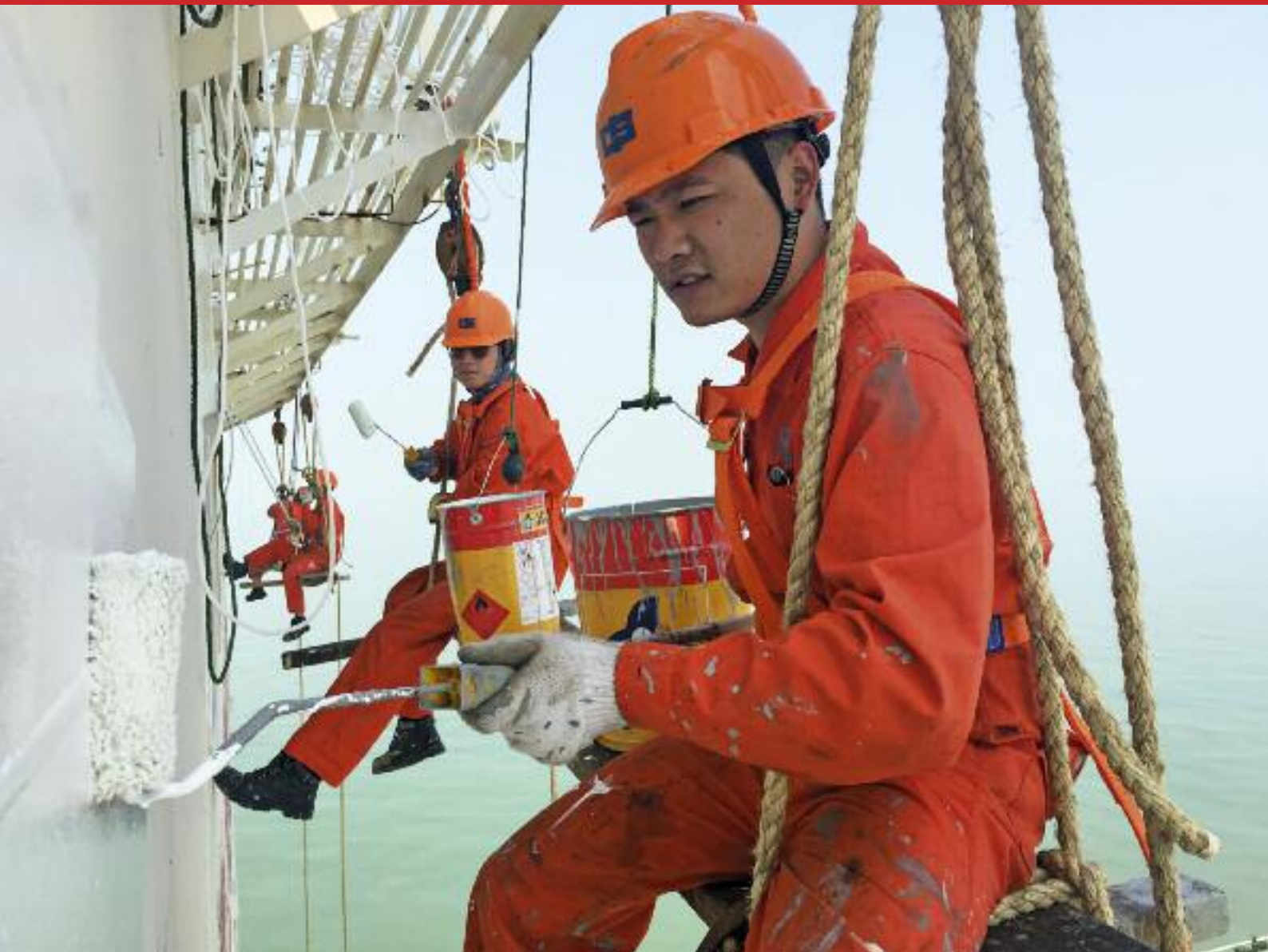


International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network

2018-19 Annual Review





Chairman: International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network

I am delighted to present this new annual review of ISWAN for the financial year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. This is the first time we have produced this annual review to include all the programmes of ISWAN and not just SeafarerHelp. Of course, SeafarerHelp is the main programme of ISWAN employing ten of the staff team and is the major recipient of funding.

However, at the beginning of the year a new grant funder, the Trafigura Foundation, agreed to fund the Regional Programme of ISWAN for three years. This means that we are able to secure the future of our presence in the Philippines, India and Nigeria that are important areas of the world for the maritime industry. We are, of course, extremely grateful for the support of our long term funders: the ITF Seafarers' Trust, The TK Foundation and Seafarers UK, who have continued to fund SeafarerHelp. We are also grateful for the support of our sponsors and members, who have substantially grown over the past years.

One of the highlights of the year for me was the seminar on seafarers' welfare that ISWAN held in Helsinki in November 2018. The seminar was held alongside the AGM and members' meeting. The theme of the seminar was working in partnership, a concept that ISWAN is keen to promote. The seminar attracted an audience of nearly one hundred participants from all over the world and heard from a wide range of quality speakers from Finland and other countries. On partnerships we are keen to deepen and extend our relationships with shipowners and managers, unions, P&I Clubs, and other welfare organisations in 2019/20. Another notable achievement was the development of our work on mental wellbeing, an increasing issue of concern in the maritime world and the wider community. The ISWAN self-help guides on mental wellbeing gained a lot of attention from shipping and ship management companies during the year. Over the coming year ISWAN intends to carry out a lot more work in this area including developing a training course on mental health awareness. ISWAN will also be implementing a new three-year strategy that will focus on securing the long term future of the organisation and will also seek to expand our influence and profile. I am also particularly pleased that, in the IMO's year of women empowerment, 30% of the ISWAN Board of Trustees are women. Of course a lot more needs to be done on this issue in the industry but at least ISWAN has made a good start.

I am looking forward to another successful year of ISWAN supporting the welfare and wellbeing of seafarers and their families.

Per Gullestrup
October 2019



About ISWAN

The International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) and UK-registered charity that promotes the welfare of seafarers worldwide. ISWAN is a membership organisation with members from across a broad section of the maritime industry. These include the International Chamber of Shipping, the International Transport Workers' Federation, and the International Christian Maritime Association. Other members include welfare organisations, shipping and ship management companies, and unions. ISWAN also works in partnership with government agencies, ports, P&I Clubs, and others to enhance the wellbeing of seafarers and their families all over the world.

This annual report covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

Strategic objectives set for 2016-19

The ISWAN Board of Trustees agreed the following strategic objectives for ISWAN for 2016-2019:

- Provide a multi-channel helpline available 24 hours per day, every day of the year, accessible from anywhere in the world via all available media
- Maintain access to adequate funds available at short notice for disbursement to seafarers and their families in need
- Support the establishment of port welfare facilities and services, including national and local welfare boards, to meet the welfare needs of seafarers
- Provide and promote innovative health campaigns to seafarers
- Expand the network of international organisations, funding institutions and companies that can assist ISWAN in pursuance of its aims, including through the development and publication of information and guidance
- Promote the work of ISWAN throughout the shipping community to recognise best welfare practices and continue to grow the organisation's membership
- Increase the unrestricted voluntary and grant funding of ISWAN and diversify the funding base so there is less reliance on a small number of funders

ISWAN achieves the strategic objectives by running a range of programmes and projects.



SeafarerHelp
The lifeline for seafarers

SeafarerHelp
is a global,
independent, **free**
and **confidential**
helpline for all
seafarers and their
families, available
24 hours a day.

SeafarerHelp is a free, confidential, multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. The SeafarerHelp team is here to help seafarers whatever their issue, wherever in the world they are. We are contacted by seafarers and their families about a range of issues every day. Problems include non-payment of wages, bullying and harassment, issues with repatriation, general contractual disputes, requests for information and much more.

The SeafarerHelp team comprises ten workers, half of the ISWAN staff, and each of them speaks English and one or more other languages fluently. Between them the team members speak about 11 languages fluently, including most of those used by seafarers, such as Filipino, Hindi, Russian, Mandarin Chinese and Arabic. They can also communicate effectively in several other languages and dialects. The SeafarerHelp team works from the ISWAN offices in Croydon, south London in the United Kingdom.

The SeafarerHelp service is confidential and free for seafarers and their families of any nationality or religion and we will try to assist them with any problem they may have. Over recent years our service has changed in that we now go out of our way to provide emotional support, including a counselling service where it is needed.

Over recent years the types of cases that the SeafarerHelp team deal with have become more complex. The team do not know if the next contact is going to be a simple request for information or a difficult case where seafarers have been injured or killed or if it will be assisting a seafarer and family who have been traumatised by piracy.

We work with seafarers to try and resolve their problems and we will only refer cases to a particular organisation with the seafarer's express consent. For every situation, we do our best to balance the individual's needs and requirements to achieve a positive outcome for them.

The SeafarerHelp team deal with many of the cases in-house. However, where there are issues about breach of contract or where there is a need for someone to visit the seafarer, we refer those cases to our colleagues in specialist agencies that are in the port or country where the seafarer is located. In this way, we help the seafarer receive the most appropriate support to meet their need.

The agencies that we work with are mostly specialists in the maritime sector and have shore-based personnel in ports around the world. This enables them to give valuable, direct personal support to the seafarers. Most of our referrals are to the International Transport

Workers' Federation (ITF), local unions and port welfare providers such as the Apostleship of the Sea, Mission to Seafarers, the Sailors' Society and the Deutsche Seemannsmission.

