



The
Seafarers
Happiness
Index

Seafarers Happiness Index

Quarter 3 2021

Special edition:

In the Shadow of a Pandemic



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Seafarers Happiness Index

Quarter 3

The Seafarers Happiness Index (SHI) is the shipping industry's ongoing barometer of the key issues facing those at sea today. Seafarers are asked 10 key questions every quarter, sharing their views about specific issues affecting their life and work.

This latest report highlights not only the findings of the Quarter 3 2021 data but serves to assess what crew have been saying throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We look at how the data has stacked up over the past two years, to explore some of the lessons which have been learned, and the opportunities yet to be taken.

We heard from crews all over the world and we are grateful to every single one of them, not simply for assisting us with the survey, but for their efforts in keeping trade flowing in these most difficult circumstances. They do so with professionalism, care and resolve. However, we must also stress the frustration evidenced by many responses, and the growing demand to be recognised as key or essential workers. These calls cannot and should not be ignored.

Q3 2021 Seafarer Tipping Point

According to the data received, the Quarter 3 2021 Seafarers Happiness Index showed an overall average score of 6.59/10, which was up from 5.99 in the previous reporting period.

There was, therefore, some improvement to be seen in seafarer happiness. However, the most serious and fundamental issue persists, that of leave. Whether it is crew change issues or the inability to access any shore leave, we are seeing anger, frustration, stress, annoyance and pain.

This issue of pain is a telling one. It is said that pain is a great teacher – and sadly it seems to be teaching seafarers that perhaps a career at sea is not for them. We heard from a growing number of respondents who stated that they will be completing their trip and not coming back, or who are throwing themselves into finding a new job. Some are seeking roles within maritime, but many are just looking for a way to get out. We heard from a number of seafarers who said they had no desire to continue at sea, or even in the industry.

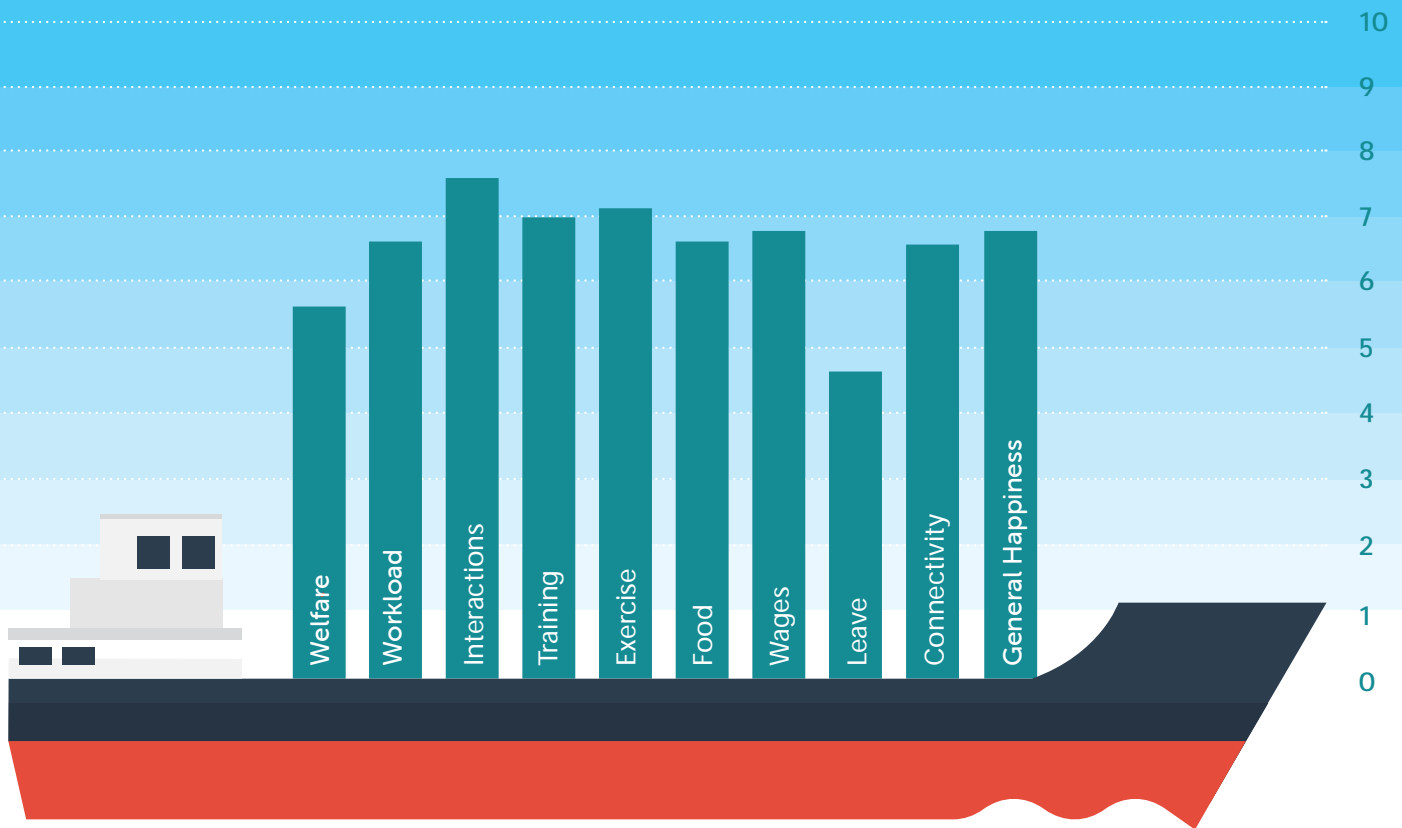
Another issue that was repeatedly mentioned was the mental health impacts now being felt. "I cannot get ashore and talk to anyone but those on board", was one quote, reflecting the intense and claustrophobic problems which some crew are going through.

So, despite some encouraging indications and the small upswing in the data, we note signs of trouble to come, namely the shortage of replacement crews and a drain of seafarers away from the industry.

There are clearly real problems at the heart of the seafaring profession. Without leave and certainty about crew changes, many seafarers are reluctant to come back to sea. This in turn leads to more difficulties with crew changes, and we are seemingly at a tipping point, one that could spiral out of control if remedial actions are not taken.

The Latest Data

The Quarter 3 2021 data indicated increases in happiness in most areas of onboard life, with only food and leave experiencing drops. This modest rise comes as a relief after the data had been falling for so long, and so consistently.



There were some positive signs in the feedback and a sense that in some places and for some nationalities, COVID-related issues are beginning to plateau. This could also be because mechanisms to support seafarers have now had a chance to bed in, and problems have begun to be addressed. For those who returned higher happiness figures, the responses captured increased optimism about getting home on time.

The issue of leave remained contentious – whether it is a short break away from the vessel to grab some shore leave or a crew changeover. This remains an obvious major sticking point for seafarers.

With regards to food, it seems that this is an interesting area which almost always seems to run contrary to the prevailing mood. If the general Index rises, then it is likely that food becomes an irritant, while conversely, when everything else is suffering, it seems that meals are a literal and figurative crumb of comfort.

