

Neptune Declaration Signatory Update

December 2021



The Neptune Declaration
on Seafarer Wellbeing
and Crew Change

Overview

- The Neptune Declaration was published 12 months ago, and it is now time to take stock on our progress achieved for each Neptune Declaration action area and zoom in on remaining challenges.
- The Neptune Declaration builds on and seeks to reinforce the many good efforts and initiatives that are already ongoing. The main activities will thus be through these existing channels, and it is up to each signatory to determine, what actions are relevant to take, based on their role in the value chain.
- Signatories are encouraged to use the Neptune Declaration as a statement of shared commitment to work collectively across the industry to facilitate crew changes.
- The lead on the ongoing activities to facilitate crew changes and engage with government will be taken by ICS, in close collaboration with ITF, IMEC, Global Maritime Forum and with the continued support of the Taskforce.
- Global Maritime Forum will continue to publish the monthly Neptune Indicator based on data from Ship Managers.



I. Recognise Seafarers as Key Workers and give them Priority Access to Covid-19 Vaccines

- **What has been achieved:**

- At the start of 2021, only relatively few nations recognized seafarers as key workers in line with the UN General Assembly resolution adopted December 2020. This number has since risen to **65** [Dec 2021].
- Many governments and ports have announced they are offering international seafarers' access to vaccines, especially ports in The Americas and Europe, but also in Panama, Singapore, and elsewhere.
- According to the latest Neptune Indicator 49.5% of the seafarers in the sample have now been vaccinated, which is a significant improvement since we began tracking vaccinations in August (15,3%).

- **Remaining challenges:**

- Seafarers from developing countries continue to have limited access to vaccines.
- Many governments do not recognize vaccinations carried out in 3rd countries often forcing seafarers to be vaccinated with more than one vaccine.
- There are concerns that Omicron will further challenge access to vaccines and boosters in coming months.
- Need remains to push for Priority Access to vaccines for seafarers; and for global vaccine standards to protect seafarers from having to take multiple vaccines to allow for crew changes.



II. Establish and Implement Gold Standard Health Protocols Based on Existing Best Practice

- **What has been achieved:**

- Best practices for crew change protocols and quarantines have been developed and piloted in multiple countries and implemented by governments across the world, which has been an important facilitator of crew changes in general.

- **Remaining Challenges:**

- Due to the lack of common global standards, governments still work by different protocols for quarantine and vaccine recognitions, posing continued challenges to crew changes worldwide.
- In addition, governments have found it necessary to adjust the requirements at very short notice, which has led to severe disruptions of planned crew changes despite the best efforts of companies.
- Best practices and high-quality health protocols need to be continuously communicated to governments, and implemented on a larger scale to ensure crew-changes despite the new situation with Omicron



III. Increase Collaboration Between Ship Operators and Charterers to Facilitate Crew Change

- **What has been achieved:**

- All Neptune Declaration Signatories have committed to not use “no crew change clauses” in contracts.
- To share examples of best practice, a framework of “[Best Practices for Charterers](#)” based on the Neptune Declaration was developed and published by a group of leading charterers in early May with an [op-ed](#).
- The United Nations Global Compact issued a “[A Tool to Support Human Rights Due Diligence](#)” for businesses, specifically drafted for cargo owners and charterers.

- **Remaining challenges:**

- Continue to push for transparent and collaborative dialogue between charterers and operators.
- Establish strong internal alignment to ensure that leadership commitments are also reflected in the decisions taken at the chartering desk.



IV. Ensure Air Connectivity Between Key Maritime Hubs for Seafarers

- **What has been achieved:**

- The number of flights in November 2020 showed a reduction in flight of about 50 percent compared to 2019, which was causing very serious challenges for crew changes. This number has improved significantly during the past year, with the total number of flights in November 2021 only being 20 percent lower than in 2019.
- The improved rates of seafarer vaccinations has also alleviated the travel situation, although the renewed travel restrictions due to Omicron continues to pose challenges for seafarers.

