



Caring for seafarers
around the world

the SEA

Summer Issue, 2020



Ship managers are facing up to the crewing challenges of Covid-19
Credit: Thorne

Innocent victims of coronavirus crisis

By Felicity Landon

Meet those working around the clock to help seafarers caught out by Covid-19

ON May 1, in response to a call from the International Chamber of Shipping and International Transport Workers' Federation, ships' horns were sounded in ports around the world to recognise more than 1.6m seafarers – the 'unsung heroes of global trade' during the Covid-19 pandemic and, of course, at every other time too.

A nice gesture and one that possibly raised the visibility of seafarers just a bit ... but as David Hammond, chief executive of Human Rights at Sea (HRAS), says: "It isn't any good everyone tooting their horns on ships and making a big show when next week we still have the same ongoing issues of seafarers and their families suffering."

Everyday reality is tough enough for seafarers. Covid-19 has served to add to and magnify the difficulties they face. First and foremost, the near impossibility of organising crew changes in the face of travel and border restrictions and lack of flights has left thousands stuck at sea weeks after their contracts should have ended; equally, thousands more are ashore in dire financial straits because they are unable to join their ships.

The Revd Canon Stephen Miller, the Mission to Seafarers' regional director in East Asia and senior chaplain based in Hong Kong, has received disturbing phone calls from seafarers in the Philippines two months or more overdue to start a new contract. "They can't pay the

bank loan on their house and can't afford to buy food, and are depending on neighbours for rice and sugar," he says.

Meanwhile, seafarers on ships have talked to him about being in a 'floating jail'. "There is no shore leave, no understanding of when they are going to get home, and the companies can't tell them because they don't know either.

"In January, when the infection started coming from Wuhan, the seafarers didn't want to get off the ship in case they caught something from us. Now it is completely the reverse – seafarers are not allowed off their ships because the port is worried we will get something from the seafarers, who have maybe come from Europe or America." >>

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Demand for visits

At the time of writing, the Mission team was allowed to visit ships in Hong Kong but could only deliver shopping as far as the gangway. Their services are much in demand. “We are taking lists in advance from ships heading here,” says Canon Miller. “We started an app showing what we can provide and there’s a box for other requests.”

Those requests have ranged from a basketball to sausages. And notably, requests for data roaming cards has increased tenfold from its usual level.

“One ship wanted 80 data roaming cards – each one lasts a month, there are 20 people on the ship and they were preparing for maybe four months at anchor. For ships that have broadband, that is fantastic – but still probably 60% of the ships we see don’t have that kind of [internet] access for everyone.”

Ship visits by the Mission have almost doubled to 500 a month in Hong Kong. Obviously the visits are shorter because they can’t go onboard, but nevertheless the ships are “queueing up for us” says Canon Miller, including in the anchorage.

HRAS’ David Hammond is concerned that with the Covid-19 focus on ‘stoic messaging’, the plight of seafarers is not understood. “It shouldn’t take a virus to highlight the worth of seafarers and their importance in the supply chain,” he says.

The reality is that seafarers are caught between nations with different perspectives and different advice, he says. “A collective response is what



David Hammond, chief executive of Human Rights at Sea (HRAS)

is needed in order to get us back to whatever the ‘new normal’ is.”

He adds: “There are many good companies doing good things; owners and ship managers are doing their level best to get people home. If the pandemic crisis continues, the concept of designating major hubs with all the necessary infrastructure, medical, quarantine and customs facilities will have to be one of the solutions, especially because when aviation does come back, no one knows which routes will be open.”

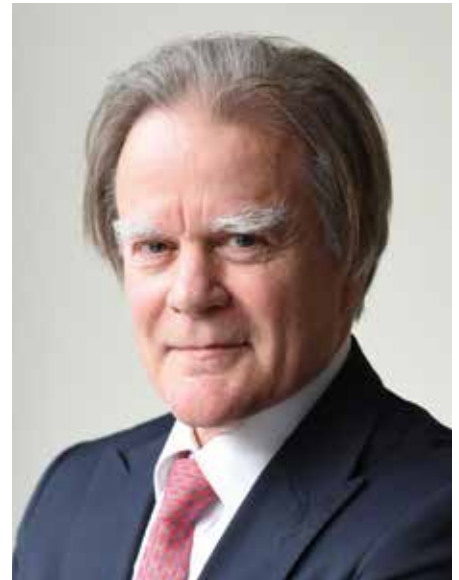
The seafarers speaking to HRAS have highlighted three concerns. First, their families, and not being able to get home to them. Second, the lack of access to constant and consistent advice, including advice on quality PPE. Third, if seafarers are giving their view, they don’t want to be identified for fear of being blacklisted.

“Increasingly we note that seafarers understand the situation is out of their hands, and there is a slow acceptance of the situation. But obviously there is the issue of mental health and agitation and family worries. We also have examples of crew being stuck overseas and having to pay their own hotel bills – and they have nothing. They simply don’t know when they are going to get home, their contracts have not been extended and their new contracts have been held in abeyance.”

He believes uncertainty is the biggest nightmare. “Seafarers just want to be told the truth, whatever it is, and that means managing expectations.”

Food expectations

Food is always important for seafarer morale and now even more so, says Christian Ioannou, managing director of Marine Catering Training Consultancy (MCTC) based in Cyprus. There



Roger Storey, managing director, Sharp Crew Management

have been supply chain challenges and logistics restrictions but MCTC has kept on top of things because it has strong relationships with global suppliers, he says.

“Of course, our clients were worrying [early on] about lockdowns – no one really knew how far the situation would go. So we were stepping up supplies for quite a few months to make sure they had [more] provisions on board. We stocked up some vessels with provisions for four to five months to make sure they didn’t run out.”

Sharp Crew Management had repatriated more than 8,000 cruise industry crew members by early May, via 13 full charter flights and two commercial flights, says Roger Storey, managing director. He expected to increase this to 9,000 by mid-May – although the closure of the main airport in Manila had held up two further charter flights.

However, crew can be home – but not home. “When seafarers do get back to the Philippines they go into quarantine for at least 14 days, and we put them into two hotels in Manila. They have the frustration of not being

“It isn’t any good everyone tooting their horns on ships and making a big show when next week we still have the same ongoing issues of seafarers and their families suffering.”

– David Hammond, chief executive of Human Rights at Sea (HRAS)

The isolation sometimes felt by seafarers is being exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic
Credit: Thome



Importance of transparency

Being open has been the central concern of Danica Crewing Services, whose managing director Henrik Jensen has spoken out on the subject of crew changes, suggesting that it is better to keep crew onboard than risk them catching the virus using public transport networks during changeovers.

Speaking to *The Sea*, he says: “When it [Covid-19] started, we were quite open with our seafarers. We explained the reasons for the problems and that it was going to take some time, and I think that had a good effect. We have also supported captains with information and a video on how to cope if any person on board is getting depressed and we also have helplines that seafarers can contact if they need help.”

