



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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A

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A. P. Møller-Mærsk

ABC Maritime

ADNOC Logistics & Services

Advent International

Airports Council International (ACI) World

Alandia

Asahi Shipping

Alfa Laval

Alfa Ship & Crew Management

Anchor SM (Singapore)

Anglo-American

Anglo-Eastern Univan Group

Anosis Maritime

Anglo International Shipping Operations

Anthony Veder Group

Apex Ship Management

Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America

ARCADIA SHIPMANAGEMENT

Ardmore Shipping

ARGELAN SHIPS SERVICE

Asiatic/Atlantic Lloyd Group

Atlantska Plovidba

AV Global Marine

Avance Gas Holding

B

Bahri Ship Management

BAO-NYK Shipping

BBC Chartering

BEMAC Corporation

Ben Line Agencies

Berge Bulk

Bibby Marine

BIMCO

BMT

Borealis Maritime

BP

Brentwood Communications

Briese Crew Management

Briese Schiffahrts

Bureau Veritas

Burmester & Vogel

BW Group

C

Camellia Line

Cape Shipping

Caravel Group

Cargill Ocean Transportation

Carisbrooke Shipping

Celsius Shipping

Citi

Cluster Maritime Français

CMA CGM Group

Columbia Shipmanagement

Concordia Maritime

Confidence Shipping Company

Contships Management

Cosmos Agency

CPO Containerschiffreederei

COSCO SHIPPING Lines

Crowley Maritime Corporation

Charles Taylor Investment Management Company

Chevron Shipping Company

China Merchants Energy Shipping (Singapore)

Chugoku Marine Paints

D

d'Amico Soc. di Navigazione

D. Oltmann Reederei

Daihatsu Diesel

Daikin MR Engineering

Daiwa Kisen

Danaos Shipping

Danica Crewing Specialists

Dee4 Capital Partners

Demurrage Desk

DFDS

DHT Holdings

Diamond S Shipping

Dorian LPG Management

Doun Kisen

Dufferin Maritime

E

Eagle Bulk Shipping

Eagle Industry

Eastern Pacific Shipping

EDT Offshore Group

Emarat Maritime

Emirates Ship Investment Company

ENESEL Group

Enterprises Shipping and Trading

EP Resources

Epic Gas

ESGPlus

Euronav

Evergas

Evergreen Marine Corp

Executive Ship Management

F

F. Laeisz

Fednav

Fidelity International

Filipino Association for Mariners' Employment (FAME)

Filipino Shipowners' Association (FSA)

Filistos ASCOT

First Ship Lease Trust

Flagship Ship Agencies

Fleet Management

FLEX LNG

Signatories

Foremost Group

Foresight Group

Frontline

Fugro

France LNG Shipping

Fukujin Kisen

FUKUSHIMA

FURUNO ELECTRIC

G

G2 Ocean

GAC

GasLog

Gazocean

Gearbulk Norway

Genco Shipping & Trading

GERMAN MARINE AGENCIES

Global Maritime Forum

Global Seaways

Gram Car Carriers

Golden Ocean

Gorrissen Federspiel

Grieg Star

Grieg Maritime Group

Grimaldi Group

Grindrod Shipping

Gulf Energy Maritime (GEM)

Gunvor

H

Hachiuma Steamship

Hadley Shipping Group

Hafnia Pools

Halcyon Recruitment

Hamanaka Chain Manufacturing

Hapag-Lloyd

Harren & Partner

Hartmann Dry Cargo Germany

Hartmann Gas Carriers Germany

Hempel

HMM

Honda Heavy Industries

Hong-Kong Maritime Museum

Houston International Seafarers' Center

Human Rights at Sea

I

Ignazio Messina & C.

IHI Power Systems

IMC Shipping

Inchcape Shipping Services

ING

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 Ports and Harbours

International Chamber of Shipping

International Christian Maritime Association

International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations

International Harbour Masters' Association

International Marine Contractors Association

International Marine Purchasing Association (IMPA)

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 Transport Workers' Federation

International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI)

Internavis

Interorient Shipmanagement

INTERTANKO

Ionic

IQrew Management (IQM)

IRIS Security

Irish Institute of Master Mariners

IS Container

ISGAM

ITF Seafarers' Trust

J

J&J Denholm

Japan Marine United Corporation

Japan Radio

JCRS

Jebsen PTC

Jebsen PTC Maritime

John T. Essberger

Joint Ship Manning Group (JMG)

K

K Line Ship Management (Singapore)

Kaptanoglu Shipping

Kawasaki Heavy Industries

Kawasaki Kisenn Kaisa ("K" LINE)

Kyklades Maritime

Kyoei Tanker

L

LADOL Free Zone

Landbridge Ship Management (HK)

Lauritzen Bulkers

Lauritzen Kosan

Lemissoler

Lighthouse Shipmanagement Phils

LLC Novikontas Kaliningrad

Lloyds' Register

Signatories

Load Line Marine
Logbridge (UK Southampton)
Lomar Shipping
Louis Dreyfus Armateurs
Louis Dreyfus Company
Lubeca Marine Management