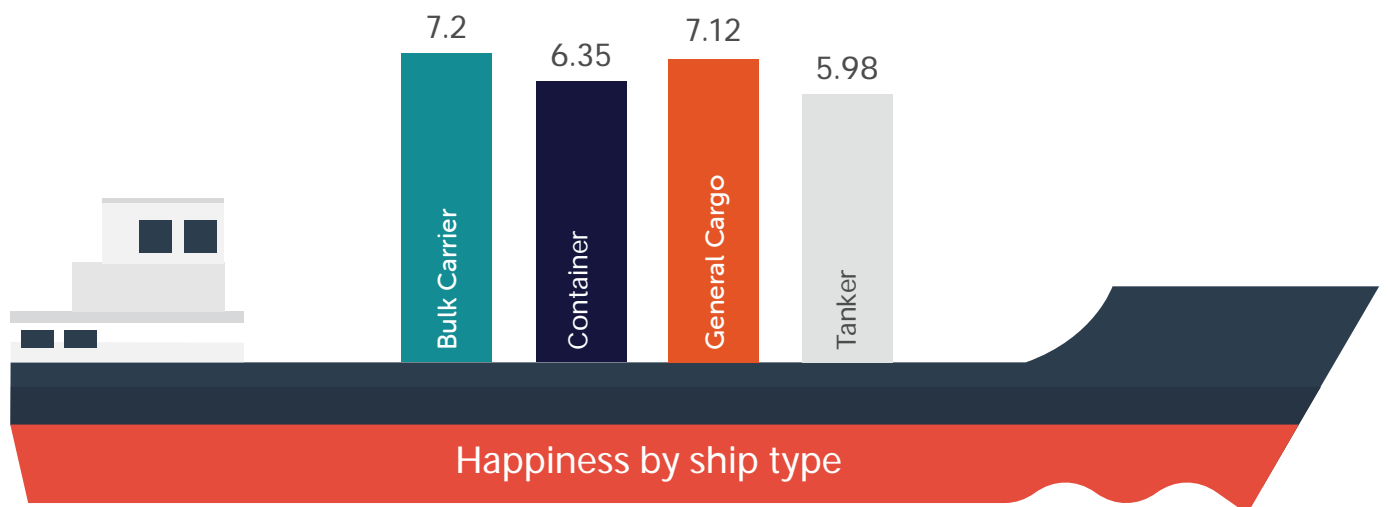
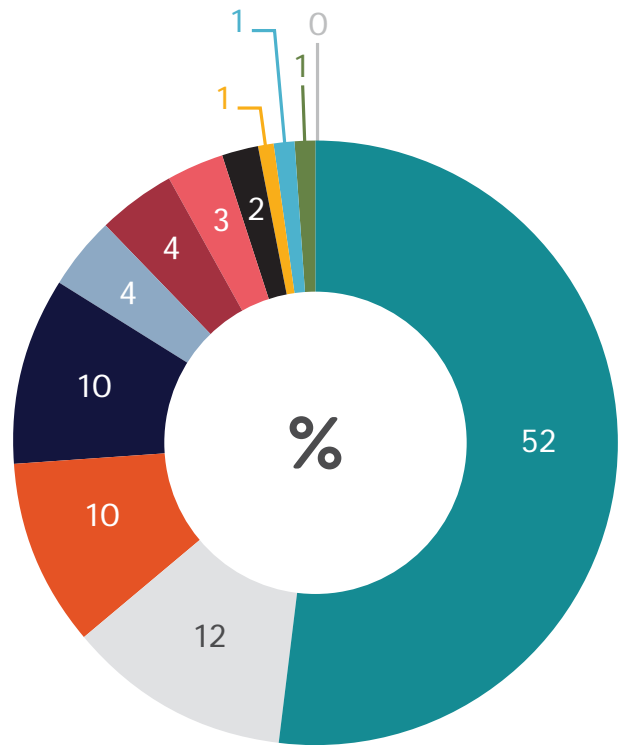
This time around we once again heard seafarers focus on the feeding rates, the standard of catering and the dearth of good quality ingredients. There was a new argument though, as Western seafarers claimed that they suffer as their diet tends to be more expensive, meaning the quality of their meals is reduced to save money. Whether real or imagined, this was a bone of contention for some respondents. “Why do we suffer when others do not?”, ran one question.

Another area of concern was training. While the data was positive, and we did hear good feedback about how senior officers on board were sharing their knowledge, there were some potential concerns. Some seafarers reported worries about revalidation periods of their certificates. They were concerned about future problems if they cannot get home to renew or refresh their shore-based training as required.

Ship Type

Bulk carriers formed the largest proportion of responses, and also performed better than the other majority vessel types when it came to happiness.

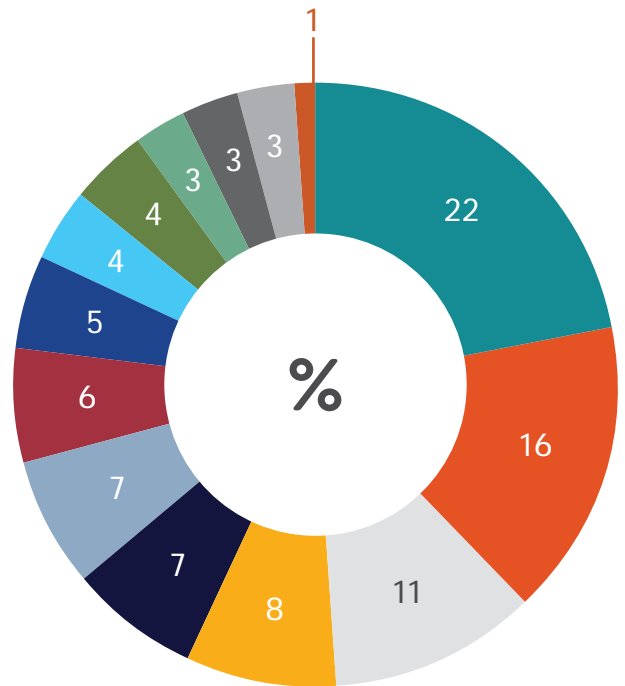
- Bulk Carrier
- Tanker
- General Cargo
- Container
- Ro-Ro
- Offshore
- Cable
- Ferry
- Survey
- Cruise
- Dredger
- Superyacht