While emphasising that he is not downplaying the problem, Mr Jensen says: “Seafarers are somewhat used to being isolated and perhaps have the mechanism to deal with it better than others – but now they also have the uncertainty of when they might go

home. On the other hand, their families are sitting at home in lockdown and their uncertainty is stressful. A lot of it is trying to manage seafarers’ expectations and not saying it will go back to the way it was tomorrow.”

Danica’s recruiting centre teams are calling seafarers’ families every other week to see if they need any assistance, he says. “This takes the pressure off the seafarer, who knows that if there is a problem for the family, they will be taken care of.”

Of a total 1,200 Danica seafarers at sea in early May, 25% were already overdue to go home. “We are looking at all opportunities and, as soon as there is a window, we will try to send them home,” says Mr Jensen. “We did get some passenger ship crew home and also a messman whose brother had passed away but otherwise we have not been able to do it because of logistics and safety issues.”

Many seafarers waiting to start contracts are running out of money, he says. “In that respect, we have seafarers on board saying it is good



Henrik Jensen, managing director, Danica Crewing Services

that they are there because they have an income and can support their family. When they do go home, they don’t know when they will have work again.”

Where Danica controls the budget, it has increased food allowances and stepped up internet access so that seafarers can spend more time online and download movies. [S](#)

able to get out of their room. When they have done 14 days, they are free to go – but there have been no domestic flights and no ferries, so they can’t get home.”

There were hopes (at the time of writing) that the government would organise some charter flights purely to get unquarantined seafarers home, but

there is also the challenge of airports in other provinces being closed.

On the cargo side, meanwhile, “frankly not a lot is happening”, says Mr Storey. “Most cargo owners stated that they couldn’t do crew changes in April and that increased into May. Some countries or ports don’t want to do crew changes and, even if they

could, seafarers are not necessarily able to fly back from anywhere to the Philippines.

“They are stuck on board with the frustration of not doing eight or nine months but ten, 11 or more. Some companies are giving them an additional allowance or other benefits like more access to the internet.” [S](#)



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Complications of crew changes

Facing up to unprecedented challenges in moving seafarers on and off ships

By Felicity Landon

AT the start of May, 12% of the 5,500 seafarers on board ship manager Thome's ships had gone past the end of their contract; Simon Frank, chief human resources officer, predicted that if there was no easing up of restrictions, the figure would rise to 19% by the end of the month. Often insurmountable crew change challenges are entirely to blame.

Thome has identified some small places around the world where it is allowed to send in and take off crew "but there are so many complications to that", says Mr Frank. "It is not only a matter of getting on and off the ship, but the whole transportation back to the home country. A simple crew change is a huge operation and a lot of elements can go wrong."

There have been cases where Thome sent a seafarer to a location but had to return them because the destination went on lockdown during the flight. There have also been cases where seafarers have arrived onboard but Thome was then not able to get the retiring people off the vessel, leading to long periods of doubling up.

"If you suddenly stop crew changes, you have many cases where you are almost forcing people to stay on board beyond their contracts and where you

don't have any opportunity to come to their rescue."

There are also huge concerns about the seafarers onshore. "Very fast we realised that the biggest problem was seafarers at home dependent on an income but not able to join their ship. Many are living from contract to contract, and they have been caught in between. We have taken some steps, issuing some pre-payments and loans to try to assist those most urgently needing to sign on. Essentially that is to keep them motivated and ready and able to sign on as soon as there is the opportunity."

Thome has changed onboard work procedures – encouraging social distancing and organising shifts so that two sets of crew work in parallel and are not in contact. Contingency plans are in place in case of a suspected Covid-19 outbreak onboard, and Mr Frank says: "We still see a lot of commercial pressures. Shipowners are working through difficult times too and companies know that there is a great risk of a vessel being offhire and in isolation for two weeks. Of course, safety comes in front of everything, but there is also a big commercial impact if we suddenly have a situation on a vessel."

Thome is keeping inspections by external parties and its own people at a minimum to avoid people coming onboard. It is minimising the need for spare parts, taking only crucial deliveries. Also, more complicated repairs and operations onboard are being postponed wherever possible. "The longer a seafarer stays on board, the more risk that he becomes complacent. More accidents happen at the end of a seafarer's contract – that is an identified risk. So, for example, we are not doing work where we have to change vital engine parts if that is not absolutely necessary."

Limiting interaction also means limiting medical appointments – Thome's online medical support function has proved vital, although Mr Frank says it is still possible in most ports for a seafarer to go ashore and see the doctor, if urgently needed. Meanwhile, Thome has taken steps such as increasing broadband access and even launching an onboard art competition to keep seafarers entertained.

And then there is the mental stress of it all. "We have seen some cases where there is real mental fatigue. We have a mental health hotline our seafarers can call, with a psychologist on the line to give advice. There is a clear sign that more and more people are having difficulties coping with these longer periods onboard. However, from a professional perspective I am extremely impressed by how our seafarers are coping with the situation and how calm they actually are. That, we are extremely grateful for." 📞



Credit: Thome

Some crew have been unable to leave their ship at the end of their employment contract

Ben Strong presents Captain Audunn Kristinsson, deputy chief of operations for the Icelandic Coast Guard, with an Amver Award for Icelandic research vessel *Arni Fridriksson*
Credit: Amver, USCG.



By Ben Strong

Being thankful for seafarers

Celebrating the rescue efforts of those at sea in the pre and post Covid-19 world

AFAMILIAR question in our home is: “Hey Dad, when is the package going to get here?” As more and more of us were asked to stay home during lockdown we became increasingly dependent on shipping. The unsung heroes of this, of course, are you the seafarers. As the manager of the United States Coast Guard’s Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel System, more commonly known as Amver, I am reminded of the huge contribution seafarers make to our everyday lives.

For those of you asking, “What’s the Amver program?”, it is a global, voluntary search and rescue scheme, founded by the US Coast Guard in 1958, that uses commercial ships to perform search and rescue on the world’s oceans. On average, an Amver participating ship saves one life per day.

In addition to recruiting ships into the Amver programme, it is my responsibility to recognise the efforts of seafarers who participate in this global safety network. The US Coast Guard Amver Awards programme celebrates participation in our global safety system. A ship or crew need not rescue anyone, just be available for rescue. As English poet John Milton said, “they also serve who only stand and wait”.

There are, of course, costs to these services. Any time a commercial ship changes course or diverts to search for

an emergency beacon, a migrant at sea, a yachtsman, or another commercial ship in distress, the ship loses money and risks your lives. There are further costs to these actions: lost port time; lost shore leave; and lost productivity. In fact, according to a paper by the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration at the George Washington University, the cost to shipping to provide search and rescue services is approximately \$12,500 per hour. The fact that in spite of these costs you stand willing to undertake rescue operations is all the more inspiring.