M

M.T. Maritime Management (USA)
Mærsk Drilling
Maersk Supply Service
Mærsk Tankers
Maestro Shipmanagement
Magsaysay MOL Ship Management
Magsaysay People Resources Corporation (MPRC) / Magsaysay Maritime Corporation (MMC)
Manabe Zoki
MarCoPay
Marine & Offshore Div., Bureau Veritas Japan
Marine Benefits
Maritime Association of Shipowners, Shipmanagers & Agents
Marlow Navigation
Marshal Ship Management
Matrix Ship Management
McNeal Law Firm
HURTWORINGOFFSHORE.com
Merchant Navy Welfare Board
Metrostar Management
MH Bland Group
Michele Bottiglieri Armatore
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 LNG Transport
MOL LNG Transport (Europe)
MOL LNG Transport (Asia)
MOL Ship Management
MOL Ship Management (S)
MOL Tankship Management
MPC Container Ships
MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company
MSea Management
MTM Ship Management

N

Naftomar Shipping and Trading
Nagasaki Sempaku Sobi
Nakakita Seisakusho
Namura Shipbuilding
Navigator Gas
Neda Maritime Agency
Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK)
Nippon Pusnes
Nissen Kaiun
Nitta Kisen Kaisha
Norden
Nordic Bulk Carriers
Nordic Hamburg Shipmanagement
Nordic P&I Group
Norse Shipholding
Norstar Ship Management
North American Maritime Ministry Association
Northern Marine Group
Norwegian Shipowners' Association
Nova Marine Carriers
NRP Finans
NRP Maritime Asset Management
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

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

P

P&O Maritime Logistics
Pacific Basin Shipping
Pacific Carriers Limited
Pacific International Lines
Pangaea Logistics Solutions
Petredac
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
Port Arthur International Seafarers' Center
Precious Shipping PCL

Signatories

probookers

Promar

PSA International

Q

Qatar Gas Transport (Nakilat)

Queensway Navigation

Queensway Services

R

Rederiet Stenersen

Reederei Hamburger Lloyd

“Reederei Nord Shipmanagement
on behalf of
REEDEREI NORD Group”

Ridgebury Tankers

RightShip

Rio Tinto

Rocktree Logistics

Roll Group

S

S5 Agency World

Safe Bulkers

Safebridge

Saga Shipholding (Norway)

Saga Welco

Samudera Indonesia

Santoku Senpaku

Scorpio

Seacor Marine

Seamar Management

Seamen’s Church Institute

Seanergy

Seaspan Ship Management

SeaTankers Services (UK)

Senator Crewing (Manila)

SFL Corporation

Shell Shipping & Maritime

Shin Kurushima Dockyard

Shinko

Shinkoh

Shipping Australia

Shunzan Kaiun

Singhai Marine Services (Shanghai)

Sirius Ship Management

Sitara Shipping

Skuld

SMT Shipping Poland

Solstad Offshore

Sonangol Marine Services

Songa Container

Songa Shipmanagement

South Trade Shipmanagement

South32

Southfield Agencies

Star Bulk Carriers Corp.

Stealth Maritime

Stella Maris

Stella Maris - Catholic Diocese of
Beaumont, Texas USA

Stella Maris Scalabrinian Network

Stena Bulk

Stena Shipping and Ferries

Stolt Tankers

Sunrui Marine Environment
Engineering

Sustainable Shipping Initiative

Swire Pacific Offshore

Swire Shipping

Swiss Ocean Yacht Management

Swiss Re Corporate Solutions

Synergy Marine Group

T

Tagashira Kaiun

Taiheiyo Kisen Kaisa

Taihua Ship Management

TAIKO KIKAI INDUSTRIES

Tamar Ship Management

Ta-Na Crew Manning Agency

Tankerska plovdba

Tata NYK Shipping

Taylor Maritime (HK)

TCC Group

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

The Nautical Institute - US Gulf
Branch

The Shipping Corporation of India

The Standard Club

Thomas Miller Holdings

Tidewater

Thome Group

Tohmei Shipping

Tokyo Keiki Inc. Marine Systems
Company

Tomini Shipping

Torm

Tortoise Engineering

Torvald Klaveness

Trafigura

Transocean Shipmanagement
(Phils)

Tsakos Shipping and Trading

Tsuneishi shipbuilding

Tufton

U

U Ming Marine Transport

UK Chamber of Shipping

UK Club

UltrNAV

Uni- Tankers

Unicrew Management

Unifeeder

Unilever

United European Car Carriers

Signatories

Ushio Reinetsu

Utkilen

V

V. Group

Vale

Van Ameyde McAuslands

Vanmar Shipping

Vitol

Vroon

W

Wallem Group

Wallenius Wilhelmsen

Wan Hai Lines

WaterFront Maritime Services DMCC

Wesmans

Western Shipping

Wilhelmsen Ahrenkiel Ship
Management

Wilhelmsen Ship Management

Windward

World Economic Forum

World Fuel Services Corporation

X

X-Press Feeders

Xiamen Hailong Manning Service

XT Management

Y

YANMAR POWER TECHNOLOGY

YDK Technologies

Yokogawa Electric Corporation

Z

Zeaborn Ship Management

ZIM Integrated Shipping Services

Z-Mariner

Zodiac Maritime