

CREW WATCH

MAY 2020

COVID-19 THE FACTS

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM COVID-19

HOW TO LIMIT THE SPREAD THE RIGHT PRECAUTIONS

MENTAL HEALTH STAYING HEALTHY DURING COVID-19

SUPPORT FOR SEAFARERS SOURCES OF HELP



BRITANNIA P&I
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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

BRITANNIA'S MISSION IS TO BE **THE FINEST P&I CLUB IN THE WORLD.**

COVID-19 is the most serious pandemic in our lifetime and is having an enormous impact on the whole world. In this special edition of Crew Watch we are setting out the basic facts about the virus, providing some practical advice about how to prevent the spread and what to do to contain an outbreak and also looking at the effect that COVID-19 can have on the mental health of seafarers in these uncertain times.

Travel restrictions have been imposed across the world and this has had a significant effect on the movement of crew. Many crew changes are disrupted or postponed and shore leave is often impossible. It may be hard to get vital supplies delivered to the ship and in some cases permission to enter a port may be refused or, in some places, the ship is subject to quarantine before allowed entrance. A broad coalition of seafarers' unions, and international shipping industry associations, together with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), are working hard to try and limit these disruptions. They are also campaigning for seafarers to be recognised as 'keyworkers' by local governments in order to exempt them from some of the restrictions and allow repatriation.

While it is very important to be aware and follow all the precautions and restrictions surrounding COVID-19, we also need to remember that most of those who catch the virus have a very mild illness or have no symptoms at all. We encourage everyone to try and stay positive and to try and avoid much of the negative information in the media that can unnecessarily increase worry and anxiety.

As always, if you have any questions on any of the issues raised, please contact us at: publications@tindallriley.com

Stay safe and look after yourselves.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EDITORS We hope you've enjoyed this issue of Crew Watch. We are looking for ways to maintain and increase the usefulness, relevance and general interest of the articles. If you have any ideas or comments please send them to: publications@tindallriley.com

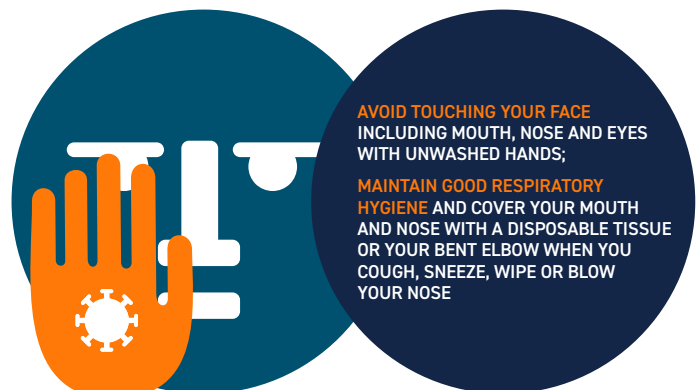
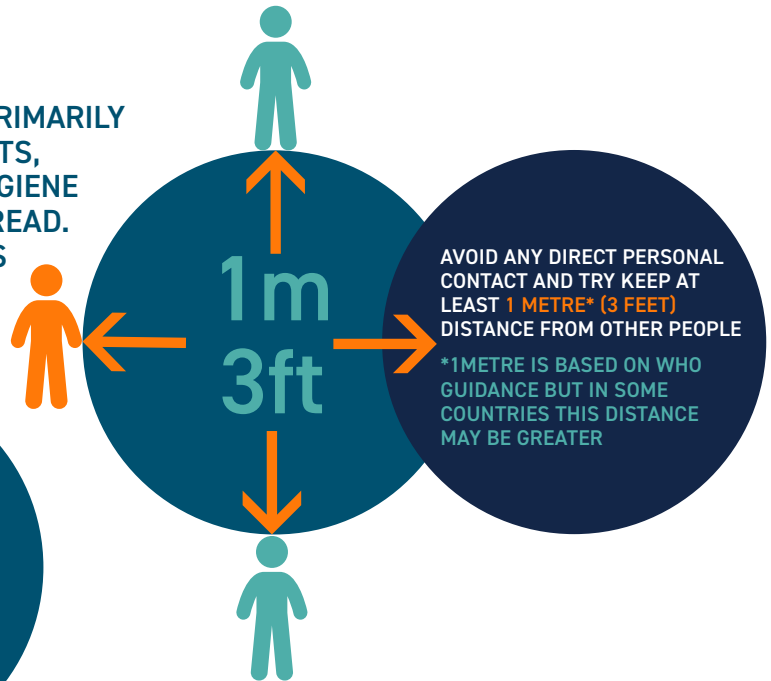
COVID-19