At the desk

The Amver office is not that much different to an office in a shipping company. It is rooted in tradition, perhaps a bit dated, and sometimes resistant to change and technology. The recent pandemic, however, has forced us to deliberate on how we can continue to recognise the good works of seafarers. Pre-Covid-19, my colleague and I used to print, collate, co-ordinate, stuff, and hand label envelopes filled with letters, certificates and award memorabilia. That changed in an instant. Now we prepare the certificates electronically and email them to your fleet manager who can either print them and mail

them to the ship or email them directly to the ship for printing and display.

What hasn’t changed is the importance of the Amver awards. Indeed, they have only increased in importance during this pandemic because at their heart they celebrate seafarers, an accolade needed now more than ever.

You matter to us. You matter to the world. Nothing brings me more joy than to board a ship, meet the crew and thank them for being available to help. Your willingness to risk life and profit makes a huge impact on the lives of those in peril.

I look forward to the day I can see you face to face again, shake your hand and offer a small token of my thanks and the thanks of the United States Coast Guard for helping us to ensure that people in distress at sea have someone who is listening, someone who cares, and someone who will save them. Until then, stay healthy and continue to show the world the value of the seafarer. You and your families should be proud that you continue to bring us the goods we need to survive and to fight this pandemic. Until we can meet again, know that I am grateful for all you do! 🙏

Based in New York, Ben Strong is the civilian director of Amver Maritime Relations for the US Coast Guard.

A time of strange voyages

Past crises have demonstrated the flexibility of shipping and Covid-19 is proving no different

IN all the economic and transport turmoil caused by Covid-19 and violent movements in the oil price, there are some very strange voyages taking place. There are giant cruise ships, emptied of their guests, sailing halfway around the world to get their hotel crews home. There are container ships, with a barely paying payload, being directed to sail around the Cape between the Far East and North Europe, to save the canal dues that might make a difference between loss and profit on the voyage. Fuel prices are low and slow steaming is encouraged. And there are fully laden very large crude carriers wandering almost aimlessly around the oceans at very slow revolutions, as their owners search the world's ports for an empty tank, into which they can pump their cargo.

For those brought up on the discipline of 'fast passages' and always taking the most direct route, it goes against the grain to be behaving in such a way, taking 'the long way home' and forgetting those important words 'utmost despatch', which used to appear in all sailing directions. But these are uncertain times, and even if they will not be remembered fondly, they will be difficult to forget.

Ocean passages contain many

surprises. Years ago, as navigator of a ship in the Queensland port of Brisbane, the master, a chap with an inquiring mind, asked me to compare the various ways in which we could return home to our home port of London. It took a bit of time, in the days before navigational computers, but I plotted a route across the Pacific via Panama, both north about and south about Australia through Torres and Bass Straits respectively, thence with the option of routes through the Suez Canal and around the Cape of Good Hope. For fun I threw in a passage through the Southern Ocean around Cape Horn. If I was doing the same today, I might have added a Polar route north of Russia.

Long and short of it

The surprise was that in all of these different options, there were only a couple of days difference between the longest and shortest route, before you took into account the sort of weather that you might have encountered. It surprised both of us and although I rather liked the idea of a trip through the Torres Strait, or even being able to boast of having rounded Cape Horn, we opted for our normal homewards route through the Bass Strait and Suez.

Since then, voyage plans have had to be abruptly changed on a number of occasions. The closure of the Suez Canal was one of these strange interruptions in the 1970s. While in the 1980s, container ships bound for Europe from New Zealand would routinely head down into the storms of the Southern Ocean and the Horn, to save the costs of a Panama Canal transit at a time when fuel costs were sky-high and freight rates rock bottom. I remember meeting an old shipmate after one of these voyages and noting that he didn't have his usual bronzed countenance after a blue-water voyage across the sunny Pacific, and hearing his tale of woe about rolling like a pig in the icy southern latitudes. We have had several periods when slow steaming has made short voyages interminably long, whether it was to save money, or the planet.

If you look at this positively, if nothing else, it demonstrates the flexibility of shipping compared with other modes of transport, as it does offer its users choices not available elsewhere. We might reflect on this when global trade and transport have settled down and shipping can once again operate optimally. ☺

See Michael Grey's cartoon on pg 14.



Some cruise ships, emptied of their guests have sailed halfway around the world to get their hotel crews home



By Charles Boyle

Stop looking for seafarer scapegoats

What does the threat of criminalisation really mean to seafarers?

THE Covid-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented challenges for the maritime sector with seafarers facing prolonged periods of time onboard, increasingly stressful working conditions, limited availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and in some cases, a total absence of shore leave.

The case of cruise ship the *Ruby Princess*, which docked in Sydney Harbour and saw around 2,700 passengers disembark without being tested for Covid-19, highlighted the problem of potential criminalisation, where action has been taken by Nautilus International to protect the interests of its members.

In the case of the *Ruby Princess*, the vessel was quarantined in New South Wales (NSW) by the Australian Government and placed under the control of a military health contractor, assisted by the NSW police and Australian army, trying to establish who was responsible for allowing the passengers to disembark and potentially spread the virus throughout Australia.

A crew of over 1,000 seafarers including some members of Nautilus International were kept onboard where up to 800 of these crew members were attempting to self-isolate, while a further 200 experienced Covid-19 symptoms. Together with the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), Nautilus International called for its members and other seafarers to be allowed to disembark the vessel and where necessary receive medical treatment and suitable accommodation.

The New South Wales State Government ordered a criminal inquiry into who was responsible for allowing these passengers to leave the ship without being tested, to potentially spread the virus wider throughout the country. At the time, I wrote to the lead investigator of the NSW Police to insist the investigation



Charles Boyle, director of legal services for Nautilus International

adhered to the joint International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Labour Organization (ILO) Guidelines on Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident (2006), maintaining the dignity, legal safeguards and fair treatment of all seafarers onboard *Ruby Princess*.

Who is to blame?

The risk of criminalisation continues to be a challenging issue within the maritime industry with 90% of seafarers concerned about the risk while a recent survey of Nautilus's 20,000 members revealed that two thirds of maritime professionals feel the risk of criminalisation impacts their desire to stay within the shipping sector. Nautilus is positioned at the forefront of the drive to ensure seafarers are not made scapegoats for maritime incidents, as they are often seen as an easy target for law enforcement authorities, and they are particularly vulnerable in foreign ports and unfamiliar jurisdictions. In recent years, the Union has observed an increase in seafarers being criminalised, and the opportunities that authorities

find for blame are growing with the ever-increasing legislation with which seafarers must comply.

Accidents happen in every industry, but no other industry appears to treat their workers like criminals when they do, with the implication often being that seafarers deliberately set out to cause a collision, injury, or spillage. Despite the global reliance on the maritime industry, with 90% of goods moving by sea, when an incident does occur there can be great public outcry and a demand for someone to be held accountable – with shipmasters and senior officers usually in the firing line.

When seafarers find themselves in particularly difficult circumstances, this can be detrimental to their mental health and may lead to nightmares, difficulty sleeping or even post-traumatic stress. While facing criminal charges is likely to place a lot of stress on an individual mentally, it will also impact family relationships and finances if the individual is unable to work.