- **Remaining challenges:**

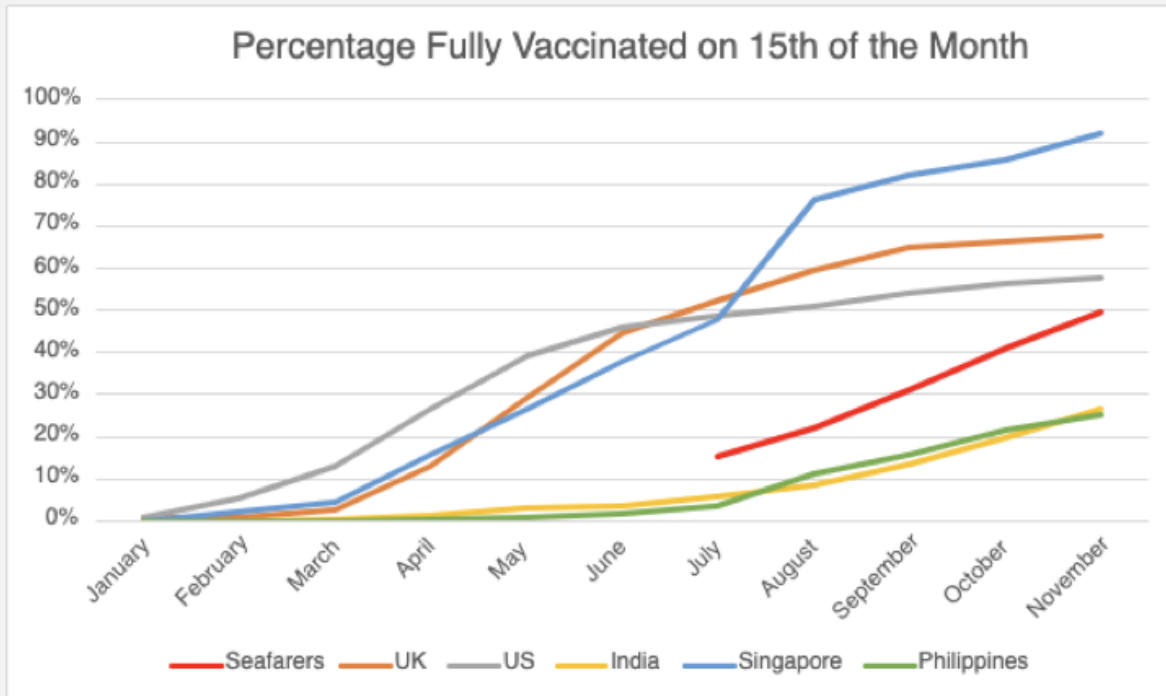
- Reimposed travel restrictions from more than 50 countries due to Omicron, rechallenging air connectivity.
- Different vaccines required by different countries, posing serious challenges to seafarer mobility.
- Support the stakeholders who are actively involved in ensuring air connectivity.



The Neptune Declaration Crew Change Indicator

- **What has been achieved:**

- The indicator has been published by Global Maritime Forum since May 2021 and is monitoring the situation and changes of seafarers affected by overdue crew-changes. Since August, the Indicator also includes the percentage of seafarers who have been vaccinated.



	Percentage of seafarers onboard beyond the expiry of their contracts		Percentage of seafarers onboard for over 11 months	
	Monthly percentage	Percentage point change from previous month	Monthly percentage	Percentage point change from previous month
December 2021	4.7%	-2.4	0.7%	-0.3
November 2021	7.1%	-0.8	1.0%	0
October 2021	7.9%	-1.0	1.0%	-0.2
September 2021	8.9%	-0.1	1.2%	-0.1
August 2021	9.0%	+0.2	1.3%	+0.3
July 2021	8.8%	+1.6	1.0%	+0.6
June 2021	7.2%	+1.4	0.4%	0
May 2021	5.8%	-	0.4%	-



About The Neptune Declaration

- **Objectives:**

- Raise Awareness about the on-going crew change crisis.
- Build momentum around the concrete actions to address the situation contained in the *Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change*.
- Demonstrate the willingness of leading stakeholders in the maritime industry and beyond to work together to address the situation.

- **Status:**

- There were 327 Signatories at launch, and the number has reached **862** by December 2021.
- There have been **3,270** media mentions and **3,270** social media posts (Instagram and LinkedIn excluded) identified by mid-December.

- Declaration available [here](#)