THE FACTS:



HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

AS THE **COVID-19** VIRUS IS UNDERSTOOD TO PRIMARILY TRANSMIT THROUGH RESPIRATORY DROPLETS, MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCE AND GOOD HYGIENE ARE TWO IMPORTANT WAYS TO PREVENT SPREAD. IN ORDER TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS TAKE THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS:



FACE MASKS MAY PROVIDE SOME PROTECTION AND THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) ADVICE IS THAT MASKS ARE TO BE WORN WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING BUT ARE ONLY EFFECTIVE IF COMBINED WITH A GOOD HAND HYGIENE. IF A PERSON IS HEALTHY, IT IS ONLY NECESSARY TO WEAR A MASK IF TAKING CARE OF A PERSON WITH THE SUSPECTED COVID-19 INFECTION. HOWEVER, YOUR COMPANY OR THE PORT AUTHORITIES MIGHT HAVE STRICTER REQUIREMENTS ON THE USE OF MASKS WHICH WILL NEED TO BE FOLLOWED. MASKS SHOULD ALWAYS BE REQUIRED FOR ANY VISITORS TO THE SHIP.

WHO ADVICE ON THE USE OF MASKS DOWNLOAD: [OW.LY/ANF030QJRSB](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/face-mask-use-during-covid-19)

REMEMBER - IF YOU SHOW ANY SYMPTOMS SUCH AS FEVER, COUGH OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING THEN ISOLATE YOURSELF AND ADVISE THE MASTER IMMEDIATELY SO THAT PROPER MEDICAL ATTENDANCE CAN BE ARRANGED. YOU SHOULD ALSO ADVISE THE MASTER IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SOMEONE SHOWING SYMPTOMS OF THE VIRUS.

HOW TO LIMIT THE SPREAD...

WITH THE RIGHT PRECAUTIONS IN PLACE, THE RISK OF A **COVID-19** OUTBREAK ON BOARD A SHIP IS LOW. HOWEVER, WHEN THERE IS A SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED CASE OF THE **COVID-19** VIRUS ON BOARD IT IS IMPORTANT THAT CONTROL MEASURES ARE QUICKLY PUT IN PLACE TO LIMIT THE SPREAD. EACH SHIP SHOULD HAVE A WRITTEN OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT PLAN (OMP) ON BOARD. THE CREW SHOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH ITS CONTENT AND AND IMPLEMENT IT AS REQUIRED.

THE OMP SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM CONTROL MEASURES:



THE SUSPECTED **COVID-19** PATIENT SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY ISOLATED, AND ALL CREW MEMBERS SHOULD TAKE PROTECTIVE MEASURES WITH THE PATIENT

DIRECT OR CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE PATIENT SHOULD BE AVOIDED WHERE POSSIBLE BUT THOSE IN CONTACT SHOULD WEAR SUITABLE PPE (GLOVES, IMPERMEABLE GOWN, GOGGLES AND MEDICAL MASK)



CLOSE CONTACTS SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED AND PLACED UNDER MEDICAL OBSERVATION IN THEIR CABINS.