Tackling criminalisation

Maritime unions around the world are committed to combatting the threat of criminalisation and are campaigning to ensure maritime professionals have access to unbiased and unwavering support if they find themselves at risk. There remains a shortage of information available for seafarers, especially about local laws and different legislation in foreign jurisdictions.

The Nautilus Federation is a group of likeminded trade unions in the shipping industry, who have come together to improve and expand the services they can offer to their members. The Federation acts as a global support network for their members meaning help is available to them wherever they are in the world.

To combat the criminalisation of seafarers, the Nautilus Federation launched the Joint Assistance and

Support Network (JASON), supported by Nautilus 24/7, which is a round-the-clock multilingual helpline run by the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN). Through JASON, the Nautilus Federation facilitates mutual assistance and support for seafarers who are members of a Federation Union. A major objective is to ensure that the IMO/ILO Fair Treatment Guidelines are fully observed in a case where a member is to be interviewed by a law enforcement authority.

Additionally, in the coming months Nautilus International will be launching a new mobile app, giving members instant access to advice following an incident at sea and a means to contact the Union directly by completing an incident report.

The maritime sector facilitates 95% of UK trade and the work of seafarers is critical to keeping goods moving. It is vital there is a change in the way seafarers are treated when things go wrong. Instead of being constantly blamed, seafarers need to be treated fairly and appreciated for the essential role they play in our economy. This



Seafarers should not live in constant fear of wrongful arrest

echoes the preamble to the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, that states, given the global nature of the shipping industry, seafarers need 'special protection'. ☹

Charles Boyle is director of legal services for Nautilus International.

For more information on the threat of criminalisation, or to find out more about the support available to seafarers, visit: <https://www.nautilusint.org/en/>.

Supporting seafarer physical wellbeing

THE international shipping industry is responsible for the carriage of around 90% of world trade. This inevitably positions seafarers as essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Shouldering the responsibility of supplying the world with essentials such as food, medical supplies and goods, seafarers must take better care of themselves now more than ever, in body and in mind.

This begins with maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle. Set up a healthy eating plan and enjoy a balanced diet. Consume more fruits and vegetables, reduce intake of foods high in sodium and sugar. Match your calorie intake to your energy output and maintain an ideal body mass index of 18.5-24.9.

If you eat more, remember to exercise more. Moderation is key! Set yourself a regular and manageable exercise routine that you can maintain. There are many simple and effective workouts that you can do in your cabin without specialised gym equipment such as push ups and sit ups.

Healthy diet onboard
Watch your portion size

Healthy diet onboard
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For more tips, information and advice follow us on Facebook: [StandardClubPandI](#).





A day of praise for seafarers

Celebrating Sea Sunday is all the more important in these challenging times

By Verity Relph

FOR 160 years, churches have united every July to celebrate Sea Sunday. It is an opportunity for people around the world to remember seafarers and raise money to support the vital work of maritime charities such as The Mission to Seafarers.

The Revd Canon Andrew Wright, secretary general of the Mission, reflects on the importance of the day: “It provides a focal point for a celebration of this amazing group of men and women, on whom we are all so dependent but who are also often invisible. Not for nothing do some talk of ‘sea blindness’. It is an opportunity to remember the very particular challenges faced by those who work at sea and to applaud dedicated service which so many take for granted.”

The global Covid-19 pandemic has made more apparent than ever the vital role that seafarers play in our lives. As we look at the empty supermarket shelves, we are compelled in a way we have not been before to reflect on how these goods make their way to our homes. As Canon Wright comments: “Perhaps the Covid-19 crisis, which has also brought many additional difficulties for seafarers, will also highlight the essential nature of their work, sustaining the supply lines, including of food and medical equipment, without which our lives would be swiftly impoverished.”

Sea Sunday is officially held on the

second Sunday in July, but in reality it is a moveable feast, as churches find a day which best suits them. Neither are the celebrations restricted to church groups – schools, community groups, families or groups of friends can all get involved. It is a chance for people to come together to celebrate, pray and give, and the giving need not be financial. Children can write messages to send to seafarers, while some use it as a focus for knitting woolly hats.

Sea Sunday increases appreciation, lets people know the stories and keeps it all human

Churches can order a pack with suggested readings, hymns, and fundraising materials, and representatives from the Mission to Seafarers are often invited to speak at services. Last year, Canon Wright travelled almost 800 miles in his car over the course of two Sundays to deliver Sea Sunday sermons. His journey took him to Newcastle, to a packed chapel near the Mission’s Centre in South Shields, and the following Sunday to Hertfordshire, to an outdoor service overlooking the water in Beaulieu, in the New Forest, which was accompanied by a brass band.

Bespoke celebrations

The usual focus is a church service, but there is no set way to observe Sea Sunday and many communities have their own unique celebrations. In Falmouth, the Royal Naval Association organises an annual parade, where young cadets, veterans and civic dignitaries march through the town centre supported by the Royal Marine Band. In Whitstable on the Kent coast, Sea Sunday has for many years been celebrated alongside the Whitstable Oyster Festival. The ecumenical service is followed by a procession down to the harbour, led by the local sea cadets’, TS Vigilant, band. The Revd Rachel Webbley, Team Rector of Whitstable Team Ministry, views Sea Sunday as a significant date for the local community: “We are a coastal town that sees tankers going up and down the coast to Tilbury. It is really important that people know where their goods are coming from. Sea Sunday increases appreciation, lets people know the stories and keeps it all human.”

The day has an increasingly global dimension with more and more churches around the world taking part. For some, it is a distinguished occasion. In Sri Lanka, at St Peter’s Church Fort, one of the oldest churches in Colombo, more than 300 people gather for the Sea Sunday Thanksgiving Service. It is a significant event in the church calendar, attended by diplomats, the Navy, Air Force and Police, and accompanied by the Sri Lankan Navy Band and bag pipers.

Meanwhile in Tuticorin, the Sea Sunday service only marks the beginning of a day packed full



Last year's Sea Sunday celebrations in Tuticorin and Colombo

of activities. Last year saw 150 members of the seafaring and fishing communities from the coastal villages in and around Tuticorin loaded into vans and transported down to the harbour to enjoy games on the seashore. Competitions for all ages were held, such as scooping sea water into glass bottles and a lemon and spoon race for children along the beach. After Holy Eucharist on the seashore, it was then back to the centre for a special fellowship dinner.

The Revd Isaac Franklin, the Mission's Port Chaplain in Tuticorin, is keen that people reflect on the human side of shipping and the sacrifices that seafarers make: "While shipping is a vast business the human elements are often neglected. The seafarers are the human elements who endure hardships and suffer loneliness on board due to separation from their loved ones. With this awareness, people are motivated to pray for the seafarers and their family members."

For many who attended the celebrations in Tuticorin, the day had an especially personal significance. As Revd Franklin observed: "The gathering of the seafarers' families during the special programs arranged for the Sea Sunday gives them an opportunity to learn from one another the different problems they face in their lives and how they can be tackled."