The team are proactive and flexible so where these maritime specialists do not have a presence in the country the seafarer is in, we will contact other organisations such as embassies, consulates, harbour or port authorities and medical service providers to gain assistance for the seafarer.

We are very happy to work in partnership with a wide range of organisations and gratefully recognise the help that they provide to both seafarers and the SeafarerHelp team.

We keep a record of every contact that we receive – the first contact is logged on our database and is called the initial contact. Any further contacts from that seafarer or any other person about the same case are logged individually on the database and are called successive contacts. In this way, we can easily follow the history of each case and we can gather useful information on issues such as preferred methods of contact, most frequent issues raised, the nationality of seafarers and other useful data. In this review, all figures relate to initial contacts, unless specifically stated otherwise.

Service enhancements

The new Salesforce case management system was implemented on 1 April 2019. The implementation took longer than planned but the new system will allow for the faster production of reports and more detailed analysis of cases. ISWAN's data protection policy was updated because of the implementation of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regulations.

All the SeafarerHelp helpline services are available through a range of media, including telephone, email, WhatsApp, Facebook, Live Chat, Skype, Twitter and SMS text.

The current system forms a modern digital system through which we can communicate with and serve seafarers via whatever channel they prefer.

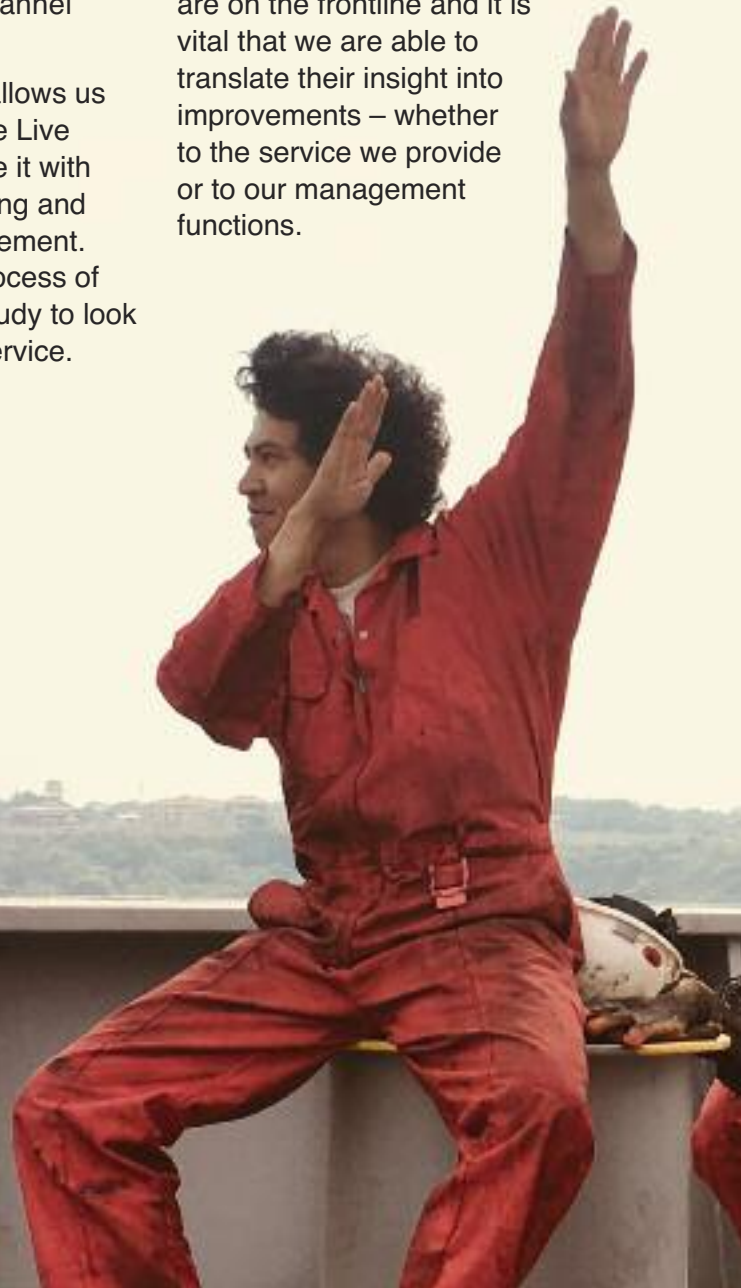
Our web-based software allows us to take call content and the Live Chat service, and integrate it with resource referral, scheduling and staff and volunteer management. However, we are in the process of undertaking a feasibility study to look at enhancements to the service.

Staff development

It is important to SeafarerHelp to be able to develop the skills within the staff team. We have a talented, professional and committed group working for ISWAN, and we look to improve skills and capabilities through training and development activities.

As such, in 2018/19 we have been commissioning and providing appropriate training sessions in keeping with the changing needs of seafarers. We have also organised annual 'awaydays' and staff surveys. This helps us to improve our service and the quality of the working life of our staff.

It also shows that we listen and can respond to the concerns that the team may raise. Our SeafarerHelp staff are on the frontline and it is vital that we are able to translate their insight into improvements – whether to the service we provide or to our management functions.



Influence and engagement

We have been raising awareness of the helpline by speaking at a greater number of relevant conferences and seminars, and we are also rolling out new initiatives within the ISWAN membership.

The aims have been to increase visits to the SeafarerHelp website, to generate more followers on Twitter, and to enhance engagement through Facebook and other social media platforms. We have also sought to increase coverage in the maritime and mainstream press.

One of the challenges for SeafarerHelp is to ensure that we are better able to produce human interest stories relating to the experiences of seafarers. Obviously, this must be done in a sensitive

and anonymous way, and we are exploring the best approach to generating the narratives from the seafarers who turn to us for help, guidance, advice and support.

Calendar year statistical overview

ISWAN has now adopted a new reporting system, with data from the financial year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

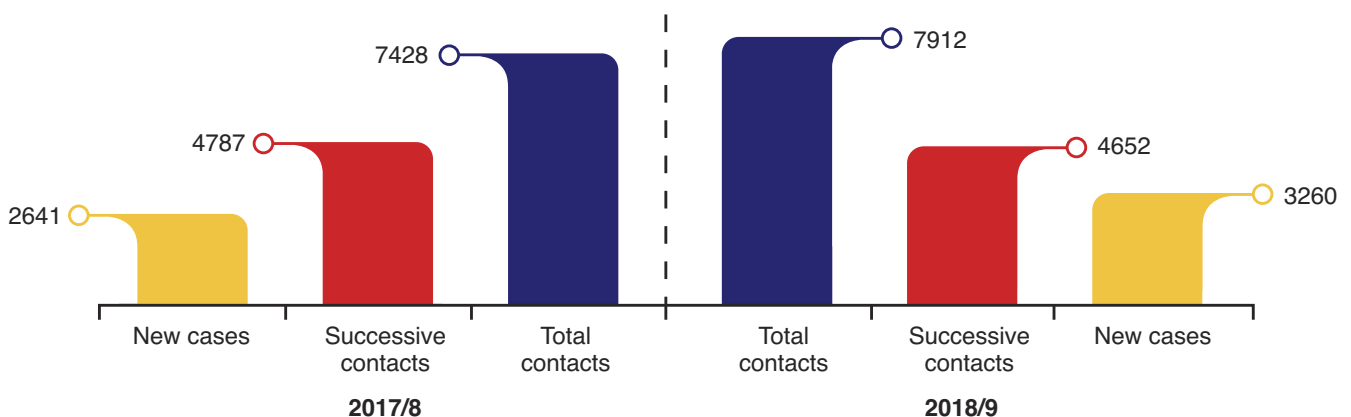
“We really don’t know who are you but you are helping us. We will be thankful to you all our life.” – Seafarer



2018-19 caseload overview

Key statistics:

- The SeafarerHelp team:
 - a) Provided assistance free of charge 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, to seafarers and their families in their own language as required.
 - b) Dealt with 3260 new cases, involving 8111 seafarers and their families. In addition, we received a further 4652 successive contacts.
 - c) Handled approximately 32 different types of issues raised by seafarers.
 - d) Helped seafarers of 91 different nationalities making contact from 126 different countries. 25 of these nationalities were from the Commonwealth
- The average time spent on a call for new contacts was 33 minutes.
- Female seafarers accounted for 6% of those who contacted SeafarerHelp, where gender was known, doubling from 3% in 2017/18.
- Of the 91 nationalities assisted, the largest numbers of seafarers were Filipinos, followed by Indians, Ukrainians, and Russians.
- The most common reasons for seafarers contacting us were: seeking employment, wages not being paid, requesting information, problems over repatriation, health problems and contract problems.
- The top five flag states of the vessels we were contacted from were Panama, Marshall Islands, Malta, Liberia and Bahamas. This mirrors the share of the global fleet, so it is perhaps unsurprising.
- Many cases we received involved more than one issue and so had to be referred to more than one organisation. While we dealt with most contacts in-house we also referred cases to recruitment organisations, the ITF Co-ordinators/Inspectors, the ITF Seafarer Support team, the Apostleship of the Sea, the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration and the Mission to Seafarers.
- Live Chat proved to be the most popular method of contact, with some 23% using this method to engage initially.