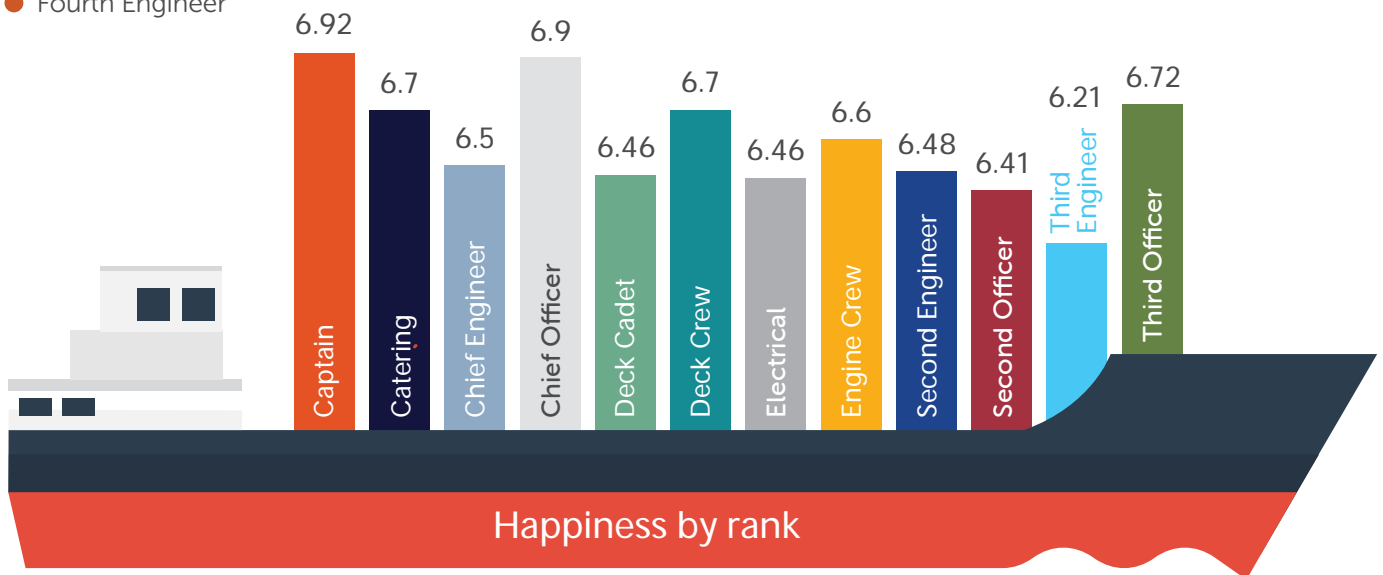
Happiness by ship type

Ranks

There was a fairly even spread in the number of responses across the ranks, with the deck side dominating slightly. Unusually, the senior officers, captains and chief engineers performed well when it came to happiness. This could perhaps relate to the rising happiness levels amongst the wider ship population, and perhaps this translated into them having less conflict on board to deal with.

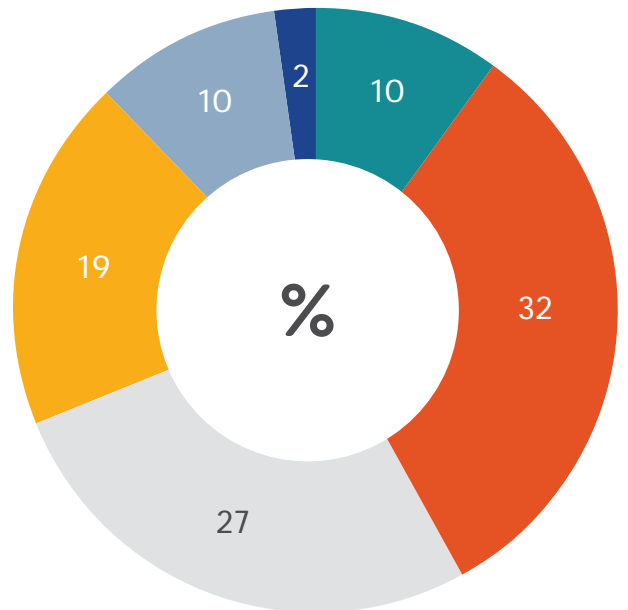


- Deck Crew
- Captain
- Chief Officer
- Engine Crew
- Catering Department
- Chief Engineer
- Second Officer
- Second Engineer
- Third Engineer
- Third Officer
- Deck Cadet
- Engine Cadet
- Electrical Department
- Fourth Engineer

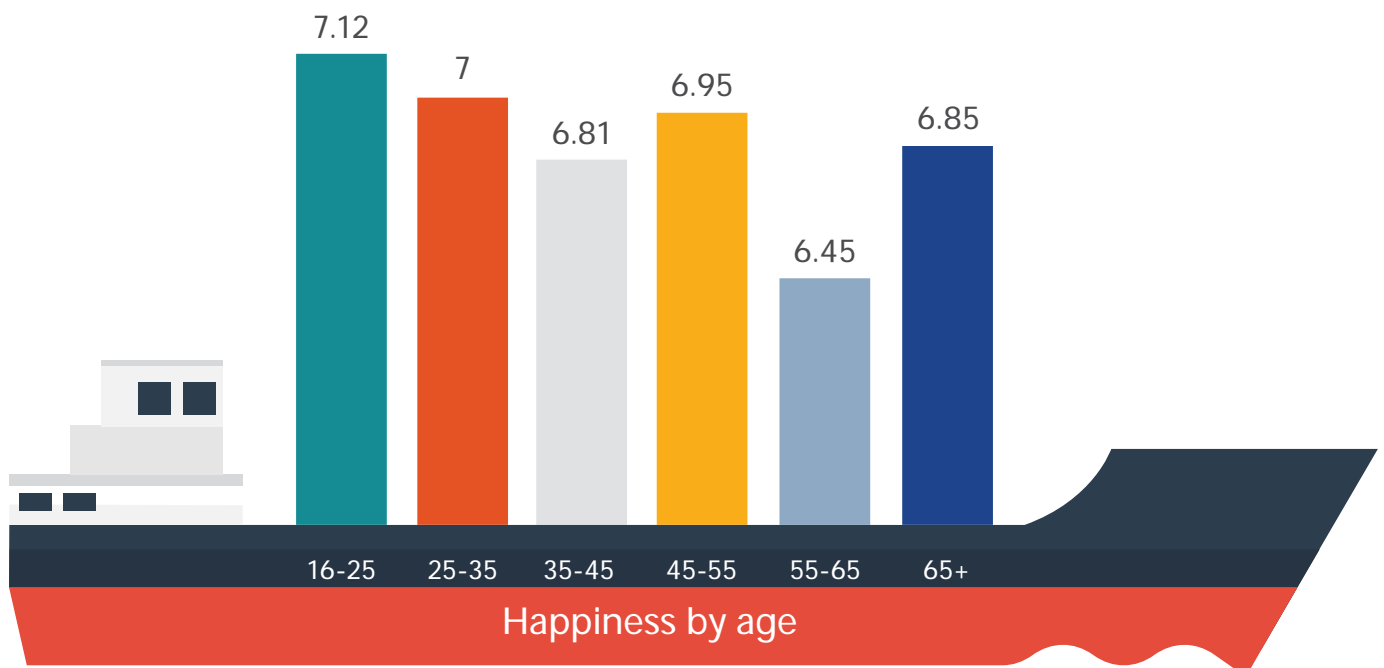


Age Range

Given the concerns which have emerged this quarter about the number of seafarers who are considering leaving their seagoing careers, it was reassuring to note that the happiest group were the younger seafarers. Hopefully, positivity will sustain, and the lifeblood of shipping will remain in seagoing careers long into the future. However, that has to be a concern for shipping, and efforts should therefore be expended in encouraging more people to stay in their careers.



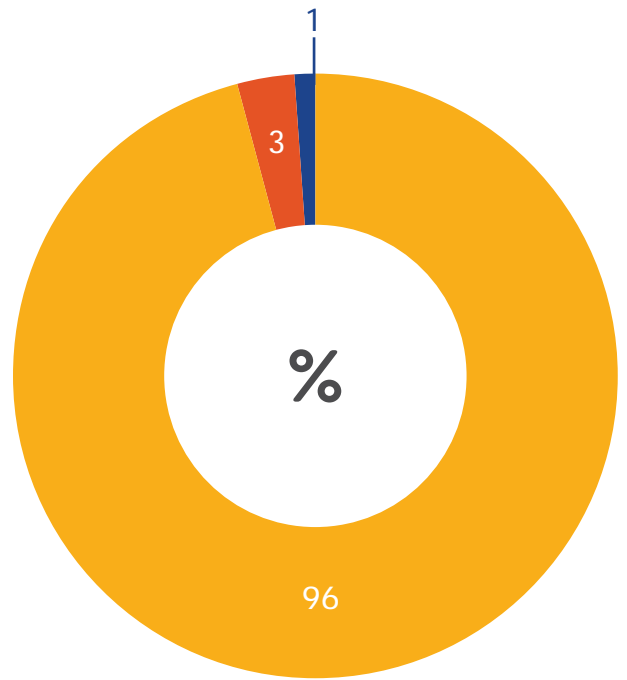
- 16-25
- 25-35
- 35-45
- 45-55
- 55-65
- 65+