Different perspective

This year, of course, presents significant obstacles to the usual celebrations and some creative thinking has been required. With the world in lockdown, there are plans in place for a virtual service

in place of the Mission's traditional Annual Service for Sea Sunday at St Michael Paternoster Royal in London. Seafarers, families and churches are being encouraged to send their own contributions to the video, which will be streamed via YouTube. Whether it be a reading, a dance number, or a sung duet, this is a chance for people all over the world to get involved. The video will be made live on Sunday 12 July and churches can use it as part of their own online service for Sea Sunday.

Sea Sunday is of course not the only date in the calendar aimed at raising awareness of seafarers. Every year the International Maritime Organization (IMO) celebrates World Maritime Day, which centres on the issues of shipping safety, maritime security and the marine environment. The IMO is also responsible for the Day of the Seafarer, an official United Nations international observance day that takes place on June 25 every year. This year it will focus on seafarers in the front line of the Covid-19 crisis, those who are stranded on board ships, waiting for relief crews or unable to be repatriated home due to travel restrictions.

Indeed, the global pandemic has brought many additional difficulties to the already demanding role of the seafarer. With shore leave being denied and contract extensions rife, many are reporting feeling increasingly stressed, anxious and exhausted. It is surely more important than ever that we take the time to remember the thousands of men and women who are working so hard to keep the world moving in this time of crisis, and vital that we raise funds so we can continue to provide support to

TAKE PART!

To find out how to get involved in this year's virtual Sea Sunday, please contact John Dowling:
john.dowling@missiontoseafarers.org

them when it is most needed.

With most seafarer centres now closed and access to ships restricted in many nations, the Mission faces serious challenges to how it cares for seafarers. 'Socially distant' ship visits at the top of gangways, providing hot spot access to Wi-Fi, and the new 24-hour 'Chat to a Chaplain' online chaplaincy function (*in more detail on Page 15*) are just some of the ways in which the Mission is responding.

Despite the challenges to this year's Sea Sunday, it also presents a unique opportunity to give the day a global dimension never before seen. It is hoped that the virtual celebrations will help unite people around the world in remembering and thanking the seafarers we so desperately depend on. ☺

Verity Relph is the project support officer at The Mission to Seafarers.

Taking the guesswork out of drift

Oceanographer Art Allen has spent his life's work improving the capabilities of offshore search and rescue teams

By Carly Fields

AS an oceanographer employed at the US Coast Guard, one would be forgiven for thinking that Arthur (Art) Allen's work has little bearing on the international seafaring community. But the understated work that Art has pioneered throughout his career has positioned him as one of only five experts in the world on 'drift characteristics'.

The outputs of Art's lifelong research and data analysis on drift of people and things have had a fundamental impact on improving the effectiveness of at-sea search and rescue. In short, Art's work has saved seafarers lives by the hundreds, if not the thousands.

That Art was destined to work in a water-related field was inevitable. He grew up beside a large lake, on which he frequently enjoyed sailing. So, when he was considering his undergraduate degree choice, a Bachelor of Science in Aquatic Science and Engineering seemed a good fit. "Most scientists,"

he tells *The Sea*, "find something aesthetically pleasing about their subject. For me, it was water."

He then successfully completed his Masters in Physical Oceanography, moving straight into a two-year posting with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as an oceanographer. Then, in 1984, he joined the US Coast Guard (USCG) to take up the same role.

Drift analysis

During his time at the USCG, Art pioneered a new way of thinking about drift in international search and rescue (SAR) operations. As part of a small team, Art developed and employed innovative techniques to determine the drift of common SAR objects and developed a taxonomy for them.

Over his career he has researched how people, kayaks, motorboats,

trawlers and a huge array of other objects drift in vast coastal waters, under a multitude of conditions. That work paved the way for improved search and rescue policies and ultimately led to the development of the Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System (SAROPS), a comprehensive SAR planning system used by the USCG in the planning and execution of almost all SAR cases in and around the US and the Caribbean.

The SAROPS tool incorporated many more parameters into the SAR mix to better determine search areas for those in distress or lost at sea.

However, while now universally lauded, getting to

the point of releasing SAROPS was no small feat. First, the journey to go-live of the first version of SAROPS in 2007 began in the late 1990s with the writing of algorithms and testing prototypes. Second, there was some initial pushback to acceptance of the new system. Art explains that while there were strong advocates for a replacement for the old USCG SAR systems, there was a reluctance to 'throw away' a system that was already running. "There was a view that what the USCG had was adequate." However, he adds: "We were able to demonstrate how much more effective SAR could be." The SAROPS system proved its worth in just a matter of days.

The progression is plain to see: in 1984, the USCG had seven search objects defined; now it can search on over 100 search objects thanks to Art's profiling and research. Much of this work has been simplified for International Maritime Organization manuals.

Development of SAROPS

Characteristically humble, Art is keen to include his co-collaborators in discussions about SAROPS. "While I certainly contributed to the SAROPS effort it wouldn't have happened without others. It may be my algorithms, a lot of my ideas and the things I prototyped and demonstrated, but it's not my code that is in the field."

The current version is credited with saving about a thousand lives a year. Statistics suggest that the USCG plucks 10 people a day out of the ocean, on average. A further three sadly die before they're found. Taking into consideration that the US SAR area is three times bigger than the continental US, the SAROPS tool has proved invaluable. The USCG's 49 operation centres cover most of the North Pacific – an area that Art describes as "the tyranny of distance" – and the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes and a large portion of the North Atlantic.

The understated beauty of Art's work is his unrivalled knowledge of the parameters that relate to drift. In an example of his approach, he was asked what could be done to improve SAR for users of stand-up paddleboards. His immediate approach was to buy two SUPs, equip them with sensors and a current meter and then simulate drift patterns.



Art receiving an IMRF award



Art outfitted a sailboat for drift experiments with a wind-monitoring system, a current meter to measure the sailboat's drift, and beacons and straps to help recover the boat Credit: Øyvind Breivik, Norwegian Meteorological Institute

He notes that vast improvements in oceanographic technology have helped him in his search for ever-greater SAR efficiencies. Instruments are smaller and lighter and computer processing is much faster today than when he started in 1984.

Then there's the improvement in data availability. "On the other side of that is the real continual improvement in operational numerical models of winds and currents available to us around the globe," he says. "That's the other part of SAROPS in that we have an equally large programme to go out and gather all the operational models from around the world and make those available to search and rescue." Over 50 numerical models and data sources for surface currents and another 30 meteorological measurements are fed, sometimes daily, sometimes hourly, into SAROPS.

Art has also spent time analysing survival suits and survivability. He explains: "Here, I looked at the model of prediction of how long people can survive in the ocean, working with human physiologists and a small community of experts on the physiology of hypothermia."

New guard

Art officially retired from the USCG last year and his replacement has been hired, but he hasn't cut his ties

completely: he'll be returning for a six-month stint to mentor his replacement and share his technical knowledge. "I'm ready now to pass things on," he says. "But I'll stay the hell off the ocean!" That said, he will be enjoying one of his lifelong passions, canoeing, in retirement and if he's not on the lake Art can be found biking or hiking.