Across the reporting period (1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019), the SeafarerHelp team dealt with 3260 (2641) new cases and handled 4652 (4787) successive contacts making the total number of contacts 7912 (7428). The figures in brackets are the corresponding figures for 2017/18.

New cases are counted as the first contact for the case and successive contacts are all contacts made after the first contact. There was a slight drop in the number of seafarers assisted from 8232 in 2017/18 down to 8111. The number of seafarers assisted is an unpredictable statistic that depends on the type of issue reported to SeafarerHelp – for instance a problem with non-payment of wages normally affects the whole crew while other kinds of issues, such as problems at home, may affect one seafarer onboard.

The SeafarerHelp team is spending longer on individual cases. The team has been trained to provide emotional support and to undertake suicide risk assessments. In 2018/19 the percentage of cases that were

being provided with emotional support increased to 9.28% compared to 6.53% in the previous year. This is a reflection of ISWAN recognising the increase in mental health issues and training its team to assist, support and assess seafarers that find themselves in such situations.

We also believe that providing a better service means that seafarers are finding it easier to talk in-depth to the SeafarerHelp team. Adding the initial and successive contacts together there were a total of 7912 contacts in 2018/19 which was an increase of 6.5% from 7428 in 2017/18. The average time taken in dealing with each new contact was 33 minutes.

Case study 1 – SeafarerHelp is here for the wellbeing of seafarers

A seafarer e-mailed SeafarerHelp while he was at sea, wanting to talk confidentially with someone. He had been having relationship problems and was getting a divorce in a country where it was illegal. He said he had suffered emotional abuse from his wife for two years and although he was the one who had suggested the divorce, he was now feeling empty. He had lost his appetite and was only eating because he knew he needed to.

The seafarer was due to be on board for another five months and he was hiding how he felt from his crewmates. He said his parents were both dead and he was not close with his siblings back home. His wife would be keeping their apartment so he was also worried that he would have nowhere to go when he finished his contract.

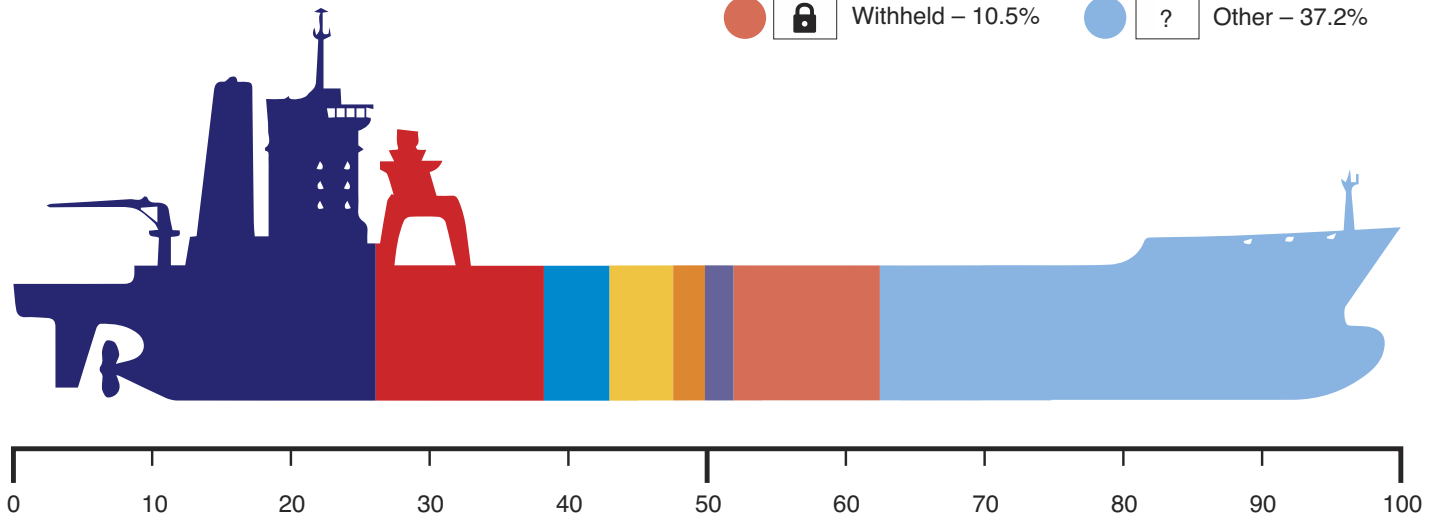
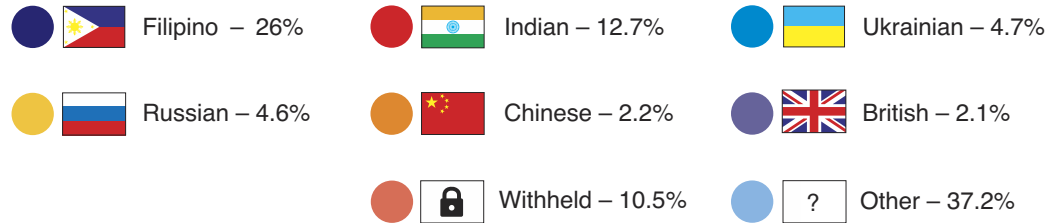
Our SeafarerHelp team is trained in providing emotional support. They listened to the seafarer's problems

and helped him through a difficult time by suggesting ways to cope with the situation and generally giving a friendly non-judgemental ear. They suggested that he could try sharing his feelings with a crewmate, and asked what activities he enjoyed that could help him feel better while he was still on board. The team also provided links to ISWAN's Good Mental Health Guides for Seafarers and other seafarers' health resources available on the SeafarerHelp website, which could help him manage his emotions and take care of his mental wellbeing.

The seafarer contacted SeafarerHelp six times over the space of two months. He later contacted the team to thank them for the time they had spent helping and supporting him. He had started a new hobby, creative writing, and was now looking for a place to stay when he finished his contract.

Seafarer nationalities

In 2018/19 the team were contacted from 126 different countries around the world and dealt with seafarers of 91 different nationalities compared to 86 in 2017/18.



Gender

Of those who contacted SeafarerHelp, where gender was recorded, 6% were female and 94% were male. Female seafarers usually account for around 3% to 4% of cases where gender is recorded. However, in 2018/19 this doubled to 6% from 3% in 2017/18.

This increase is largely due to the increasing number of superyacht crew who are contacting the helpline. During the past year, due to the launch of the ISWAN report on the welfare needs of superyacht crew, there is more awareness of SeafarerHelp in this part of the maritime industry.

“I want to express to you that I am more than grateful, for the incredible work you do, you have definitely shown that you are an excellent team of professionals, we are very conscious of all the work that you do and the investment of the many hours of your time to assist us.” – Seafarer

Case study 2 – SeafarerHelp supports seafarer after medical evacuation from vessel

SeafarerHelp was contacted by the sister of a Filipino seafarer who was concerned about her brother's wellbeing. The seafarer had been medically evacuated from his vessel after fainting while on board. The seafarer did not have his phone so his sister, who lived in Singapore, had only found out about the situation when a nurse at the hospital contacted her.

The seafarer had been on a seven-month contract and this was his third time working on a ship. He loved working at sea but he had told his sister that he was being bullied by the other crew members. His colleagues would verbally abuse him and on one occasion he was threatened to be killed if he made any further mistakes. It was affecting his sleep and the seafarer was already overworked, as the vessel no longer had a catering boy who would usually help him with his duties.

The fatigue and overwhelming mental stress from the abuse and bullying resulted in the seafarer suffering from epistaxis (a nosebleed) and fainting while on duty. He was medically evacuated and taken by helicopter to a hospital in the UK.

The seafarer's sister asked SeafarerHelp to find out more information about her brother's current situation, so the SeafarerHelp team contacted the hospital and liaised between the hospital staff and the seafarer's sister to provide her with updates.

The SeafarerHelp team eventually managed to communicate with the seafarer directly via the helpline's

Filipino speaker so the seafarer could communicate in his own language. The team provided emotional support and, with the seafarer's consent, referred his case to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Seafarer Support Team in London who could advocate for the seafarer's medical repatriation and payment of his owed wages. The SeafarerHelp team also arranged for a local Apostleship of the Sea chaplain to visit the seafarer in hospital for support.

The seafarer was eventually discharged from hospital and repatriated to the Philippines. His shipping company covered all medical and travel expenses, along with his wages for the next two months. However, the seafarer had a long way to go until he was fully recovered – he was still suffering the effects of the trauma and emotional and mental abuse, and needed further medical treatment. The SeafarerHelp team put him in touch with ISWAN's Regional Representative in the Philippines, Jun Pablo, and the local ITF inspector for support in his home country.

SeafarerHelp continued to keep in touch with the seafarer as his health improved. When the seafarer was eventually certified fit for work, the SeafarerHelp team supported him in his search for new employment. His sister said: "[On] behalf of our family we would like to thank you all for your quick response and action... Your being friendly, good listeners and quick rescue gives us hope and confident to continue to fight for the rights of the victim seafarers."

Seafarers concerns and issues

SeafarerHelp receives calls from seafarers about a wide range of issues; from requests for information about the location of the nearest seafarer centre through to complex cases involving abandonment or a traumatic event. Issues raised about unpaid wages reduced to 9.07% of cases from 12.40% of cases in the previous year. Similarly issues about repatriation problems reduced to 4.49% of cases from 6.80% of cases in the previous year. One possible factor in the reduction in these cases is the impact of the implementation

of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and seafarers' awareness of it. More shipping companies now appreciate that they need to meet the required standards and crew are now more aware of what they should expect and are increasingly likely to raise concerns if these standards are not met.