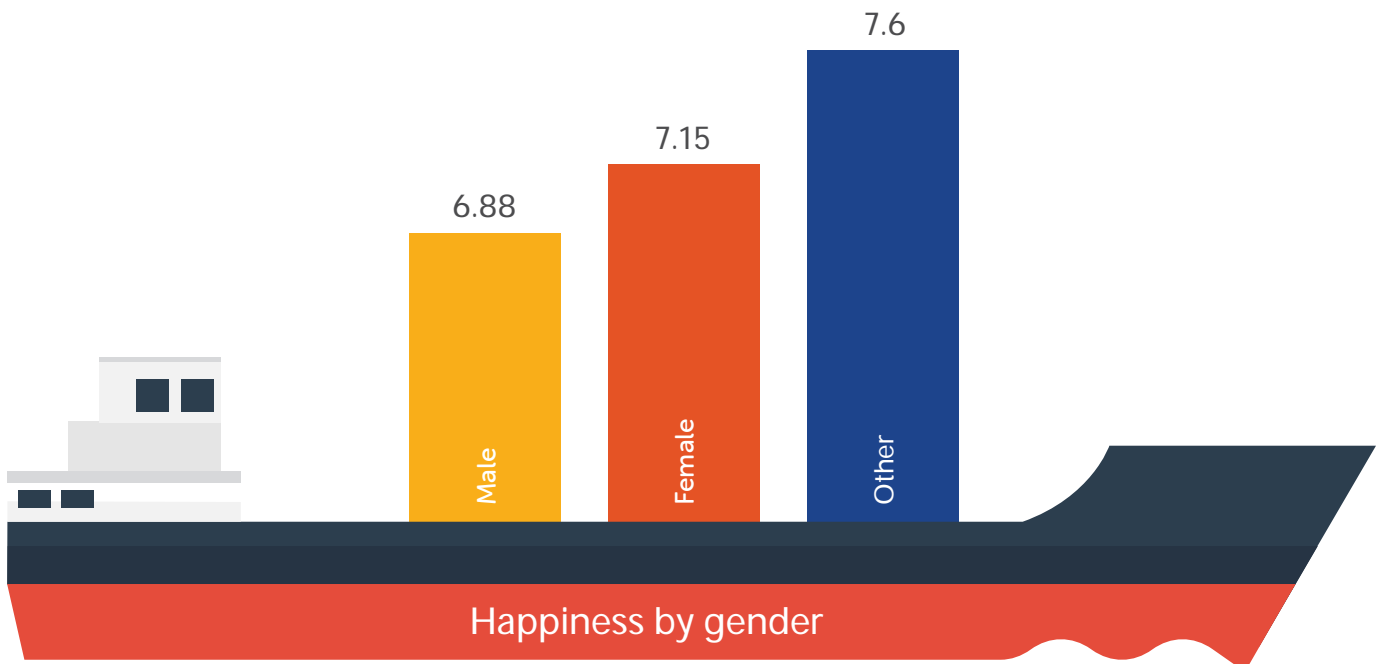
Gender

It is common for us to be disappointed with the comparative levels of response from male and female seafarers. This time is no different, and we shall maintain our efforts to engage with more female seafarers. The experiences of women at sea need to be heard and we look forward to hopefully being a positive platform to encourage and facilitate that.

While the percentage of respondents was poor, it was some slight comfort to note that happiness for females outperformed that of their male counterparts. However, as has often been the case, those who do not wish to state their gender performed better than others.



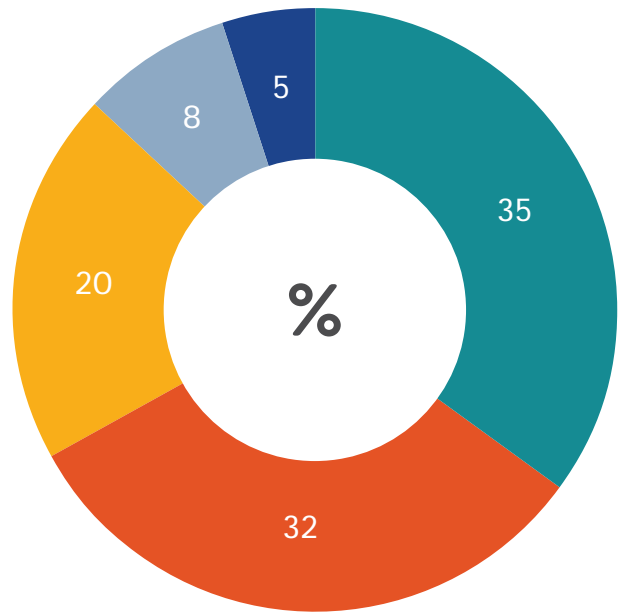
- Male
- Female
- Other



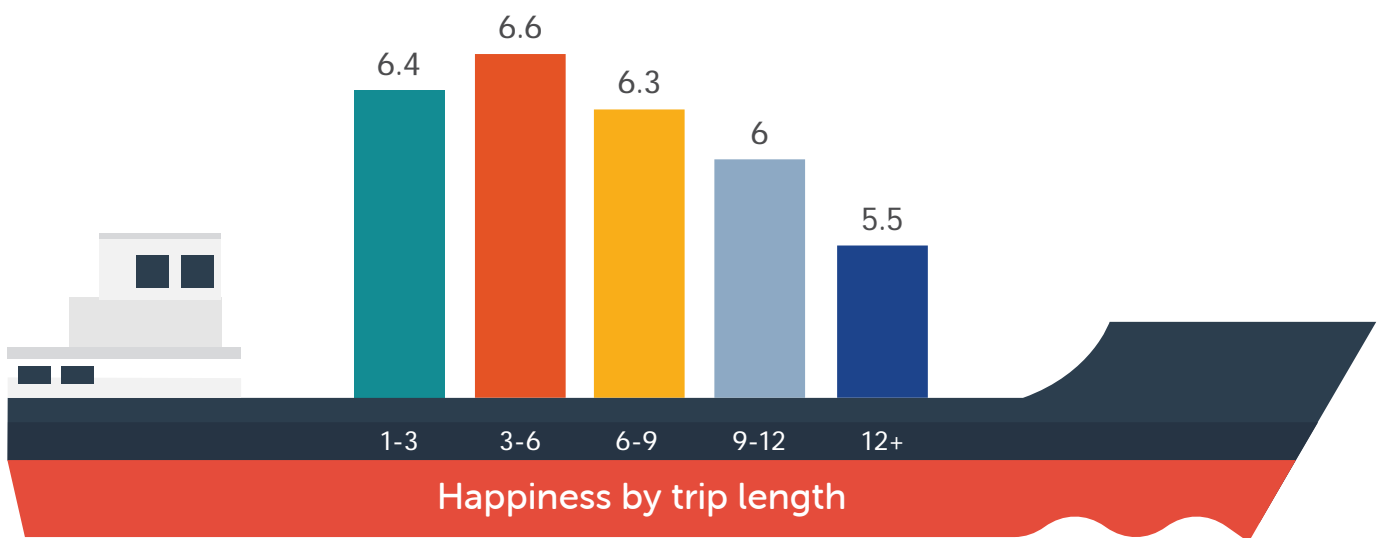
Trip Length

A new area of questioning for 2021 has been to enquire as to the length of time seafarers have been serving on a particular vessel, or the length of time they have been away working. As can be seen, thankfully the large majority have not been away more than 9 months. However, it is troubling to note that 13% of seafarer respondents have been at sea for more than 9 months, with 5% of these serving for over a year.