He's not worried about the capabilities of the team he leaves behind and describes the "pyramid of knowledge" that continues to work on SAROPS and SAR in the USCG.

At the bottom of the knowledge pyramid there is the standard information that can be found in the SAR tools and manuals. "That covers the vast majority of the cases that the 1,000 SAR controllers handle."

Then in the middle of the pyramid there are the USCG's sector controllers within each district who each have 10-plus years of data to draw on. At the top of the knowledge pyramid sits Art. "If there is an unusual problem, which is outside the scope of normal operations, then it comes to me. If it gets to me then I know that it is a problem that no-one else knows."

Asked by *The Sea* whether he would choose the same career path if he had his time again, Art replies with an emphatic "absolutely". "I was very fortunate to match my abilities to this particular job," he says. "I was given 100% freedom. I was told, 'we're not sure what you are doing, but keep on doing it!'" Those at sea have a debt of gratitude that Art was given that vote of confidence so many years ago as the results of his unremitting focus on drift are now plain to see. [S](#)



The USCG rescues 10 people a day on average Credit: US Coast Guard

theSea Leisure Page

There are many health benefits to spending down-time solving puzzles. Lower stress levels, better memory, improved mood, improved problem solving abilities, and better work performance are just some of them.

Sudoku

The aim of Sudoku is to fill in the empty cells so that each column, row and 3x3 region contain the numbers 1 to 9 exactly once. Find the answers to both puzzles in the next issue.

EASY LEVEL

		3				5		
8						1	7	
7	5	1		2				9
			3			8		4
	4	9		1		2	5	
3		5			9			
9				6		4	3	7
	6	4						8
		7				6		

TRICKY LEVEL

			7			1	2	9
			3	6	9			
5						2		
3	9					5	7	
7								2
	5	4				1		9
			8					4
					2	9	3	
	8	2	5			9		

Credit: www.sudokuoftheday.com

EASY LEVEL

solution (Spring 2020)

4	5	1	7	2	9	8	6	3
6	9	2	8	3	5	1	4	7
3	8	7	1	6	4	9	5	2
7	2	3	4	1	6	5	8	9
5	4	8	9	7	3	2	1	6
1	6	9	2	5	8	7	3	4
2	7	6	3	8	1	4	9	5
8	3	4	5	9	7	6	2	1
9	1	5	6	4	2	3	7	8

TRICKY LEVEL

solution (Spring 2020)

1	4	7	2	9	8	3	6	5
6	3	5	1	4	7	2	9	8
2	8	9	5	3	6	4	7	1
4	5	2	8	1	9	7	3	6
8	1	6	3	7	4	9	5	2
7	9	3	6	5	2	8	1	4
5	2	4	7	6	3	1	8	9
3	6	8	9	2	1	5	4	7
9	7	1	4	8	5	6	2	3

Jumble

Can you correctly unscramble these anagrams to form four words? If so, send your answers by email to thesea@missiontoseafarers.org by August 30, 2020. All correct answers will be entered into a draw for a chance to win a Mission to Seafarers' Goodie Bag, containing a pen set, mug and handmade woolly hat. Please include your answers, name, the vessel you are working on, your nationality and finish this sentence: "I like The Mission to Seafarers because..."

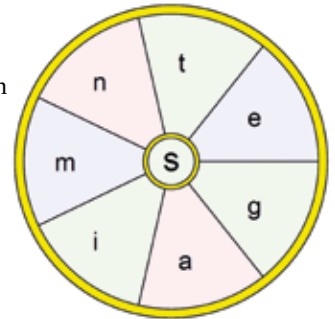
- 1) HURLSPU 2) BERSUNK 3) ARETHEW 4) ANGILIS

Spring issue solutions:

- 1) Bulbous 2) Winch 3) Freeboard 4) Generator

Word wheel

This word wheel is made from a nine letter word. Try and find that word, then make as many words of any length as you can from these letters. You can only use each letter once, and each word must include the letter T.



Answer for Spring issue: 65 possible words, nine-letter word was ANTARCTIC

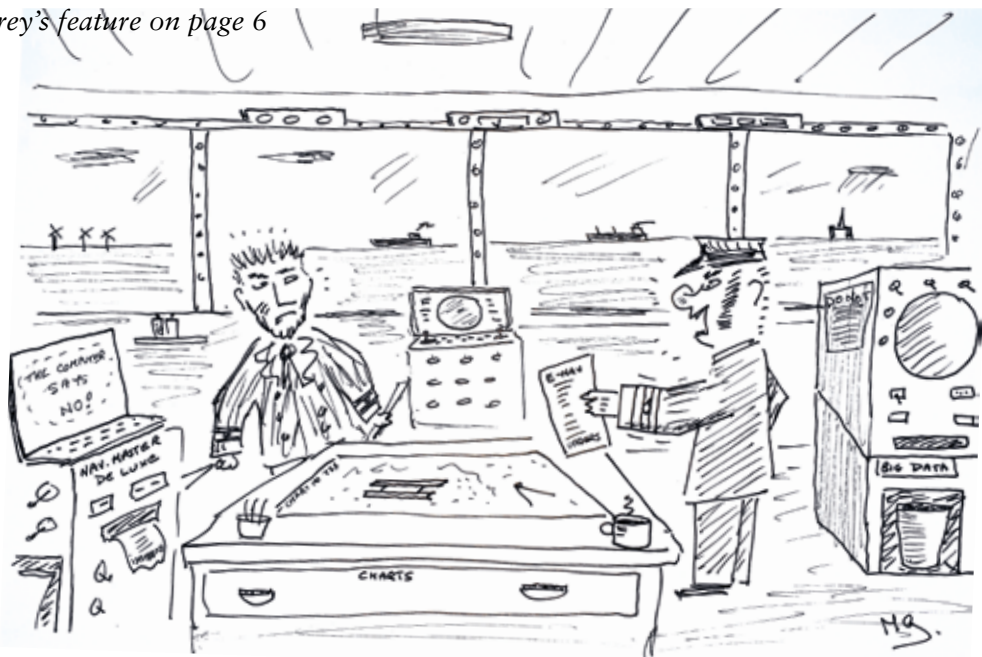
Flag code

Can you tell us what word these flags are communicating? Answer in the next issue.

Answer for Spring issue: Lubricant



See Michael Grey's feature on page 6



"It's our new orders – we are sailing from Rotterdam to New York, via Cape Horn!"

Help for seafarers around the world

The Mission has launched a digital chaplaincy service in response to the need for seafarers to be provided with remote support.

Working closely in partnership with the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA), the Mission has launched an online 'Chat to a Chaplain' messenger service which provides remote support both for seafarers and their families wishing to speak to a chaplain during these unprecedented times.

The project, which has been funded in part by Seafarers UK, is led by the Mission and offers online support from a global network of port chaplains who are currently unable to provide face-to-face chaplaincy services due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has seen a significant number of seafarers' welfare facilities unable to function.