Other trends in issues raised are little changed from the previous year.

Issues relating to financial and debt problems have increased to 3.65% from 2.10% in the previous year.

Another issue that has increased to 11.51% from 8.50% is the amount of information that the team gives out about seafarer centres.

Problem type	total	%
Abuse, Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination	144	3.26%
Cargo Handling Violation	10	0.23%
Compensation (Personal Injury)	41	0.93%
Contract (Abandonment)	94	2.13%
Contract (Repatriation)	198	4.49%
Contract (Ship conditions or living conditions)	77	1.75%
Contract (Unfair dismissal)	119	2.70%
Contract (Wages/Salary not paid)	400	9.07%
Contract (Other not specified above)	99	2.24%
Criminalisation	27	0.61%
Death, Bereavement, Missing seafarers	59	1.34%
Environmental Damage or issues	5	0.11%
Family/Relationship problems	38	0.86%
Fatigue (Tiredness, exhaustion, lack of rest, etc.)	60	1.36%
Financial or Debt problems	161	3.65%
Health/Medical (Physical)	230	5.21%
Health (Psychological) including mental stress and depression	104	2.36%
Information (about health provided)	565	12.81%
Information (Education, Training, Qualifications)	111	2.52%
Information (ITF Seafarer Support Team, Inspectors, Contacts, or Affiliated unions)	34	0.77%
Information (Seafarer Centres, Port Welfare Facilities)	508	11.51%
Information (Safety and safe practices on board)	52	1.18%
Information (Other not specified above)	222	5.03%
Piracy/War zone/Armed robbery	7	0.16%
Seeking employment	495	11.22%
Ship arrest or detention	15	0.34%
Ship sunk or in danger of sinking/Shipwreck/Grounding	1	0.02%
Welfare/Emergency provisions required	47	1.07%
Other (Awaiting information)	54	1.22%
Other (Communications failure, technical)	6	0.14%
Other (Caller failed to respond/reply)	86	1.95%
Other (Corruption or exploitation allegation)	20	0.45%
Other problems (Not specified above)	323	7.35%

Method of contact

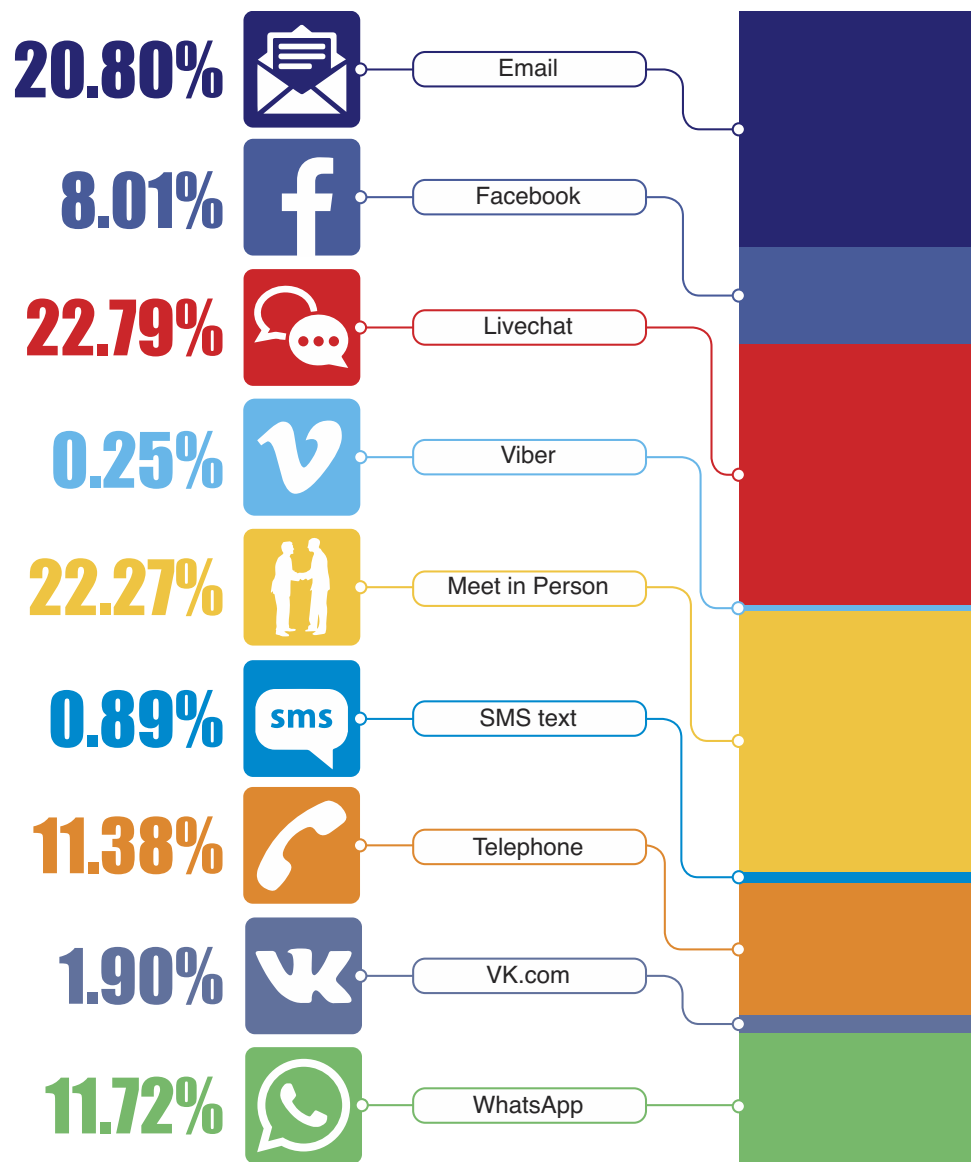
Live Chat is now the most popular method of communication at 22.8% taking over from email which is now at 20.8%. The methods of communication using the internet are the most popular because they are free of charge and convenient. In total communication via the internet accounts for over 60% of all communication. The phone now only accounts for 11% of the calls to SeafarerHelp. WhatsApp is now becoming an increasing important channel of communication. Our office in Manila deals with a number of face-to-face interactions.

A key aspect of our work in 2017 was to improve the multi-channel aspects of the helpline and ensure that we are available 24 hours per

day. Social media is a key pillar of this approach, and we were pleased to see how these efforts have translated into positive engagement.

Once again throughout 2018-19 we continued to make good use of social media. By the end of the year there were 368,085 likes on the SeafarerHelp Facebook page and 366,949 people following us. We also have a service for Russian speakers on VK.com with 1,379 friends and followers.

We also continued to distribute our SeafarerHelp posters and cards together with other ISWAN publications. As a result of these ongoing engagement efforts, seafarers continued to turn to us for assistance, guidance and support.