The physical and mental impacts of extended trip lengths can be seen in the happiness data received. There seems to be a sweet spot at between 3-6 months, where those who work longer trips appear to be settled in and even looking forward to going home. After that, the levels fall away dramatically. After 6 months, it appears there are clear negative impacts for crews.



- 1-3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6-9 months
- 9-12 months
- Over 12 months

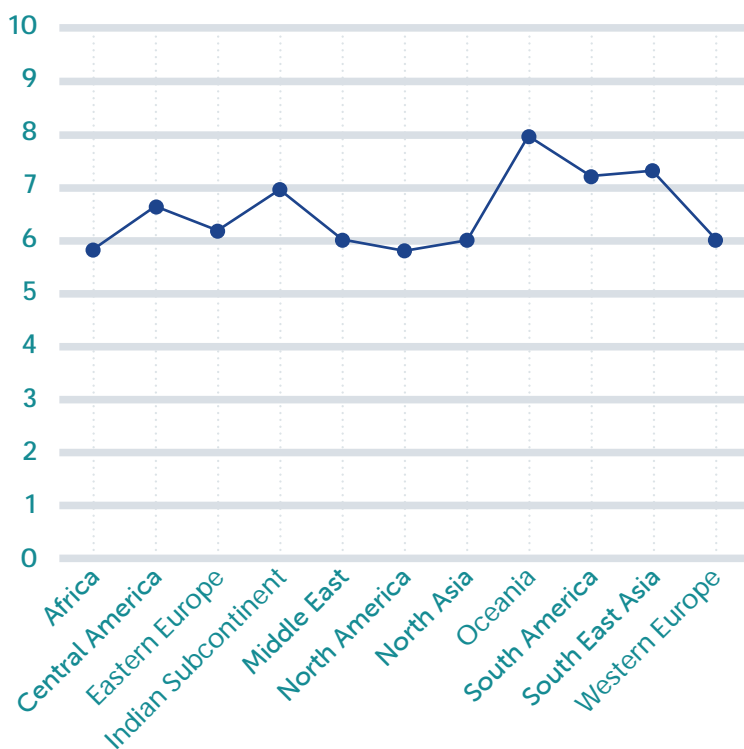


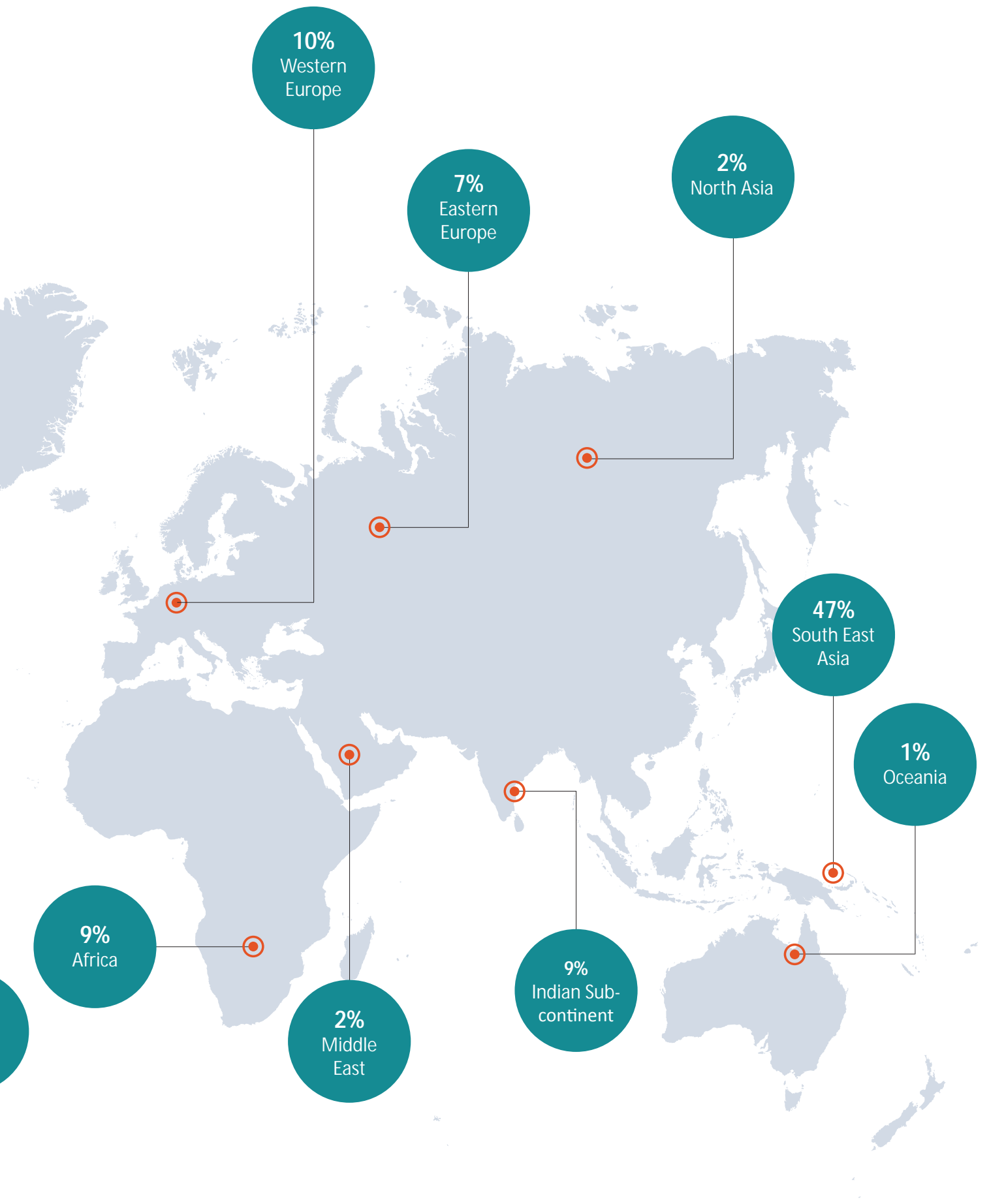
Where

It is not unusual for seafarers from SE Asia to make up the largest proportion of respondents. It is, however, the first time that Western Europeans have outscored those from the Indian Subcontinent.

In the responses, we noted a large increase in comments about issues such as language and the comparative cost savings made on certain diets. This could likely be explained by the larger western cohort.

Regions and happiness





Special Focus: In the Shadow of a Pandemic

Seafarers have been struggling for around 21 months living in the dark shadow cast by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through that time the entire shipping industry has been stretched like never before, and as a result, the day-to-day lives of seafarers have been massively impacted.

The latest data from the Seafarers Happiness Index comes at an interesting point, as we have reached a seeming inflection point for seafarers. There have been many lessons learned, there have been improvements made, but so too problems that will not seemingly go away. So, at this vital juncture, what will it mean for seafarers? Will we be able to build on the good, or will these remain tantalising missed opportunities?