The new platform provides the holistic and spiritual support services that port chaplaincy teams are known for. The portals are available via the Mission's and ICMA's Facebook pages, and on www.missiontoseafarers.org and www.icma.as. They are staffed around the clock by chaplains across the world who provide free, confidential support to seafarers and their families. The service will offer seafarers the chance to access:

- One-to-one counselling.
- Advice and signposting on issues to do with Covid-19, concerns over the extension of contracts and repatriation.
- Family support and referral to the MtS Family Network in the Philippines.
- Spiritual support.
- Referral to a chaplain in the local area who may be able to arrange a gangway visit or other interaction via a local agent.

To access the new Chat to a Chaplain service, simply go to the MtS website and click on the chat facility located in the bottom right corner of the screen: www.missiontoseafarers.org.



CREW HELP CONTACTS

SeafarerHelp

Free, confidential, multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, provided by ISWAN.

Direct dial: +44 20 7323 2737

Email: help@seafarerhelp.org

Contact a Chaplain

Should you want to contact a chaplain before your arrival in port, you can complete the Contact a Chaplain form on our website: www.missiontoseafarers.org/contact-a-chaplain.

CrewHelp

The Mission to Seafarers can provide help and support if you have a welfare or justice issue.

Please get in touch with us at crewhelp@mtsmail.org

Get in touch!

Have you got news or views that you'd like to share with The Sea? Please get in touch with the Editor, Carly Fields at thesea@missiontoseafarers.org.

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App puts MtS details in easy reach

The Mission to Seafarers Hong Kong has launched an app which contains the details of all the MtS centres and chaplains around the world.

The Mariners Seafarers App gives access to a full range of help, advice and support. Information available on the app includes full details of the Mission's services as well as news and advice for life at sea and useful contacts for maritime welfare centres around the world.

At a local level, the Mariners team of chaplains, volunteers and staff can provide seafarers with local information and advice around Hong Kong port, including help with sim-cards and Wi-Fi access, religious services on board ships, shuttle services in Hong Kong container port and confidential advice and counselling.

The app can be downloaded at the Google Play Store.



Keeping pace with changing learning profiles

Seafarers today need a blend of education tools to ensure continuous and appropriate development

HAVING been a seafarer and a ship manager for over 25 years, I believe that learning and skills development at sea and ashore are due for an overhaul. This belief led me to take the helm at the recently formed Ocean Technologies Group (OTG), which includes the market defining maritime learning businesses MTS, Seagull and Videotel.

Such an overhaul requires ubiquitous platforms, that can create a globally consistent and transportable learning standard. Throughout their career, seafarers may work in a variety of operating environments ranging from best-in-class operators and some that are purely focused on compliance.

The overhaul also needs strong collaboration between learning solutions providers such as OTG and onshore training providers, including the training establishments of ship owners and managers. This is vital to create seamless digital bridges between the brick and click environments in maritime learning. With only circa 10% of today's training focus on e-learning, we expect a significant change in the blend from onshore to online training, backed by investment in more capable tools for desktops, tablets and mobile phones.

OTG works with around million active users and runs over 750,000 training sessions per month so the company is able to observe indicators that link learning activity to the operational environment. Since the onset of Covid-19 earlier this year, online training activity has risen by 175% on our online platform. I

expect this trend to intensify further and we will drive for closer collaboration between ship owners, managers, training businesses, organisations like the IMO, flag and port State administrations, P&I clubs, underwriters, charterers and other stakeholders.

In designing the blend of learning tools for competence development throughout the career of seafarers, we factor in preferences of those serving today as well as future candidates. All learners are individuals and respond to different styles, mediums and pace of learning.

Some thrive in group learning discussions and videographic material is highly effective in stimulating communal learning. Some learners have low levels of educational attainment or their language skills are not advanced enough, thereby benefitting from lots of visual learning support. Others like to study alone at their own pace and respond better to gamified play-through scenarios and role-playing situations. We also see many learners seeking more advanced and challenging content to augment their learning over time.

Learning progression

Much emphasis in early development of maritime training had been on the delivery and imparting of knowledge. We are now also placing greater emphasis on giving the learner an immediate context to apply that knowledge. In practical terms, this means imparting a number of play-through scenarios, decision trees



Manish Singh, Ocean Technologies Group

and situational simulation, and moving into virtual reality (VR) and the opportunity it affords for the learner to demonstrate skills and experience environments that would otherwise be difficult to simulate in the safety of a training session.

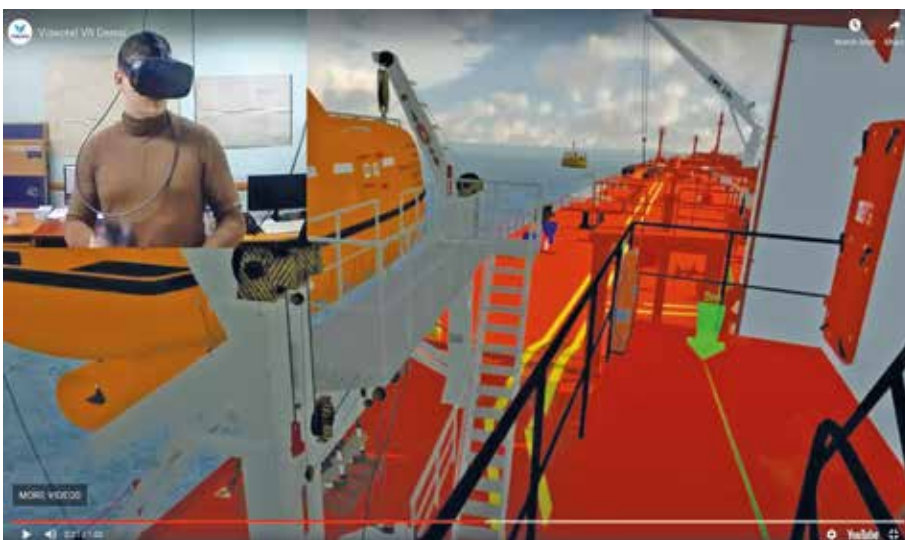
In the future, blended learning will see greater use of role-playing walk-through learning experiences, especially for the youngster coming to sea with greater expectations for engaging and immersive learning tools.

However, we also observe that crew profiles are getting older in certain positions, in management ranks in particular, as expected. In our use of VR or mobile role playing game pilots, we have not seen any cognitive disadvantage across age groups, but we do find that the younger users have a much stronger preference for gaming based content and it's important that we keep everyone with us on the journey, so sometimes traditional media is still the best option.

We also know that our customers are looking for joined up solutions and are also blending maritime learning by interfacing our learning management platforms with ship management systems, e-navigation systems and other areas that go to the heart of decision making by those on-board and shore-based managers. We must all get used to a world in which lifelong learning is the norm and our employees are able to access the resources they need to re-tool and upskill at the point of need.