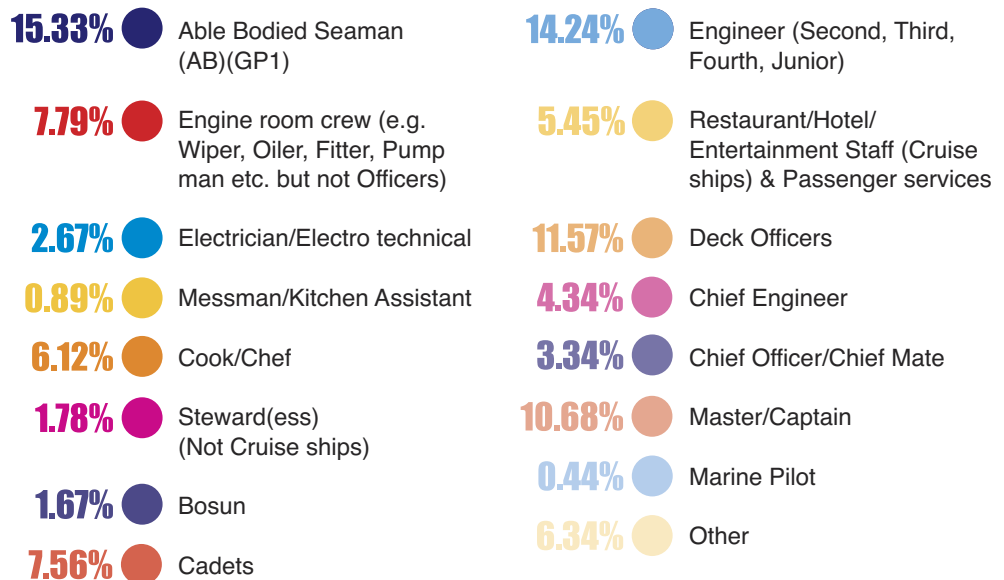
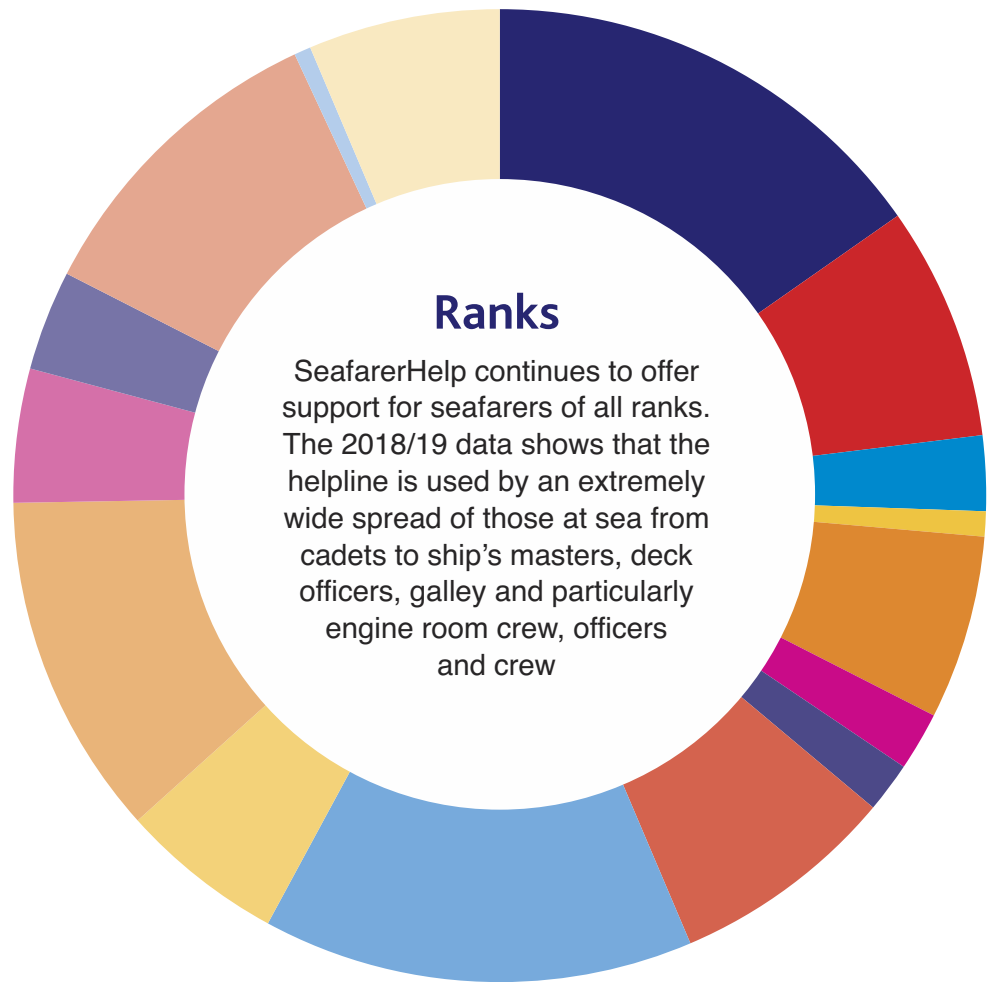


Referrals to other organisations

SeafarerHelp works with a range of organisations who we refer many cases to. The number of cases dealt with in-house has grown over the past few years. Nearly 50% of the cases are now dealt with in-house by the SeafarerHelp team. However, SeafarerHelp still relies on external organisations, particularly for labour-related issues. Nearly 13% of the cases are referred to the ITF or their affiliated unions while over 15% of the cases are passed on to seafarer missions or centres.

Agencies/Organisations involved	total	%
Counselling (provided by external agency)	15	0.47
Emotional support (provided in-house)	297	9.28
Flag state of ship	7	0.22
Government agency or Embassy	123	3.84
Helpline Team (in-house)	1281	40.01
ITF Coordinator/Inspector/Contact	127	3.97
ITF Seafarer Support Team	235	7.34
Job website (Crewtoo)/Government approved list of manning agencies	197	6.15
MPHRP. Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme	3	0.09
Port authority/Port state control	11	0.34
Professional Yachting Association	1	0.03
Seafarer Centre. AOS (Apostleship of the Sea)	105	3.28
Seafarer Centre. MTS (Mission to Seafarers)	74	2.31
Seafarer Centre. SS (Sailors Society)	20	0.62
Seafarer Centre. Other missions/groups	293	9.15
Seafarers' Emergency Fund	25	0.78
Unions	44	1.37
Other	571	18.00
SAIL	11	0.34
CHIRP	12	0.37
ICS	1	0.03
P&I Club	1	0.03
ILO	2	0.06
Seafarers Rights International	3	0.09

“Thank you very much. I can’t explain my gratitude in words. You have been very very supportive... You are amazing. Thank you.” – Cadet

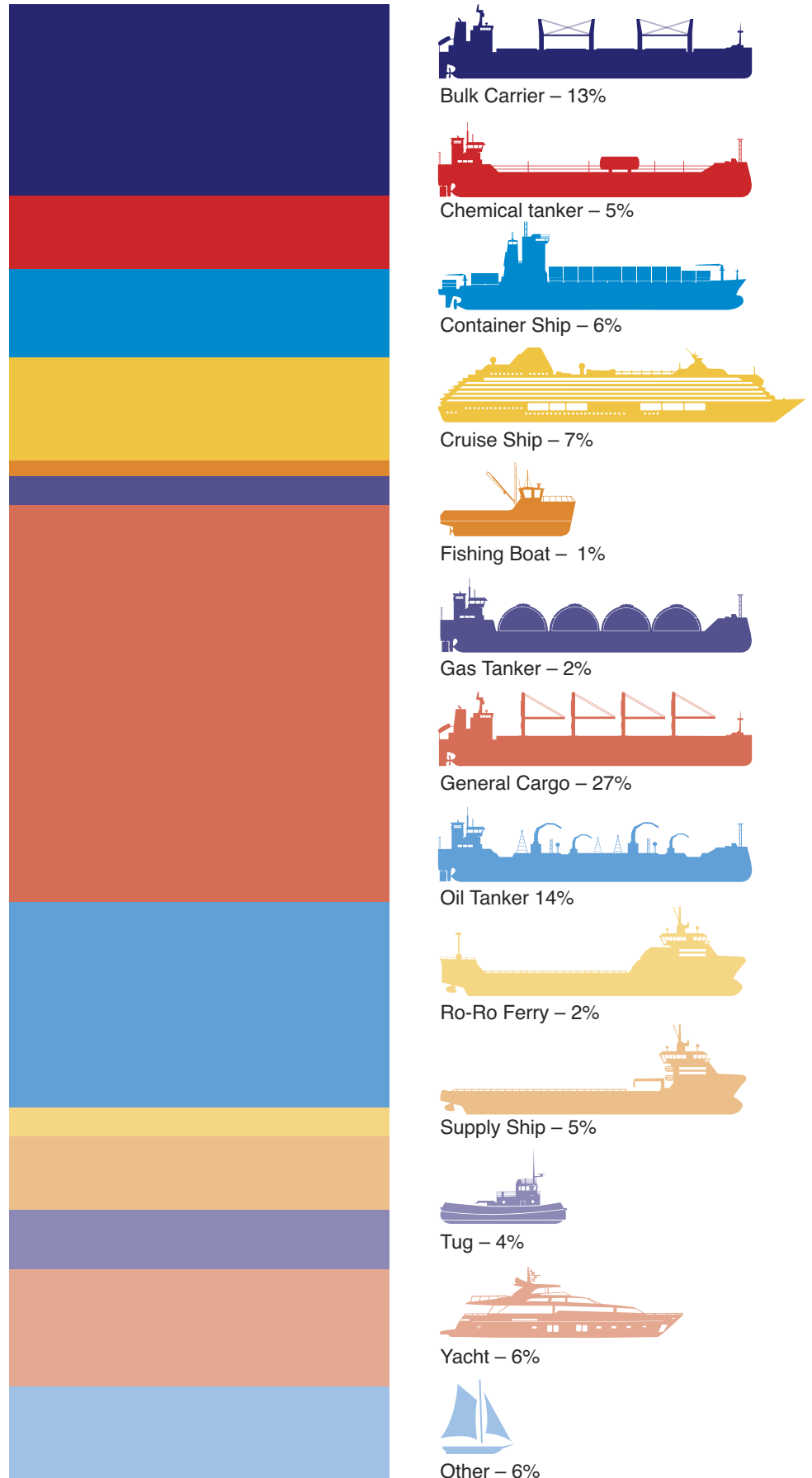


“From far away I want to say thank you very much to SeafarerHelp for your support and working 24 hours every day.” – Seafarer

“Thanks a lot for being so prompt in replying to me. In times of trouble, a person listening your problems is a big relief.” – Seafarer

Vessel types

Seafarers contacted us from a wide range of vessel types. General cargo vessels were the most common vessels on which the seafarer got in touch with us.