A CLOSE CONTACT IS SOMEONE WHO HAS:

BEEN WITHIN **1 METRE** OR IN AN ENCLOSED ENVIRONMENT WITH THE PATIENT

THE SHIP SHOULD BE FULLY DISINFECTED USING HOT WATER, DETERGENT AND APPLYING COMMON DISINFECTANTS. A HIGH CLEANING STANDARD MUST BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE OUTBREAK



THE COMPANY SHOULD BE NOTIFIED AND PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE OBTAINED TO WORK OUT THE BEST TREATMENT. IF IN PORT, THE LOCAL AGENT OR COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE

ANY LAUNDRY, FOOD SERVICE UTENSILS AND WASTE FROM THE CABIN OF THE PATIENT OR SUSPECT CASES AND CONTACTS SHOULD BE TREATED AS INFECTIOUS. THE OMP SHOULD COVER THE HANDLING OF INFECTIOUS MATERIALS ON BOARD



THE MASTER SHOULD IMMEDIATELY ALERT THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY AT THE NEXT PORT OF CALL TO DETERMINE IF THE NECESSARY CAPACITY TO TRANSPORT, ISOLATE, AND CARE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL IS AVAILABLE

ONCE THE PATIENT OR SUSPECTED CASE HAS BEEN DISEMBARKED, THE CABIN OR QUARTERS WHERE THE PERSON HAD BEEN ISOLATED SHOULD BE THOROUGHLY CLEANED AND DISINFECTED BY STAFF USING PPE AND WHO ARE TRAINED TO CLEAN SURFACES CONTAMINATED WITH INFECTIOUS AGENTS. THE MASTER AND COMPANY SHOULD BE IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE LOCAL PORT HEALTH AUTHORITIES TO CONFIRM ANY MEASURES FOR THE REST OF THE CREW.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE IS AN INFECTION ON BOARD SEE THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING GUIDANCE WHICH CAN BE FREELY DOWNLOADED FROM THE ICS WEBSITE:

[ICS-SHIPPING.ORG/FREE-RESOURCES/COVID-19](https://www.ics-shipping.org/free-resources/covid-19)

MAINTAIN YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19



Connie S Gehrt
CONOVAH Health and Safety Solutions



THE LEVEL OF UNCERTAINTY FOR SEAFARERS HAS BEEN HIGHER THAN EVER DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. VERY UNDERSTANDABLY, MANY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR LOVED ONES AT HOME. THE WORLDWIDE LOCKDOWN HAS HAD A HUGE EFFECT ON CREW CHANGE AND SEAFARERS HAVE HAD TO STAY ON BOARD FOR MUCH LONGER PERIODS THAN NORMALLY. BOREDOM AND FATIGUE ARE NATURAL CONSEQUENCES OF BEING ON BOARD FOR LONGER PERIODS.

NORMAL REACTIONS AND COPING MECHANISMS

Sometimes it's good to remember that it's perfectly normal to react differently in these strange and unusual situations. Uncertainty and danger activate our natural defence mechanisms. Fear and anxiety are normal responses that help us respond and cope appropriately with dangerous situations. We all react differently whether with mood swings, becoming more grumpy or angry or feeling a need to downplay the whole thing. It's all about defence mechanisms trying to help us cope. However, sometimes they also make us overreact or overthink a situation.

If you can recognise these as defence mechanisms in your own reactions or in those of others it might help you understand and meet yourself and others with more empathy and kindness. It's good to try and understand the situation and perspective of others and to assume too much. Ask questions – don't assume you know what people are feeling. You might be surprised at their answers.

CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE

Worrying about things like the weather and the pandemic often cause frustration because they are not really within our control. Here it can be helpful to have a reality check and focus on things that are within your circle of influence or control. How can you adapt? What is possible for you to do? What information is necessary and helpful? Maybe select a few reliable news sources and limit the time reading these.

Talk about your concerns, needs and expectations, and try to establish a supportive community on board. Stick to good

routines and talk to each other about your individual need for time together and time alone. But try also to break the monotony once in a while. Bear with yourself and others if you or they sometimes lose patience. Accept it's a strain on everybody whether on board or at home. Try to occasionally relax and take a break from the worries.