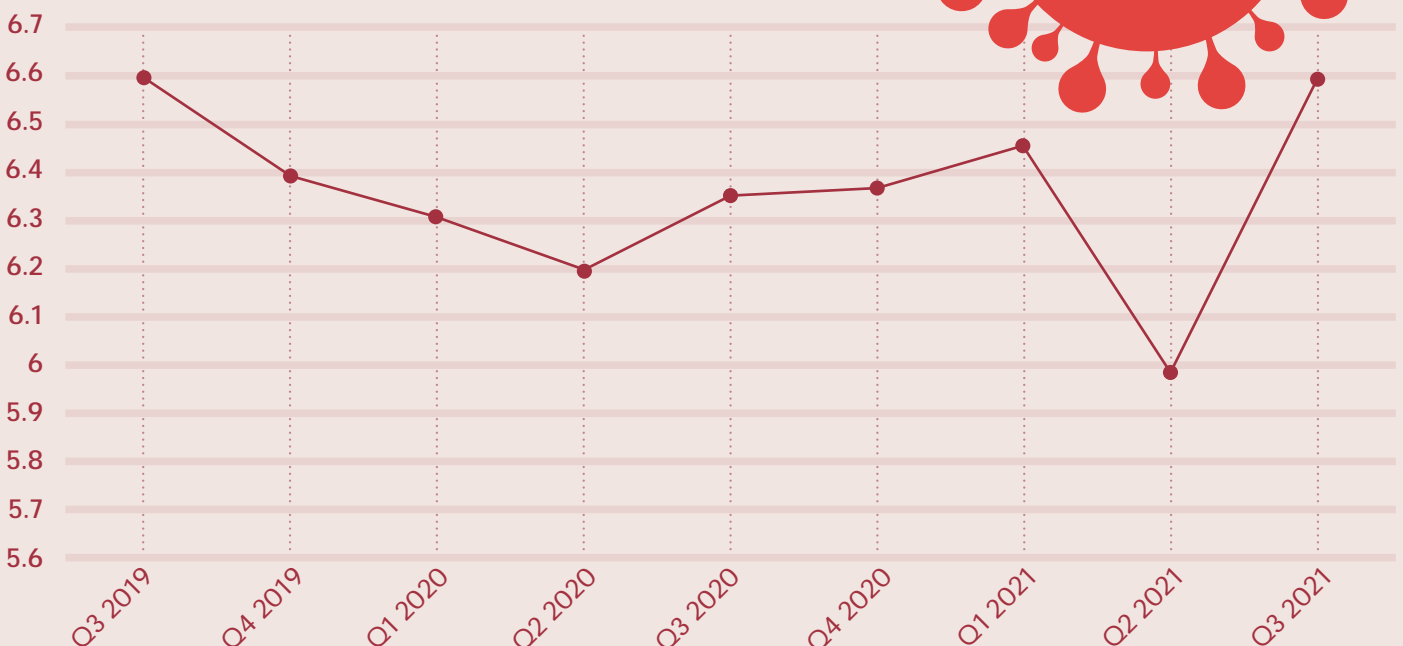
In this special report, we hear from seafarers on what they are experiencing today and of the things that must change, and what the knock-on effects and implications will be if they do not. This is a chance to grasp the good, banish the bad and learn from the ugly.

What do the numbers say?

The inflection point has been reached, as the latest increase in the average Happiness Index data has pushed us back exactly to where we were pre-pandemic. This quarter we have seen a rise to **6.59** which is up from a previous low of **5.99**, which was an all-time low for the Index.

From Quarter 3 in 2019, we can plot the peaks and troughs of emotion experienced by seafarers. There were clear low points, which then gave way to optimism, and that is where we have reached once more today. The Quarter 4 2021 data will be an important insight and will complete the picture, giving us an indication of the true emotional trajectory of seafarers.

Will we climb away from the problems, or is this a premature hope? It would seem that while we are far from the end, or even the beginning of the end, perhaps reaching equilibrium and parity with Quarter 3 2019 is the end of the beginning.



Seafarer Feedback

As the Seafarers Happiness Index data has slowly climbed back to the pre-pandemic state, it is a good opportunity to discuss some of the latest key lessons which have helped to propel us to some form of recovery, however fragile that may be. There are areas of life on board that are positive, but there also remain issues of great frustration, annoyance and contention.

By listening to the experiences of seafarers and understanding their views, it is to be hoped we can build on the positives and begin to dismantle the conditions which often lead to negatives. So, here are our nine key takeaways from the latest seafarer responses.

It's good to talk

It has always been an important focus of the Seafarers Happiness Index to report back on positives, as well as challenges. So, for the first key lesson or opportunity, we are pleased to report that one area of real improvement has been the flow of communication between companies ashore and the ship.

In the latest reporting period, there were clear indications that companies were being more supportive and communicative, which is an important and positive change. In past surveys, seafarers felt that employers were wary about being open and transparent, especially about crew changes, with the result that when problems transpired, crews felt caught out and disappointed.

Thankfully it seems that lessons have been learned, and seafarers praised the owners, operators and managers that treated them like adults and engaged with them on key issues. There are still companies that do not openly and honestly share with their vessels, but there are lessons from those that do.

To a backdrop of improved communications, it seems that even if there are still problems, seafarers are better able to anticipate, prepare and deal with them. The crew change and shore leave challenges will not be fixed overnight, so seafarers must be equipped with facts through honest dialogue, rather than suffering the indignity of being kept remote and in the dark.

This issue of open, transparent and positive relationships with employers was a key factor in raising satisfaction levels. There was a marked difference amongst those seafarers who felt that their employers respected and were looking out for their best interests, as opposed to those who disengaged or denied the scope and scale of problems.

So, praise and kudos to the companies which have communicated well, or who have learned the power of relationship building. If a company does not know when a crew change will happen, then it is better to say so, rather than building false hopes on board. We heard repeatedly from seafarers who felt that they had been cheated, lied to or "made to feel a fool by office staff".



Good WiFi, Bad Costs

Connectivity is a long-held contentious issue. There are still some voices that bemoan the tendency of crews that have internet access to retreat to their cabins, as it can impact social cohesion. That said, the real enemy of interaction is having too few people on board and not having enough to do other than work. That is the flip side of the debate, and it needs to be explored in more detail.

When it comes to Wi-Fi and access to the internet, this is an issue that divides happiness levels like no other. As has been reported many times in the past, seafarers who have good, cost-effective (or especially free) access far outperform those who do not when it comes to satisfaction at sea.

The crews who either have no access or feel that it is poor quality, slow, patchy and expensive, are not happy. Many respondents see the issue of internet access as one of the most telling ways of assessing how a company feels about its crews. These are the employers who are most likely to lose out in the long term. "I will never again work on a ship without good internet", said one respondent, which captured a sentiment shared by many.

The issue of the cost of online access came up repeatedly this quarter. One seafarer stated, "Our internet on board costs US\$25 for 100MB". It is useful to provide some form of context as to how expensive this is. For instance, many people ashore will currently be excitedly downloading a latest games release, such as Fifa22, a best-selling console football game. This is a 50GB download on a PlayStation 5, and so for a seafarer to download this at the price quoted would cost in the region of US\$12,800. That is the scale of how challenging the fee structure landscape is for seafarers.

We are not expecting that anyone would download such large amounts of data at sea. However, it is important and useful to note that something which would cost perhaps \$40-\$50 ashore is costing crews so much more.

Others bemoaned the size of their internet allocation, with one stating that owners gave them 250MB for the whole month consumption. Prompting the seafarer to ask, "Do you think it is enough? Do you think you could have a video call with your family?" There is too little understanding of the real-world impacts of access or lack thereof for those trapped on board ship for so many months.

