

Neptune Declaration July Update

Maritime Industry Crew Change Taskforce
July 2021



The Neptune Declaration
on Seafarer Wellbeing
and Crew Change

Key Developments

- The latest Crew-Change Indicator shows a significant increase in the number of seafarers onboard beyond expiry of contract as numbers have risen by over 50% over the past 2 months.
- The number of Covid-19 cases remain high in key seafaring nations, such as India and the Philippines.
- In response, travel and local restrictions have caused disruption to crew movements and complicated crew-changes.
- A decrease in the number of flights and further travel bans has made it harder for seafarers to join vessels or go back home.
- Some seafarers are starting to get vaccinated, especially in the US and in parts of Europe, but access to vaccines still remains a serious issue.
- The use of 'no-crew change' clauses or similar provisions continues to complicate crew changes.
- In early June, the ICS issued [Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers, Third Edition](#) to help shipping companies and seafarers follow health advice provided by UN agencies in response to Covid-19.



Seafarers' Access to Vaccines

- Ensuring seafarers have access to vaccines is a long-term solution to overcome the crew-change crisis. Recent developments include:
 - In the **United States**, vaccines have been offered to international seafarers in more than 70 ports. NAMMA has compiled a list of North American ports offering vaccines for seafarers: [COVID-19 Vaccines for Seafarers \(namma.org\)](https://namma.org).
 - Vaccination campaigns for national and non-national seafarers are also being implemented in **Europe**. The Netherlands, Germany, Italy (for national and potentially for non national) and Belgium are for instance following the USA's example and offering vaccinations to seafarers calling in their ports.
 - **India** has also begun offering vaccinations to seafarers as key workers and there has been work to set up quarantine, testing and vaccination centres in Chennai and Mumbai.



Seafarers' Access to Vaccines

- However, seafarers continue to have **limited access to vaccines** as lack of vaccine supply is also a challenge in many key seafaring nations. In the Philippines, industry partners have set up facilities for quarantine, testing and vaccination but the lack of vaccinations affects this structure.
- Despite being vaccinated, some seafarers still face **travel restrictions**. Some countries require certification of vaccination or electronic proof of it. There are also issues with the types of vaccines administered and their recognition.
- The ICS, ITF and other organisations continue to actively work with international governance bodies to further secure seafarers' access to vaccines. There is for instance conversation with Cyprus of the potential development of a vaccination hub.



The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator

- The latest Indicator was published on 1st July, showing a resurgence in the number of seafarers who have been onboard past the expiry of their contracts.
- Since the Indicator was first published in May, this percentage has risen by 51,7% and is based on data shared by the 10 largest ship managers. This rise from 5,8% to 8,8% reflects the deteriorating crew-change situation.
- The number of seafarers who have been onboard for over 11 months has also rise from 0,4% to 1%, corresponding to a 150% increase.

	Percentage of seafarers onboard beyond the expiry of their contracts		Percentage of seafarers onboard for over 11 months	
	Monthly Percentage	Percentage Point Change from previous month	Monthly Percentage	Percentage Point Change from previous month
May 2021	5.8%	-	0.4%	-
June 2021	7.2%	+1.4	0.4%	0
July 2021	8.8%	+1.6	1.0%	+0.6

The data reflects the situation on the 15th day of the preceding month



The Day of the Seafarer, 25.06.21

- A number of articles and interventions on the day of the seafarer called attention on the need to resolve the crew-change crisis. Here are links to select examples:
- [Time to solve COVID seafarer crisis and protect global trade | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#), article by **Jeremy Nixon**, Co-Chairman - Neptune Declaration, Co-Chairman - World Shipping Council, CEO - Ocean Network Express (ONE) Ltd, published on the World Economic Forum Agenda Blog
- [‘Why the crew change crisis can only be solved collectively’](#), by **Rajesh Unni**, CEO of Synergy
- Different initiatives published by the **IMO for the Day of the Seafarer** can be found here: [Day of the Seafarer 2021 \(imo.org\)](#)
- Examples of media coverage on the Day of the Seafarer:
 - **TradeWinds:** [Esben Poulsson: Dire challenges faced by seafarers greatest in 50 years | TradeWinds \(tradewindsnews.com\)](#)
 - **TradeWinds:** [Maritime must tackle seafarer crew challenges with greater transparency | TradeWinds \(tradewindsnews.com\)](#)
 - **Cyprus Shipping News:** [Shipping community puts pressure on governments to end crew change woes | Cyprus Shipping News](#)
 - **Shipping Australia:** [Shipping community puts pressure on governments to end crew change woes | Shipping Australia](#)
 - **AP News:** [Merchant ship crews still stuck at sea amid pandemic \(apnews.com\)](#)
 - **Lloyd’s Register:** [It’s time for action rather than words. \(lr.org\)](#)



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