

UN spotlights wellbeing of seafarers on International Day

Highlighting the challenges – both physical and mental – faced by seafarers on their voyages, the United Nations [International Maritime Organization](#) (IMO) has called for greater attention to ensuring their wellbeing.

In his annual message for the [Day of the Seafarer](#), IOM Secretary-General Kitack Lim noted that many factors can affect the quality of life at sea, including shore leaves, prompt and sufficient wages and even “simple things” like the Internet or provision of exercise on board ships.

“All of these come, and more, come together, under the banner of ‘seafarers’ wellbeing’,” he said.

“Day of the Seafarer 2018 provides a platform to advocate for higher standards of welfare and enable shipping companies and others within the industry to show how they provide a good working environment for seafarers and thereby make a positive contribution to their wellbeing,” added Mr. Lim.

The theme for 2018 continues the focus IMO announced last year on the physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of those at sea.

According to the UN agency, by addressing the issue of seafarers’ wellbeing and particularly mental health, the campaign can inform specific strategies to tackle stress and other issues affecting seafarers’ mental conditions – and make the tools available more widely known.

The campaign will also showcase best practices, as well as spotlight areas of concern and examples of shortcomings.

A major part of the campaign is an online survey where seafarers themselves are being encouraged to share their own views and experiences. The results of the survey will be analysed and presented to the IMO Council.

Alongside the survey, the campaign also has a strong social media focus and includes a photo competition where seafarers are being called to show the world “what a good day at the sea looks like.”

The Day of the Seafarer, marked annually on 25 June, was established in a resolution adopted by the 2010 Diplomatic Conference in Manila, the capital of Philippines, to recognize the unique contribution made by seafarers from all over the world to international seaborne trade, the world economy and civil society as a whole.