The indications from our research show that more and more seafarers, and particularly those of the younger generation, crave ever more connection with home. So, while there may be barriers to this, it would behoove those who make such decisions to explore how crews can be given more of what they want, over and above what they may be deemed to need.



I will never again work on a ship without good internet.

Mental Health Challenges

This latest quarter saw an increase in responses that focused on mental health issues. One narrative was especially powerful, as it captured some of the confusion and perhaps even the fear which a descent into negativity and a poor mental state can bring. The seafarer stated, “During my last commission I started to feel depressed, but was not entirely aware of it at the time”.

He went on to describe how he began to feel increasingly anxious, stressed and was having trouble sleeping, engaging and even focusing on work. Having never experienced “these kinds of feelings before” he didn’t realise the warning signs until he got home and noted how different he felt when he was away from the ship. This may be the case for many seafarers, and so efforts to educate and inform are vital. Seafarers often do not know how to spot mental health issues, meaning that things can get worse before they get better.

Another seafarer captured the waning levels of happiness and the impact on mental health better than most. He stated: “First month: 10/10, Second month: 8/10, Third month: 5/10, Longer: 1/10”, which mirrored much of the feedback.

Unfortunately, tied into the issue of mental health we received numerous reports that morale on board is still very low. The challenges of “Small crew and big hours” is still taking a heavy toll. While we received positive results on workload this latest quarter, it remains that there is much work to be done to tackle the issue of working hours and rest time. Fatigue continues to bite hard, and we hear from many seafarers who feel they are “sleepwalking” through their time at sea, which is a disaster waiting to happen.



During my last commission I started to feel depressed, but was not entirely aware of it at the time.

Bullying and Victimization

One area that had always performed exceptionally pre-COVID was that of seafarer interactions onboard. While there were signs of improvement in this latest reporting period, there are still issues that need to be fixed.

Unfortunately, whereas in the past, there was often a sense of camaraderie and togetherness onboard, it seems that the challenges of crew changes and bans on shore leave have seen tensions running high. This has all too often been manifested in accusations of bullying, intimidation and victimisation.

One respondent stated, "I'm sick of hearing and going along with the adage of 'it's gotten better.' No. It's inexcusable when it's bad. Bullying, intimidation, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dismissal for reporting. These are all things I've experienced within the last year. And some people try to tell me I'm lucky".

We also heard from seafarers on the difficulties of reporting or getting action taken against perpetrators. One seafarer stated, "It's a pirate ship out there on the unconquered boys club seas of the saloon-style wild-west. Nothing gets back to land. If it does, it's not the full truth, it's late, and follow up is past due with victim blame being the first topic of discussion".

A key part of this debate is that of onboard leadership. We have heard from seafarers who say that their senior officers are wonderful and make a real difference, and we have also read tales of those captains, chief engineers and officers who make for a "toxic atmosphere". We need to ensure that these problems are dealt with and that those who are not able to encourage, support, nurture and bring the best out of people are given the chance to learn how to be better leaders.

It is vital that answers are found and that the various industry schemes and efforts to enforce good practice are supported, accepted and used.



I'm sick of hearing and going along with the adage of 'it's gotten better.'

Few People, Many Tongues

Perhaps the most common observation we receive from seafarers is about the prevalence of downsizing when it comes to crew numbers. Time and time again, we hear about the difficulties on board which are exacerbated by having fewer people.

Some responses focused on the impact of “down-manning” when vessels went off-hire. So, when charters ended and awaited new ones, the ship would go down to an almost skeleton crew. This is having serious impacts as much of the work on board still needs to be done.

From the impact on workload and watch patterns to the knock-on effects of social life on board – with smaller crew numbers it is obvious that there are fewer opportunities to interact. Seafarers are also concerned about multinational crews as they can mean there is hardly anyone on board that speaks their language fluently, or to a level adequate to engage in non-work related matters.

This is making it even harder still for people to get along, to talk, to find the time to sit down and converse. It is arguably cultural and language difficulties which sends people back to their cabins, and there they use the internet if they have it.

Seafarers are good at getting along, they make friends easily and well. However, without a core population to engage with and socialise with on board, there are massive implications for loneliness and isolation.

Multinational crews bring benefits, but these are eroded when they potentially destabilise relationships and team building on board. Such matters should be considered when crewing is assessed. Without realising the impacts on human experience, there are likely to be problems for those on board, especially as we are seeing longer tours of duty, no opportunity for the respite of shore leave, and for some, very little interaction with home.

Rules By Fools

When faced with challenging times, even small frustrations begin to eat away at people, and we heard from many seafarers who were angered by a range of small impositions, which built to make a regime that undermines the professionalism of seafarers.

Across the past year and a half, we have become accustomed to reading reports from vessels about some ill-conceived, or poorly thought-out diktats that have been added to their safety management or operational systems. Issues such as washing all their equipment, clothing and even bedding at ridiculous intervals for example. Others have included demanding that masks be worn on board, or social distancing when trying to hand over a navigation watch, meaning that neither watchkeeper can see the radar screen at the same time.

There was also feedback on initiatives that some owners have introduced, schemes that are intended to improve safety or efficiency, but which leave seafarers frustrated and stressed having to manage them. We heard from one seafarer about a major company's programme: "The scheme has made our life hell on board. Are we teachers, mentors or psychologists to conduct these programs? We spent a lot of time doing this with hardly any output."

Rules which are not fit for purpose, not thought through, or considered, make for tension, pressure, annoyance and frustration on board.



We spent a lot of time doing this with hardly any output.

Seafarers Not Welcome

Seafarers are being painted as pariahs when visiting nations, despite the goods, materials, fuels and food which these crews bring to them. Why is there such a disconnect between the good that seafarers do, and the bad reception they get when doing it?

As many nations are currently experiencing, when transport links are stretched or broken, shortages occur. Sadly, very few seem to be joining the dots and understanding that shop shelves were stocked not just by the wonderful shop workers, not just by the amazing truck drivers, but by the fantastic seafarers who got the things through in the first place.

To read of seafarers stating that they feel unwelcome, that they are seen as “bringers of disease” is as depressing as it is wrong. “Treated like outcasts by various port authorities at every port”, ran one response.

There are questionable decisions at the core of so much of the seeming degradation and humiliation of seafarers. In an airport, it is easy to spot seafarers, dressed in cheap paper approximations of hazmat suits and herded together, only lacking the plague bells to seemingly warn people of the dangers approaching.

Some have reported being made to leave vessels wearing plastic disposable suits and made to transit airports looking like pariahs. This is a source of much annoyance for seafarers. It is not right, not necessary and delivers only a “COVID theatre” of viral protection.

Seafarers are increasingly vaccinated, frequently tested and often spend whole ocean passages as a form of quarantine. Yet, they are the people forced to dress for effect. This is humiliating and is another sign that wider society and the authorities in many nations do not understand, appreciate or recognise the importance of seafarers.

While there were criticisms and rightful concerns about travel, there was praise too – with Japan singled out as a place that has dedicated much effort and resources to supporting seafarer travel. Respondents said that Japan is a place that, perhaps more than any, has appreciated the importance of movement and has worked to support that.

On the subject of vaccinations, those who had received them were immensely relieved and grateful. Ports such as Antwerp and Singapore were singled out for praise, and it is clear that some ports have increasingly effective systems of support and vaccination in place. Those who don't could learn from those that do and a system of global best practice and lesson sharing could be encouraged.



Treated like outcasts by various port authorities at every port.

Not Coming Back

The issue of poor treatment and a lack of recognition seems to fuel this next important issue, that of seafarers talking about leaving the sea and never coming to work on ships again.