Bulk Carrier – 13%



Chemical tanker – 5%



Container Ship – 6%



Cruise Ship – 7%



Fishing Boat – 1%



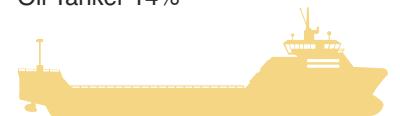
Gas Tanker – 2%



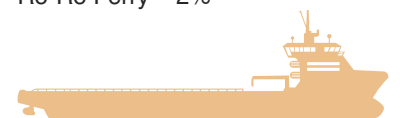
General Cargo – 27%



Oil Tanker 14%



Ro-Ro Ferry – 2%



Supply Ship – 5%



Tug – 4%



Yacht – 6%

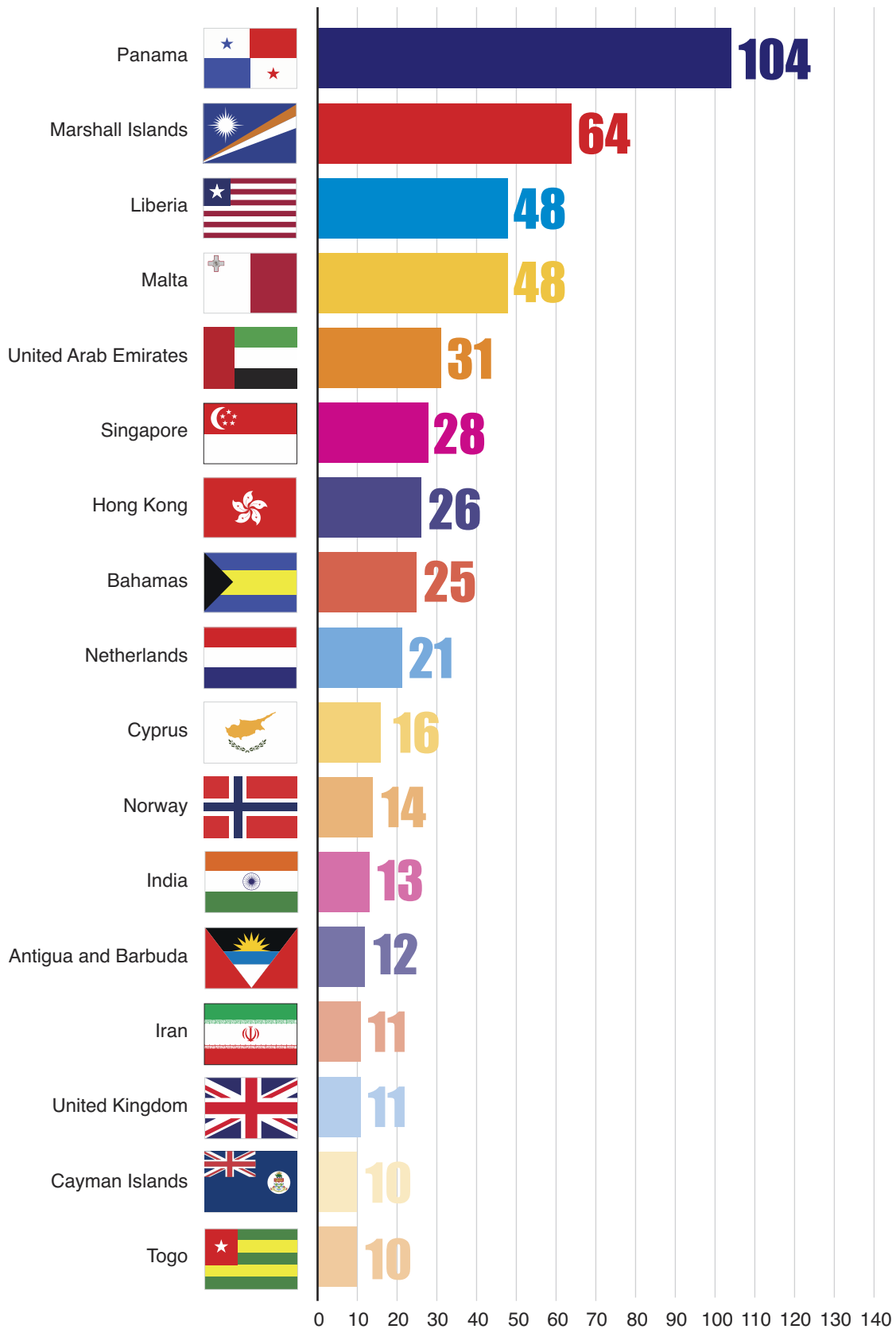


Other – 6%

Flag states

Seafarers contacted while working on vessels from a wide range of flag states. These are the flags which registered more than ten contacts.

There were many more which saw low levels of contacts, in single figures.



A significant amount of work was completed to ensure that SeafarerHelp complied with the European Union GDPR by the deadline of May 2018.

ISWAN has continued to invest in the training and professional development of the SeafarerHelp team. During 2018/19 SeafarerHelp team members attended a total of 77 training sessions. The team received training on safeguarding, counselling and listening skills, supporting emotional service users, responding to suicidal callers, and essential helpline skills.

ISWAN also runs three other helplines for external organisations through our trading company SWAN Ltd.

“Thank you ISWAN for all your care and assistance towards my family! Here, on behalf of my family, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to your organisation!” – Seafarer

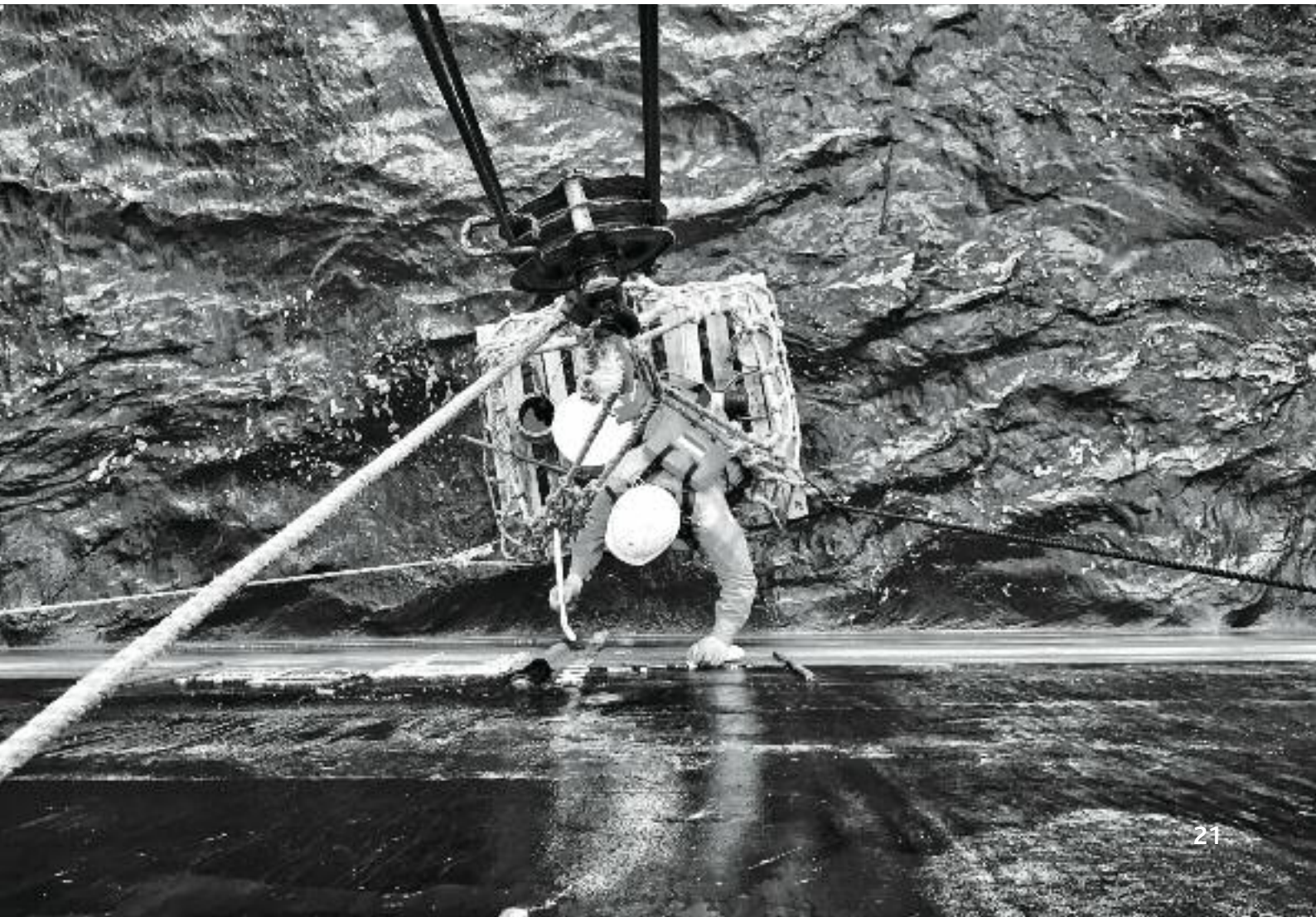



Regional Programme

The ISWAN Regional Programme developed from the Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme (MPHRP) and is now funded for three years by the Trafigura Foundation. The programme continues to develop in India, the Philippines and Nigeria. In India the work is overseen by a Programme Steering Group that consists of representatives from the maritime administration, shipping companies, crewing agencies, unions, professional associations and welfare organisations. In the Philippines, the programme has established MoUs with government agencies and other organisations. In Nigeria, the programme works closely with the Nigerian Seafarers Welfare Board (NSWB) in providing support to the seafarers visiting various ports.

Over the past year the programme has supported abandoned seafarers in the Gulf region including the UAE and Iran, responded to incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, assisted seafarers and their families affected by traumatic events, and campaigned against non-registered crewing agencies who exploit and often abandon seafarers.

In India the programme continued to promote the campaign against non-registered crewing agencies through social media platforms and through interactions directly with seafarers at maritime institutes. Posters and flyers were distributed to seafarers and a wide range of organisations. A survey was undertaken to assess the impact of campaign on seafarers. Work was carried out with partners in a number of cities to alert families and young people to the risks of signing up with non-registered agencies.





