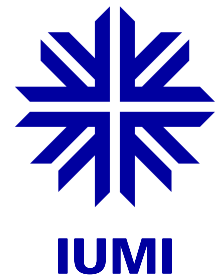


Only 15% of seafarers have been vaccinated

19th August 2021



The Global Maritime Forum has said that data provided by leading ship managers indicated that only 15.3% of seafarers had received Covid-19 vaccinations and that the crew change crisis continued to worsen. The monthly report from the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator, which builds on aggregated data from ship managers Anglo-Eastern, Bernhard Schulte, Columbia Shipmanagement, Fleet Management (FLEET), OSM, Synergy Marine, Thome, V.Group, Wallem, and Wilhelmsen Ship Management, assessed vaccination levels among about 90,000 seafarers currently onboard. While there was only a 15.3% vaccination rate among seafarers, the share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in large shipping nations in Europe, North America and Asia had reached about 50%.



Kasper Søgaaard, Managing Director, Head of Institutional Strategy and Development, Global Maritime Forum, said that “seafarers must be recognized as key workers and given priority access to COVID-19 vaccines. This is key to protect seafarers’ wellbeing and the functioning of global supply chains. Seafarers are starting to get vaccinated, especially those from developed countries. Programmes in the US and some European countries are offering vaccines to international seafarers, but many more countries must follow suit to solve the crew change crisis.”

Ship managers have identified the Philippines, Myanmar, Indonesia, Venezuela and Latvia as the areas with the largest challenge in securing the supply of vaccines. Neptune's monthly analysis also found that the crew change crisis remained unresolved. The number of seafarers remaining onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract had increased slightly over the last month, from 8.8% to 9.0%. The number of seafarers onboard vessels for over 11 months had risen from 1% to 1.3%. Travel restrictions persisted, GMF said, in particular for seafarers from the Indian subcontinent and China. Many inbound flights had been cancelled, especially to Australia and the Philippines.

Ship managers have also pointed out that ongoing high infection rates and subsequent domestic lockdowns were challenging crew changes and causing disruption to crew movements and stretching resources, especially in Eastern Europe. The Philippine government has announced a travel ban for seafarers travelling from the UAE, Oman, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan, which has further disrupted the movement of crews.

GMF said that, as top ship managers are making significant efforts – and were often better placed – in facilitating crew changes, the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator could not be used directly to calculate the full numbers of seafarers impacted by the crew change crisis. Likewise, the calculated percentage of seafarers who had been vaccinated is likely to overestimate the actual proportion of vaccinated seafarers.

This article is kindly supplied by [Insurance Marine News](#). If you would like a complimentary trial to the daily Insurance Marine News e-bulletin please email grant.attwell@insurancemarineneews.com.