



# The Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change

## Overcoming the Seafarer Crisis: Enabling Crew Changes and Repatriation

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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<sup>1</sup>, 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*<sup>2</sup>, 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

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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.

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1 [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_755390/lang--en/index.htm](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*<sup>3</sup> 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<sup>4</sup>, 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.

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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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3Seas Shipping

### A

A. M. Nomikos Transworld Maritime Agencies  
A. P. Møller-Mærsk  
ABC Maritime  
ADNOC Logistics & Services  
Advent International  
Airports Council International (ACI) World  
Asahi Shipping  
Alfa Laval  
Alfa Ship & Crew Management  
Anchor SM (Singapore)  
Anglo-American  
Anglo-Eastern Univan Group  
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  
BEMAC Corporation  
Ben Line Agencies  
Berge Bulk  
Bibby Marine  
BIMCO  
BMT  
Borealis Maritime  
BP

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

Dorian LPG Management  
Doun Kisen  
Dufferin Maritime

### E

Eagle Bulk Shipping  
Eagle Industry  
Eastern Pacific Shipping  
Emirates Ship Investment Company  
ENESEL Group  
Epic Gas  
ESGPlus  
Euronav  
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  
Fleet Management  
FLEX LNG  
Foremost Group  
Foresight Group  
Frontline  
France LNG Shipping  
Fukujin Kisen  
FUKUSHIMA  
FURUNO ELECTRIC

### G

G2 Ocean  
GAC  
GasLog  
Gazocean  
Gearbulk Norway

## Signatories

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Genco Shipping & Trading  
GERMAN MARINE AGENCIES  
Global Maritime Forum  
Gram Car Carriers  
Golden Ocean  
Gorrissen Federspiel  
Grieg Star  
Grieg Maritime Group  
Grimaldi Group  
Gulf Energy Maritime (GEM)  
Gunvor

**H**  
Hachiuma Steamship  
Hadley Shipping Group  
Hafnia Pools  
Halcyon Recruitment  
Hamanaka Chain Manufacturing  
Hapag-Lloyd  
Harren & Partner  
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 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)  
INTERTANKO  
Ionic  
IQrew Management (IQM)  
Irish Institute of Master Mariners  
IS Container  
ISGAM  
ITF Seafarers' Trust

**J**  
J&J Denholm  
Japan Marine United Corporation  
Japan Radio  
JCRS  
Jebesen PTC  
Jebesen 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 Kosan  
Lemissoler  
Lighthouse Shipmanagement Phils  
LLC Novikontas Kaliningrad  
Lloyds' Register  
Load Line Marine  
Logbridge (UK Southhampton)  
Lomar Shipping  
Louis Dreyfus Armateurs  
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  
Marine Benefits  
Maritime Association of Shipowners, Shipmanagers & Agents  
Matrix Ship Management  
McNeal Law Firm  
HURTWORRINGOFFSHORE.com  
Merchant Navy Welfare Board  
Metrostar Management

## Signatories

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MH Bland Group  
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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  
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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  
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  
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Norwegian Shipowners' Association  
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  
Petredec  
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  
probunkers  
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  
Rio Tinto  
Rocktree Logistics

### S

S5 Agency World  
Safe Bulklers  
Saga Shipholding (Norway)  
Saga Welco  
Samudera Indonesia  
Santoku Sempaku  
Scorpio  
Seamen's Church Institute  
Seanergy  
Seaspan Ship Management  
SeaTankers Services (UK)  
Senator Crewing (Manila)  
SFL Corporation  
Shell Shipping & Maritime

## Signatories

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Shin Kurushima Dockyard	Taylor Maritime (HK)	Utkilen
Shinko	TCC Group	<b>V</b>
Shinkoh	Team Tankers International	V. Group
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Shunzan Kaiun	Teekay Group	Van Ameyde McAuslands
Singhai Marine Services (Shanghai)	The China Navigation Company	Vanmar Shipping
Sirius Ship Management	The CSL Group	Vitol
Sitara Shipping	The Dow Chemical Company	<b>W</b>
Skuld	The Mission to Seafarers	Wallem Group
SMT Shipping Poland	The Nautical Institute	Wallenius Wilhelmsen
Solstad Offshore	The Nautical Institute - US Gulf Branch	Wan Hai Lines
Sonangol Marine Services	The Shipping Corporation of India	WaterFront Maritime Services DMCC
South Trade Shipmanagement	The Standard Club	Wesmans
South32	Thomas Miller Holdings	Western Shipping
Southfield Agencies	Tidewater	Wilhelmsen Ahrenkiel Ship Management
Star Bulk Carriers Corp.	Thome Group	Wilhelmsen Ship Management
Stealth Maritime	Tohmei Shipping	Windward
Stella Maris	Tokyo Keiki Inc. Marine Systems Company	World Economic Forum
Stella Maris - Catholic Diocese of Beaumont, Texas USA	Tomini Shipping	World Fuel Services Corporation
Stena Bulk	Torm	<b>X</b>
Stena Shipping and Ferries	Tortoise Engineering	X-Press Feeders
Stolt Tankers	Torvald Klaveness	Xiamen Hailong Manning Service
Sunrui Marine Environment Engineering	Trafigura	XT Management
Sustainable Shipping Initiative	Transocean Shipmanagement (Phils)	<b>Y</b>
Swire Pacific Offshore	Tsuneishi shipbuilding	YANMAR POWER TECHNOLOGY
Swire Shipping	Tufton	YDK Technologies
Swiss Ocean Yacht Management	<b>U</b>	Yokogawa Electric Corporation
Swiss Re Corporate Solutions	U Ming Marine Transport	<b>Z</b>
Synergy Marine Group	UK Chamber of Shipping	Zeaborn Ship Management
<b>T</b>	UK Club	ZIM Integrated Shipping Services
Tagashira Kaiun	Ultranav	Z-Mariner
Taiheiyo Kisen Kaisa	Uni- Tankers	Zodiac Maritime
Taihua Ship Management	Unicrew Management	
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