The regional staff, working closely with the SeafarerHelp team, is providing support to seafarers and their families affected by traumatic events and crises. In the Philippines ISWAN works with volunteer psychologists who provide psychosocial support. The regional team in India and Philippines have interacted with local shipping companies and crewing agents and introduced ISWAN's mental health self-help guides which are being distributed to seafarers. The team was also able to present on the issues concerning mental wellbeing of seafarers at various seminars and conferences in their regions. In Nigeria the team member is a qualified social worker who has provided support to injured seafarers and also to crew who are being held in prison. She regularly visits vessels at various ports and provides emotional and counselling support to the seafarers. The team member works closely with port welfare committees (PWCs) and assists seafarers who are affected by incidents of piracy and armed robbery.

The programme also works closely with Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and administers the Piracy Survivors Family Fund (PSFF). The regional team in India and Philippines also provide humanitarian support to seafarers and their families when they are affected by incidents of maritime piracy. The programme is also working on providing assistance to families of Iranian crew who are still held by Somali pirates after more than four years.

The regional team is providing emotional support to seafarers and their families in dealing with traumatic incidents and have been able to assist them to cope with crises.

In India, the programme has been able to raise awareness on importance of establishing PWCs in Indian ports with maritime stakeholders including the Government and is working closely with them on the matter.

In all three countries the team works closely with government agencies, ship owners, crewing agencies, maritime schools, unions and welfare organisations.

International Port Welfare Partnership (IPWP) Programme

The ISWAN IPWP programme aims to support the establishment of welfare boards which, according to the Maritime Labour Convention 2006, “shall regularly review welfare facilities and services to ensure that they are appropriate in the light of changes in the needs of seafarers resulting from technical, operational and other developments in the shipping industry”. The programme is run on behalf of ISWAN by the UK Merchant Navy Welfare Board. This year the team successfully helped to establish committees in three major Nigerian ports: Apapa, Tin Can Island and Port Onne as well as in Dakar (Senegal), Novorossiysk (Russia), Mombasa (Kenya) and

Douala (Cameroon). A number of Australian ports formed their own port welfare committees as did the Falkland Islands. The team continues to provide support to several maritime sector representatives who are keen to establish welfare boards in South Africa, Mexico, Thailand, Gambia, Vietnam and Zanzibar. The IPWP website, www.portwelfare.org, continues to receive an increasing number of ‘expressions of interest’ to actively participate in the programme. The programme is match-funded by the ITF Seafarers’ Trust, TK Foundation, Seafarers’ UK and Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB) with an Executive Committee made up of shipowners, unions, port authorities/owners, government, maritime funders and voluntary organisation representatives, all keen to promote better seafarers’ welfare in ports.



Helsinki Seminar

In association with the Finnish Seamen's Service, ISWAN organised a successful seminar in Helsinki in late November 2018 alongside the AGM and members' meeting. The theme of the seminar was 'Working in partnership, seeking practical solutions' and it was attended by nearly one hundred people from a range of organisations both from Finland and around the world. Participants came from government, shipowners, unions, welfare organisations and maritime companies. The seminar looked at implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, removing obstacles to seafarers' welfare, health and wellbeing of seafarers, supporting women in the maritime industry, abandonment and increasing the effectiveness of port welfare.

2018 International Seafarers' Welfare Awards

The International Seafarers' Welfare Awards were held at the ILO in Geneva in April 2018. Attendees included ISWAN-invited guests and MLC STC delegates representing shipowners, unions, governments and welfare organisations. The ceremony format followed previous years' ceremonies held at the ILO where award categories, shortlists and winners were announced by the Chair (ISWAN Trustee, Karin Orsel) and presented by the Guest of Honour (Mr Greg Vines). As ILO Director-General Guy Ryder could not attend, a video message from him was recorded in advance and presented to guests at the beginning of the ceremony. The winners were: Joseph Chacko and Leena Joseph

(Posthumous Award for Outstanding Services to Seafarers' Welfare, collected by their daughter Neha Joseph); Wallem (Shipping Company of the Year); Port of Rotterdam (Port of the Year); Mission to Seafarers Brisbane (Seafarer Centre of the Year); Nautilus Welfare Fund (The Dr Dierk Lindemann Welfare Personality of the Year (Organisation)); and Jasper Del Rosario (The Dr Dierk Lindemann Welfare Personality of the Year (Individual)).

Superyacht crew

We partnered with MHG Insurance Brokers to survey seafarers who work on superyachts to investigate welfare issues specific to the sector. The survey was designed to:

- Highlight areas of welfare needs among seafarers on superyachts
- See what is working well under current conditions to meet their welfare needs, and what needs improvement
- Explore how existing seafarers' welfare structures may meet these needs and where there is scope for new provision

The survey was anonymous and asked questions on food, cabins and communications, as well as the health and wellbeing of the men and women working on board. Responses were received from over 400 seafarers. Inmarsat sponsored the launch of the report, which took place on Monday 3rd December 2018 in London. The report gained a lot of interest and, as a result, a group of industry partners including unions, welfare organisations, and yacht management companies was formed to see how the recommendations of the report could be implemented.

Mental wellbeing

In July 2018 the third guide in our self-help guide series, 'Managing Stress and Sleeping Well at Sea', was launched. This guide includes an audio exercise (Relaxation at Sea, currently available in English and Filipino) which was released separately at the end of April. The guides and infographics have been downloaded thousands of times from the ISWAN and SeafarerHelp websites. A grant from Seafarers UK has allowed us to print and distribute 10,000 copies of Steps to Positive Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing at Sea in English and

Hindi around India through manning agents and/or maritime clinics, nautical colleges and seafarers' centres. Work was started on developing a one-day mental health awareness course for shipping companies that will be rolled out. Videotel produced a film based on ISWAN's Good Mental Health Guides on seafarers' mental wellbeing which is free for all seafarers to access. The video has now won several awards. Videotel made the ISWAN guides available for free on their 'VOD Box' which are present on approximately 10,000 ships.

Case study 3 – ISWAN provides counselling for injured seafarer in hospital

Before his accident, Arjun* had been working as a seafarer for 18 years. He had graduated at the top of his class on a Merchant Navy course, and he worked on his first vessel for 32 months back to back out of his love for the job.

When his accident occurred, Arjun was working as an able seaman on a vessel sailing from Malaysia to Nigeria. He was injured on board when he and a colleague went to fix twisted crane wires – a piece of equipment pulled in Arjun's hand, crushing his palm and fingers.

Arjun was immediately evacuated and taken to hospital where he received corrective surgery on his hand. However, the outlook for his two middle fingers, which were the most damaged, was not good.

ISWAN's Regional Representative in Nigeria, Afusat Eke, visited Arjun in hospital. He was traumatised by the accident and glad to see Afusat – he had been having nightmares since it happened and feared losing his fingers. He told Afusat that he was worried about the impact his injury would have on his ability to provide

for his family. His wife of seven years did not work due to a medical condition so Arjun was the family breadwinner.

Afusat provided emotional support to Arjun and reassured him that ISWAN had been in touch with the shipping company, which was doing everything possible to support him. Afusat continued to support Arjun until he flew home to India – she kept in contact with the company's representative and ensured Arjun was able to communicate with his family while he was in hospital.

Once Arjun had been repatriated, ISWAN's Regional Director in South Asia, Chirag Bahri, contacted the seafarer's shipping company for an update. The company confirmed that Arjun had been admitted to a good hospital in Mumbai and would receive the best care by an in-house team. The company would also look after Arjun's future needs, providing compensation and assistance with future employment when he had recovered. Chirag offered to continue ISWAN's support by visiting Arjun in hospital in Mumbai.

* This seafarer's name has been changed to protect their privacy.

Seafarers Emergency Fund

ISWAN administers the Seafarers Emergency Fund (SEF) that is funded by The TK Foundation, ITF Seafarers' Trust and Seafarers UK. The SEF is available to provide immediate, essential aid to seafarers and families of seafarers, who are directly involved in sudden or unforeseen crises. The fund may be needed to cover expenses such as psychological counselling, medical bills, repatriation and a number of other unexpected costs. Over the past year there were 30 applications to the fund and 21 were successful. The fund paid out a total of USD\$76,603.

Photo competition

In 2018, we joined forces with the International Maritime Organization to run a photo competition in celebration of Day of the Seafarer. There were 1,800 entries to the photo competition. Seafarers were invited to submit their best photographs showing a typical day at sea, whether at work, rest or play. The theme of 2018's Day of the Seafarer on 25 June was 'Seafarers' Wellbeing', so photos needed to reflect the theme hashtags #SupportSeafarersWellbeing and #GoodDayatSea.

Further activities

During the year the ISWAN website, www.seafarerswelfare.org, was relaunched with a new design and content management system. This meant that that content could be accessed more easily by users and the website is easier to navigate. The website is designed for easy use on both PCs and mobile devices. Since the launch of the new design in November 2018 the number of monthly users has increased.

Two new guides were developed and launched. The 'Good Practice Guide for Shipping Companies & Manning Agents working with situations involving missing seafarers' was produced by ISWAN, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and InterManager. The guidance covers managing relationships onboard, actions that should be taken, and managing relationships with the families of seafarers who have gone missing. It includes details of recommended procedures to follow, templates and scripts for communicating with families, and further resources including contact details for reporting incidents of missing seafarers.