Ensuring that we can meet our organisational learning needs in the right blend of formats for the individuals in our team will be crucial in helping us to meet the challenges of 21st century shipping and maximise the opportunities that come our way. ☺

Manish Singh is group chief executive officer at Ocean Technologies Group, a global learning and operational technology company. Find out more at <https://oceantechnologiesgroup.com/>.



Ocean Technologies Group's Videotel uses virtual reality as part of its blended learning offering for seafarers
Credit: Videotel

Worried about work and home

Crews voice Covid-19-related concerns in the Seafarers Happiness Index

THE Seafarers Happiness Index (SHI) gauges the big issues affecting those at sea, and there can be few things in living memory which has affected shipping, and thus crews, like Covid-19. This is something that is naturally reflected in the latest set of responses from seafarers.

The data for the latest report has been gathered in the first quarter of 2020, and so captures a slow dawning realisation that things are changing for the worse and shifting fast. As far as the numbers go, the latest average seafarers' happiness score stands at 6.30, which is down from the fourth quarter of 2019 (6.39), which was also down from third quarter 2019 (6.59). There is definite downward momentum, which is a concern although perhaps not surprising.

Starting with the data from January 2020, one can almost sense a growing feeling of confusion, and of responses changing as the landscape has shifted around them. There is perhaps no set of workers more exposed to a pandemic than seafarers. Whether from a health perspective or through the terrible unfolding truth that nations are very quick to shut the door on them, even if they still want the cargo, goods and fuel.

The reality of the virus has meant that nations have been closing their borders and crew changes have been delayed for long periods, perhaps indefinitely. There are moves to quarantine crews, and shipping companies have been renewing contracts of employment, even where seafarers are desperate to go home.

Shore leave, already a problematic issue, has become a remnant of a different age. Ports are locked down and seafarers are simply not allowed to leave their vessels. In many nations, the closure of entertainment venues such as pubs, clubs and bars has led to the shuttering of seafarer centres.

There are real fears too of contracting the illness, and the questions of where, when and how they will get treatment have come to the fore. Seafarers feel trapped, concerned for their own health but also struggling to comprehend what is happening in their home countries and to loved ones. With nations in



lockdown many seafarers report feeling utterly helpless, and sadly useless to their families.


All this change in a matter of months, if not weeks, has led to a massive sense of uncertainty, worry and even fear. To be at sea in times of crisis is perhaps one of the most difficult experiences for seafarers to cope with and seafarers responding to the SHI report a growing sense of isolation. Responses have highlighted frustration relating to company responses and certain flag States, and annoyance about the draconian immigration rules which have started to appear.

Some seafarers seem resigned to the problems and just want to be helped to deal with their concerns and their need to either get back home, or at the very least, to have regular contact with home. Thankfully some companies and technology providers have responded to the need for improved connectivity and, where this was happening, seafarers reported a great sense of relief.

For others, there has been some sense of (albeit reluctant) acceptance. With companies increasingly stating that crew changes are suspended that

at least provides some certainty, if no succour.

Times are bad, but there is also an overwhelming sense of pride that seafarers and shipping can make a difference. Crews are reading of supermarket shelves being empty, of panic buying and the like, and are proud that seafarers around the world are doing everything they can to help keep the shelves full and society supplied with the important goods it needs.

Let's hope the sacrifices of seafarers, their professionalism and their dedication are remembered in better times. 
Steven Jones is the founder of the Seafarers Happiness Index, in association with the Shipowners' Club and Wallem Group. The Index is designed to monitor and benchmark seafarer satisfaction levels by asking 10 key questions and serves as an important barometer of seafarer satisfaction with life at sea. Questions focus on a range of issues, from mental health and well-being, to working life and family contact. If you would like more information, to see the data or read more in-depth reports, visit www.happyatsea.org for access to the latest results and to have your say.

This crisis reminds us that we are all in the same boat

Taking the opportunity to rediscover, rethink and re-evaluate our global community

I AM writing this reflection in Easter week in the midst of the turmoil brought by the Covid-19 pandemic. This paradox anchors me in the certainty that LIFE, as evidenced by Our Lord's resurrection, overcomes death (and coronavirus). Now more than ever, Jesus' words encourage us, giving us a sense of security and, above all, restoring our hope for life "in all its fullness" (John 10:10).

The aim of maritime ministry in the Port of Rio Grande, Brazil, is, as with other seafarer centres, to offer support to seafarers from all over the world. However, we do have a few additional unique features that broaden and enrich our pastoral perspectives of the spiritual and practical pastoral aspects of our ministries.

'Colonia Z1', situated near the port, is a community of humble fishers who fish the waters along our coastline to earn a living and support their families. The fishing industry centred on our local public market employs and sustains hundreds of families in the area.

For truck drivers, our port is the only one situated in and serving the State of Rio Grande do Sul. Consequently,

it is the single most important import/export transportation hub in the region. Approximately 80% of our total agro-industrial production is transported through here by road. For this reason, our ministry also aims to reach out to truck drivers.

With regards to ecumenical partnership, our Stella Maris Seafarers' Centre was founded in 2010 and is a shared space where the three main Christian traditions in our region, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Anglican, work together to serve seafarers, truckers and fishers together. We are a team of some 15 people who meet weekly to plan our activities together and we share ship visiting and other pastoral activities among smaller sub-teams.

Sadly, with the arrival of Covid-19, our access to the port has been suspended as has our ministry with fishers and truck drivers. This situation has pushed us to go beyond our established patterns of ministry and so we have been directing our energies to serve the many homeless street dwellers in the city. We work with the Municipal (Civic) Centre in the provision of accommodation, meals, clothing, toiletries,

medicines, leisure activities and pastoral and spiritual care for this often-forgotten section of our community.

It is ironic and tragic that it has taken a deadly invisible virus to open our eyes to the truth that we are all 'in the same boat'. In every country we are seeing that national health services are vulnerable, that governmental austerity measures have diverted funding away from hospitals, that corruption distorts politics and economics, that fear displaces efforts to build peace by giving primacy to the military, and that the few control the vast proportion of the world's wealth and the majority are robbed of their dignity and the right to fullness of life.

In spite of all this I have complete faith in the Risen Christ, that Covid-19 will enable us to rediscover, rethink, re-evaluate and redirect our global community. We are already seeing the impact upon our leaders' assumptions and decision-making processes; we are witnessing the relocation of the Human to the centre of human affairs. Today, more than ever, the parable of the Good Samaritan can serve to inspire us and the Resurrection of Jesus can serve as our 'compass'. Both offer insights and directions for the conduct of our common life as a global international family as well as the ways in which we engage locally and nationally to transform our societies, politics, economies and cultures.

Easter calls us to reject all that is deathly with passion and 'evangelical' daring, directing us to those things that point to the life of the Kingdom of God to that Truth, Justice, Love and Peace made real in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! Alleluia! 🙌

The Revd Ramaçes Hartwig is an honorary chaplain for the Mission in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.



The rainbow has become a global symbol of hope and gratitude during the Covid-19 pandemic

Take heart

"...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)