We heard from many seafarers, particularly those aged 35 and over, that they were not intending to return to sea once they eventually got home. The challenges of balancing home life with the uncertainties that the crew change crisis have led to many who were tentatively considering a move ashore accelerating their career change plans.

The issue of retention in an already stressed workforce is a major concern. The expertise that is potentially going to be lost should serve as a warning to all.

Others felt that the changing landscape of technology is a factor. Some seafarers felt it important to either get maritime work ashore or even to move into different industries now, as they wanted to, "get ahead of the curve when autonomous ships arrive".

A profession that is becoming more difficult, less enjoyable, less rewarding, and one which is talking about the death knell of unmanned ships, should not be surprised that it will become ever more difficult to attract and retain people. "Fun and happiness are taken out of sailing by most ship owners and managers for commercial gains", ran one response.

There is likely to be a growing shortfall in seafarers in the coming years, and there is seemingly little or no coherent mechanism to manage the problems coming over the horizon. This is perhaps well illustrated in the problem of getting key or essential worker status confirmed for seafarers, an issue summed up in one response, "Countries need us, but will say we are essential, why?". Why indeed?



Fun and happiness are taken out of sailing by most ship owners and managers for commercial gains.

Cost Of Living

Reactions to the issue of seafarer wages usually falls into one of two camps, those who feel well rewarded and those who do not. Very often respondents speak of good salaries and their pride in providing for families back at home.

Alas, we do also hear from many who feel underpaid, who are not rewarded well for what they do, and indeed the tragic prevalence of abandoned crews who have to fight for years to get what they are owed.

One seafarer wrote, "What tickles me is when I'm told I am overpaid working at sea. Easy thing to say when you sleep in your own bed every night, can have a glass of wine with your dinner, kiss your kids goodnight each night, pop to the shop to buy whatever you need whenever you need and can pick up the phone/jump in the car to speak to family and friends any time you like. Try having a circadian rhythm that's totally disrupted, not knowing when you'll be home and having to work a full 12-hour shift plus occasional extra every single day for months on end".

Another issue of concern is the rising cost of living which many nations are currently experiencing, and inflation which seems to be driven by the impact of COVID on economies. This is hitting seafarers hard, and there are increasing frustrations that their wages are becoming eroded by the costs at home. This was juxtaposed against what many seafarers are reading about high freight rates, and there is a growing sense of injustice that record profits are not filtering down.

This is not perhaps something that the industry can fix, and there has been an agreement to raise minimum wages for seafarers; however, it is something that employers should be aware of, and which will likely further impact issues of recruitment and retention in the short to medium term.



Try having a circadian rhythm that's totally disrupted, not knowing when you'll be home and having to work a full 12-hour shift plus occasional extra every single day for months on end.

Lessons Learned

From the many responses and written messages, we can perhaps see some clear routes forward to make life better at sea. From the above reflections, we would distil these down to:



- 1 Respectful, open and honest communication from employers to seafarers.
- 2 Good quality internet provision for seafarers and an assessment of the associated costs.
- 3 Help and support for seafarers to identify mental health issues and any changes they may be experiencing.
- 4 Unequivocal reporting mechanisms for bullying, harassment, victimisation and intimidation on board. A zero-tolerance approach, but with a realistic and visible means of applying it.
- 5 Assessment of the impact of multinational crews, especially where there may be issues of isolation or lack of interaction through language issues.
- 6 Ensure common sense and pragmatism are applied when developing rules or systems on board, with seafarer input and feedback acted upon.
- 7 Make seafarers feel respected, and apply further pressure on nations to define them as key/essential workers.
- 8 Provide more vaccinations for seafarers at ports. A system of best practices and lessons learned should be shared globally.
- 9 Recognise and understand the challenges of recruitment and retention. An honest assessment of why seafarers may not wish to return to sea, and action to counter it.
- 10 Recalculation of seafarer remuneration, taking into account rising costs of living and the anticipated likelihood that market forces will see raised wages for a shrinking pool of experienced seafarers.

Moving Forward

The issues relating to COVID-19 are still having a massive impact on seafarers, and are likely to for some time to come. That said, it is a source of relief and testament to the resilience of crews that we seem to have reached a point where we can reflect and move forward.

The latest Seafarers Happiness Index data suggests that crew sentiment has stabilised, which is at face value good to see. However, it remains unknown as to whether this is a start of positive change or whether we are simply in the eye of the storm. Perhaps it merely reflects the fact that seafarers have grown better able to cope with the negatives they are experiencing because of the pandemic.

This will all become clear as we move forward, but what can be said with more confidence is that seafarers have been through so much over the past two years. They have been key to world trade at a time of unparalleled risk and disruption, they have kept the lights and heat on, they have kept shop shelves stocked and they have allowed the world to edge towards recovery. We owe them all a huge debt of gratitude and enormous respect and recognition.

Sadly, it seems that as is usually the case, seafarers and the ships they are on are invisible unless things go wrong. So, we should not be surprised that issues such as key worker status, freedom of movement and access to vaccines still urgently need addressing.

That said, there are positives and there are opportunities to apply hard-fought lessons. In this latest report, we have featured the issues which can be, and hopefully will be.

Thank you to the seafarers who have opened up and shared with us. We always need more data, and to hear the stories of more seafarers, and for those who have already done so, to share again. So please visit **www.happyatsea.org** to find out more, and to complete the survey. We also want these reports to be spread as far and wide across shipping as possible, so please do share these findings.

We must also thank our 2021 sponsors, maritime solutions company Wallem Group and specialist marine and energy insurer Standard Club, and the many companies which have now approached us about setting up bespoke happiness surveys for their fleets. There is immense value in benchmarking their performance against the wider population of seafarers, and it is heartening to see that so many companies recognise this.



On Board Mental Health Champions

The Mission to Seafarers have developed mental health resources to build resilience with crews on board.

Sometimes we face difficulties that make us feel...



Take
back
control

Think like a STAR

Stop: Take a moment to pause, collect your thoughts and try a 'calming' coping method.

Think: Consider what you are worried about. Try a 'regain control' coping method.

Apply: Use your coping methods, consider sharing them with a loved one or a trusted crew member.

Reach out: Contact The Mission to Seafarers, we're here to listen and support.

Calming

Breathe 4,7,8 Repeat

Focus on your breathing. Slowly inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7, and exhale for 8. Repeat 4 times. Think about the cool air entering your nostrils and the sensation of your chest rising and falling.



Round Off

Slowly say the alphabet or count to 100 out loud.

Regain Control

Task Challenge

Do a task where you feel in control and receive a sense of achievement. This could be ticking off a To Do list, completing a word search or solving a math puzzle.



Mood Diary

Write four columns headed 'Day', 'Feel Up', 'Feel Down', 'I pledge'. At the end of the day write what made you feel good, what made you feel upset, and a pledge on how you will take back control.



WeCare downloadable resources to use on board and at home —



This information is designed for information purposes only. It is not intended to amount to medical, legal, or financial advice and should not be relied on or treated as a substitute for specific advice relevant to your circumstances. Nor should it be relied upon by you in making (or refraining from making) any specific decisions. If you have specific questions about your mental health or finances, you should consult a suitably qualified healthcare professional or financial adviser.

What makes your crew happy at sea?

The Mission to Seafarers is now able to run bespoke Happiness Surveys for your crew, so you can benchmark your quality of care against the international survey.

If you're interested in finding out more, contact ben.bailey@missiontoseafarers.org

www.happyatsea.org



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