approaches and why we need everyone to work together in a collaborative manner so we can ensure the well-being of our seafarers,"* says **John-Kaare Aune, Chief Executive Officer, Wallem Group.**

## **V. Group**

*"V.Group believe in the continued focus on recognizing seafarers as key workers and enable free movement across the world,"* says **Allan Falkenberg, Chief Executive Officer, V. Group.**