'Arrested and Detained Vessels, and Abandoned Seafarers' was produced by ISWAN in partnership with InterManager, ICS, ITF, and ICMA. The guide aims to assist port welfare committee members and welfare agencies in reviewing best practice in these situations. The new guidance outlines the responsibilities of the authorities and other organisations that might become involved when problems are identified aboard a vessel whilst in port.

The membership of ISWAN has grown over the past year with a number of new shipping and ship management companies becoming members. ISWAN is also working more closely with P&I Clubs and developing our relationship with unions and other organisations. ISWAN was invited to present at a number of conferences during the year.

Plans for future periods

The ISWAN Board of Trustees is formulating a new strategy and business plan for the next three years (2019 to 2022) that will focus on building funding and raising the profile of ISWAN and our work. An external evaluation of ISWAN will be undertaken over the coming year and this may have an effect on the future direction of the projects and programmes.

Strategic objectives

The main objectives will be to:

- 1) Promote the provision of port welfare facilities meeting seafarers' identified needs;
- 2) Share and promote best practice in health and welfare;
- 3) Develop and promulgate advice and information;
- 4) Run promotional campaigns to highlight specific wellness and welfare issues including the risks involved in using unregulated and unscrupulous crewing agencies;
- 5) Provide short term emergency financial relief for those in need;
- 6) Provide a 24/7 helpline for the world's seafarers;
- 7) Identify seafarer welfare and assistance needs through feedback from seafarers, their representatives and others concerned with seafarer health and welfare, and analysis of information available through SeafarerHelp and other sources;
- 8) Undertake projects and research aimed at identifying solutions to the developing issues affecting seafarers and their families;
- 9) Seek to diversify and enhance ISWAN's sources of financial support;
- 10) Raise global awareness of ISWAN's activities, information and advice and its international profile.

SeafarerHelp

The following initiatives are planned for SeafarerHelp, the free and confidential 24-hour helpline. There is going to be a feasibility study on providing a health and lifestyle information service via SeafarerHelp. Research to gauge the demand for the service would be carried out in-house. There will be more promotion of SeafarerHelp to seafarers and their families through an integrated marketing campaign that will include print (posters), social media (Facebook/Instagram), and videos/animation. Further training of SeafarerHelp team on sexual harassment, welfare needs of superyacht crew, counselling and mental health awareness skills (refresher) will be undertaken during the year. An external evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the SeafarerHelp service is planned and this will form a main part of the wider evaluation of ISWAN.

Since the publication of the report into the welfare of superyacht crews, ISWAN has convened a small industry group that has designed a project to provide information for these crews. SeafarerHelp is a main part of the project and a new section of the website will be targeted at superyacht crews. ISWAN will publish a quarterly report on data from calls to SeafarerHelp that includes the types of issues that seafarers contact the helpline with, the main method of communication, the top nationalities, etc.

The report will contain an analysis of the contacts and will identify trends and highlight specific cases and concerns. The report will be made available on the website and will be promoted to key partners in the maritime industry.

Seafarer wellbeing

Working with shipping and ship management companies, ISWAN will deliver a guide to mentally healthy vessels that will include guidance in implementing mental health awareness policies. We will be rolling out a programme of mental health awareness training with the aim of changing attitudes to mental health within the maritime industry. This will consist of 'open courses' in London and in-house training delivered internationally by psychologists or counsellors. Further distribution of the printed self-help mental wellbeing guides that provide tools to seafarers is planned for the Philippines. SeafarerHelp is a key part of the mental health strategy, responding to concerns raised by seafarers and providing emotional support. A new speak-up campaign is planned that will encourage seafarers to seek help if they are feeling low. A key aim is to increase awareness of SeafarerHelp and other resources for seafarers. ISWAN will further develop closer partnerships with P&I Clubs and seek funding for specific health and wellbeing projects.

Regional Programme

Over the next year the Regional Programme has a number of objectives. The programme is planning a range of activities to reduce the number of seafarers signing up with non-government registered crewing agencies. A campaign has already been launched in India and has the backing of government, unions,

shipowners, crewing agencies, and welfare agencies. The campaign is being intensified in 2019/20 with the production of printed materials and the organisation of workshops.

The programme will increase the awareness of the effects of piracy among seafarers and their families. The programme will also raise awareness among seafarers and their families of support available after deaths at sea or other traumatic events. The regions will actively promote the support provided by SeafarerHelp and will work with other welfare providers.

The programme will aim to provide seafarers with the best possible support while awaiting trial or being unjustly imprisoned in the countries covered by the Regional Programme.

Visits to seafarers held in prison in Nigeria will be organised and a project developed with other partners such as the ITF Seafarers' Trust and Mission to Seafarers to ascertain the number of seafarers in prison and the support available to them. The offices in India and the Philippines will support families of seafarers from these countries unjustly detained and will work with government departments, embassies, unions, shipowners, and others to secure their release. The regions will continue to disseminate the self-help guides on mental wellbeing. The regional offices will organise mental health awareness briefings in maritime schools, crewing agencies, and shipping companies.

ISWAN will work with WISTA and other organisations in the regions to develop a programme to encourage more women to go to sea. ISWAN will use the regional presence to promote the IPWP in each region. The regional staff will play an active part in establishing port welfare committees in their regions.

Case study 4 – Help for seafarers when they need it most

A female seafarer contacted SeafarerHelp in an extremely distressed state. She was having suicidal thoughts brought on by a traumatic relationship breakdown.

The SeafarerHelp officer who first spoke to the seafarer realised the gravity of the situation. While providing emotional support, the SeafarerHelp officer also gathered as much information as possible from the seafarer to undertake a suicide risk assessment and work out the best way to help her.

The SeafarerHelp team assessed the seafarer as being a high suicide risk and they spent the next few days having long telephone conversations with her. The seafarer was very emotional – she felt that her career in the maritime industry had come to nothing, that she had no value and that there was no point in carrying on. She had no family or friends she could turn to so she felt isolated and vulnerable. The SeafarerHelp team reassured her and explained that they were there for her whenever she wanted to talk. They also rang her over the weekends to make sure she was OK.

In the meantime, the SeafarerHelp team were exploring other ways in which they could assist the seafarer. They believed she would benefit from face-to-face counselling, so with the seafarer's consent they

contacted her trade union's local office who agreed to fund some support. The seafarer was on leave and living outside of her home country, so the trade union arranged for her to see a local counsellor who spoke her language.

However, it became apparent that the counsellor's command of the seafarer's language was not good enough to counsel her so the SeafarerHelp team needed to find a replacement.

Despite contacting the seafarer's local embassy and another government's local consulate, the SeafarerHelp team could not find a suitable counsellor where she was living so they asked the seafarer if she would be happy to be counselled over Skype instead. When the seafarer agreed, they found and put her in touch with a counsellor experienced in the maritime industry. Over the next few weeks, the counsellor supported the seafarer through what was a very difficult time.

The seafarer now has a much better outlook and, at the time of writing, is pursuing a new job. She feels much stronger and more able to cope with the challenges she faces.

SeafarerHelp has offered the seafarer further support including counselling if she needs it.

International Port Welfare Partnership Programme (IPWP)

The IPWP will continue to facilitate the establishment of port welfare committees worldwide. However, with the programme due to end in 2020 ISWAN will work with partners to determine the future of support for existing and new port welfare committees, who will be encouraged to join ISWAN.

International Seafarers' Welfare Awards 2019

The awards are going to be held at Inmarsat in September during London International Shipping Week.

Other activities

ISWAN will be holding a seminar on the mental wellbeing of seafarers alongside the AGM/members' meeting in Mumbai in November 2019. There is also going to be a workshop on establishing port welfare committees run by the IPWP.

Case study 5 – Seafarer with hepatitis C supported by Seafarers Emergency Fund

A Filipino seafarer who had been working at sea for more than 10 years was shocked when he was diagnosed with hepatitis C at his pre-employment medical examination (PEME). The diagnosis prevented him from gaining medical clearance to work at sea and meant that he might never be able to work on board again.

The seafarer was worried that he would no longer be able to support his family. The oldest two of his three children gave up their studies to help provide for the family. The seafarer had also seen two specialists and was told he required various laboratory tests to assess his condition but he was unable to afford them. His manning agent was uncooperative and advised him that he was not covered by any insurance.

Desperately needing help, the seafarer contacted SeafarerHelp. The SeafarerHelp team immediately got in touch with ISWAN's Regional Representative in the Philippines, Jun Pablo. Jun accompanied the seafarer to hospital for further tests and scheduled a meeting with the

seafarer and a Sailors' Society chaplain to discuss the case.

The seafarer was faced with costly medical expenses – one laboratory test alone cost \$500 (USD) – so Jun applied to ISWAN's Seafarers Emergency Fund (SEF) on the seafarer's behalf. The application was approved and the seafarer was awarded a grant of \$2,960 (USD) to pay for his medical tests and treatment.

The seafarer later contacted SeafarerHelp to provide an update on his recovery: "Me and my family are very thankful to you [SeafarerHelp Team] because of your kind heart. I will be able to support my family again when I get well and I believe that God made ISWAN the instrument for me to have a second chance in my life... when I felt hopeless and weak, you lift me up and gave me hope. No words can express on how to say my gratitude to ISWAN, and also to your staff in ISWAN Philippines, they really take good care of me on the process of treatment. May God always bless all of you in ISWAN so you can continue to give hope to seafarers in need."





SeafarerHelp

The lifeline for seafarers

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