THINGS YOU CAN INFLUENCE

- try to get some sleep – too little sleep can make you more likely to worry.
- eat a healthy and varied diet – this gives you extra energy.
- stay physically active – physical activity helps your health and improves your mood and energy levels. Organise a tournament, put some music on and have a dance competition – laughter is so positive.
- stay mentally active – keep your brain active by reading a book or magazine, solve sudoku, doing a puzzle. Doing things that require creativity, concentration or doing things with others promotes good mental health.
- help each other cope – be aware of each other and pay particular attention to staying in touch with your family and loved ones. Reach out to your manager or HR if you need further support.
- don't blame yourself or others for being affected by the situation. Remember that illness is caused by viruses, not people. Take care of yourself. When you look after yourself, you can better care for others.

CONNIE GEHRT IS WORKING WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING, SUICIDE PREVENTION, CRISIS, PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE AND PROMOTING GOOD LEADERSHIP AT SEA. SHE HAS BEEN WORKING IN THE MARITIME INDUSTRY SINCE 2002 AND HOLDS A MASTER'S IN LAW AND A MASTER'S IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ORGANISATIONS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT CONNIE'S WORK PLEASE CONTACT [CONOVAH.COM](https://www.conovah.com)

SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

COVID-19 HAS CERTAINLY CREATED ADDITIONAL PRESSURES AND ANXIETIES FOR SEAFARERS. IN THE PREVIOUS ARTICLE, THE IMPORTANCE OF HELPING ONE ANOTHER THROUGH THESE EXTRAORDINARY AND UNCERTAIN TIMES WAS RIGHTLY STRESSED, LIKEWISE THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEKING HELP FROM YOUR EMPLOYER.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE A VARIETY OF OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO SEAFARERS:



SAILORS' SOCIETY

At the time of writing, this charity had suspended its port activities around the world. However, it has instead been rolling out virtual seafarer support in response to the crisis. This has included helping stranded crews, as well as those who are sick or unable to work.

The charity has created a new dedicated emergency **COVID-19 helpline** for seafarers and their family members, available by calling:

+1-938-222-8181 or via instant chat at:

wellnessatsea.org/covid-19

A Coronavirus seafarer support Facebook group has also been set up providing ongoing advice, support and community at:

facebook.com/groups/coronavirus

The charity also has developed a range of dedicated material to help seafarers deal with the crisis, including Q&As, and podcasts on 'How to Cope with Coronavirus' and 'Relaxation', providing practical advice to seafarers on how to manage their mental and emotional wellbeing.

In addition, Britannia is a proud sponsor of the charity's **Wellness at Sea App**, details of which are available at:

