



Some countries reintroduce restrictions and test requirements following Chinese ease of regulations

Six months after the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator transitioned from monthly to quarterly updates, the situation remains fairly stable. The rise in infections in China is cause for concern, as other countries reintroduce test requirements and restrictions against seafarers coming out of some Asian countries, posing new challenges to crew changes.

Copenhagen, 19 October 2022 –The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator for the fourth quarter of 2022 shows that 2.7% of seafarers are still stuck onboard vessels beyond contract expiration, a 0.6 percentage point drop compared to the third quarter.

The number of seafarers kept from disembarking is the lowest since the Crew Change Indicator was introduced in May 2021. At the same time, the percentage of seafarers onboard vessels for more than 11 months fell to 0.2%, a decrease of 0.1 percentage points since the October indicator.

“The numbers trend in the right direction, but the figures still represent thousands of seafarers, who can’t get to work or journey home, as they were supposed to. The fundamental issues of seafarers not being treated as key workers also hasn’t changed, which will be a global problem if the pandemic resurges or when we face a similar problem in the future,” says **Susanne Justesen, Ph.D., Project Director Human Sustainability, Global Maritime Forum.**

Ship managers report that the recent ease in restrictions in China is simultaneously encouraging and concerning. While China repeals restrictions, other countries, including India and Japan, implement new test requirements and restrictions for seafarers arriving from specific Asian countries because of the rise in infections. Furthermore, local and central governments in China are not yet aligned, and crew changes in China are thus very reliant on local agents to ensure compliance with regulations.

Vaccinations continue

The indicator suggests that seafarers are still getting vaccinated, as the number of seafarers vaccinated is up 2.7 percentage points since October, bringing the number of vaccinated seafarers to 95.6%. Data-providing ship managers report that concerns remain over the possibility of new variants developing and current vaccinations not being sufficiently effective. Some ship managers further note that they opt to replace non-vaccinated crew members with vaccinated crew members when possible.

The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator builds on aggregated data from ten leading ship managers: Anglo- Eastern, Bernhard Schulte, Columbia Shipmanagement, Fleet Management (FLEET), OSM, Synergy Marine, Thome, V.Group, Wallem Ship Management, and Wilhelmsen Ship Management which collectively have about 100,000 seafarers currently onboard.

The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator is published every quarter and builds on aggregated data provided by the ship managers to the Global Maritime Forum. The data is used to calculate a weighted average of the percentage of seafarers who have been onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract of employment, a weighted average of the percentage of seafarers who have been onboard vessels for over 11 months, and a weighted average of the percentage of seafarers who have been vaccinated. As top ship managers are making significant efforts – and are often better placed – in facilitating crew changes, the Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator cannot be used directly to calculate the full numbers of seafarers impacted by the crew change crisis. Likewise, the calculated percentage of seafarers who have been vaccinated is likely to overestimate the actual proportion of vaccinated seafarers.

The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator for the fourth quarter of 2022 can be found [here](#).

For further information: Project Director, Human Sustainability, Susanne Justesen at sj@globalmaritimeforum.org.

About the Global Maritime Forum

The Global Maritime Forum is an international not-for-profit organization committed to shaping the future of global seaborne trade to increase sustainable long-term economic development and human wellbeing.