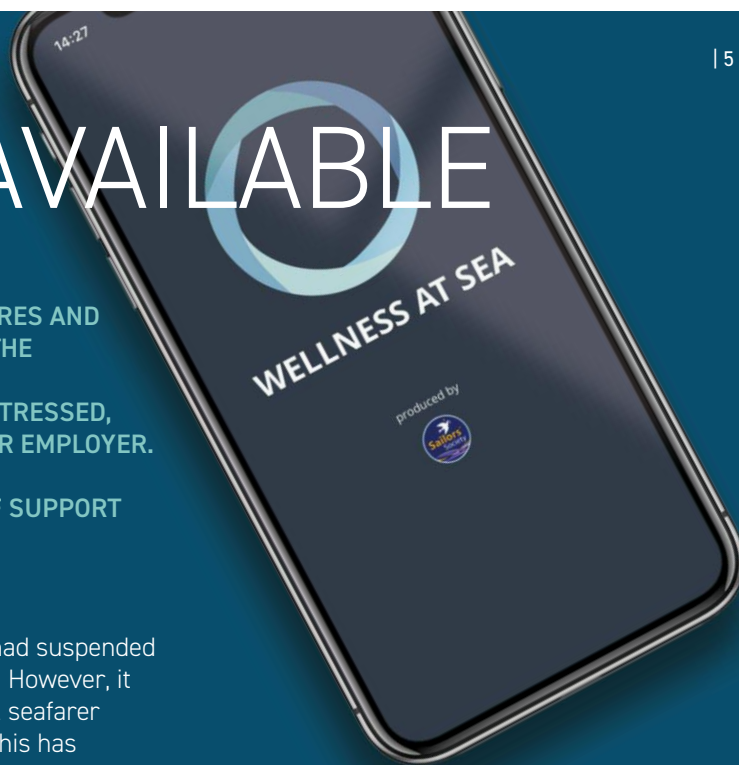
wellnessatsea.org/services/mobile-app/

INTERNATIONAL SEAFARERS' WELFARE AND ASSISTANCE NETWORK (ISWAN)

ISWAN's **SeafarerHelp** is a free, confidential, multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families that continues to be available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

Seafarers and their families can contact the helpline via a range of channels including telephone by calling **+44 20 7323 2737** or by e-mail: **help@seafarerhelp.org**, WhatsApp and Live Chat, and speak confidentially to a helpline officer. More information about SeafarerHelp and full contact details can be found at:

seafarerhelp.org



The helpline has experienced a surge in demand during the current crisis, but its trained officers have been able to provide support to hundreds of seafarers experiencing issues as a result of the **COVID-19** outbreak.

A variety of useful information and resources has also been collated at:

seafarerhelp.org/en/health-well-being/seafarers-health-resources/coronavirus-covid-19



MISSION TO SEAFARERS

Although this charity has been able to sustain a limited service in many ports at the time of writing, most of its Seafarers Centres have unfortunately had to close due to the crisis. However, the Mission has instead been focussing on offering "digital chaplaincy", by supporting chaplains in maintaining digital and social media contact with their seafarer networks.

The charity has also launched a "**Chat to a Chaplain**" service, accessible from their website at: **missiontoseafarers.org/**. This is a major digital facility allowing 25 chaplains at any one time to connect with seafarers who may want to talk or seek support and advice. The '**Chat to a Chaplain**' helpline will work collaboratively with the ISWAN seafarer helpline and the icall centre, supported by Synergy.

Seafarers can also contact the charity at: **crewhelp@mtsmail.org**

Britannia gives regular donations to the Mission to Seafarers.

THANK YOU SEAFARERS OF THE WORLD DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

TO END OUR SPECIAL EDITION OF CREW WATCH WE WANT TO TELL ALL SEAFARERS ACROSS THE WORLD HOW GRATEFUL WE ARE TO YOU FOR BEING COURAGEOUS AND DETERMINED IN THE FACE OF THIS GLOBAL PANDEMIC.

Shipping is vital to the global economy – not only is 90% of world trade carried by ships, but the industry employs more than one million seafarers across the globe. It is always demanding work, but never more so than now with all the additional challenges and problems created by COVID-19.

But we want you to remember that you are not alone. Kitack Lim, the Secretary-General of the IMO, recently sent out his personal message to seafarers around the world:

“ I, personally, have been deeply touched by the many stories we have heard from individual seafarers of the challenges, hardships and sacrifices that seafarers have made to keep the global supply chain moving while helping the global population.

I have written to all our Member States, urging them to recognize all seafarers as “key workers”, remove any barriers to your documentation and lift national travel restrictions so that you can get home on conclusion of your contracts, and rejoin your families. ”

Kitack Lim

Secretary General of the IMO

There are many organisations around the world dedicated to helping seafarers – together with charities and industry bodies they are all working hard to support all those at sea who may be struggling.

We urge you to share your stories and experiences with us – send us your photos to: publications@tindallriley.com and tell us about how you and your colleagues are finding ways to cope in these strange times.



SUPPLYING THE WORLD

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



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