

Spring wage negotiations begin

With Nippon Car Ferry Roumu Kyokai, 2 domestic shipping associations, Zennaiko; central bargaining sessions start

The first rounds of this year's spring central wage negotiations for seafarers began on March 7, 2022 at the Hotel Mariners' Court Tokyo, where the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) met with Nippon Car Ferry Roumu Kyokai, Naiko Roumu Kyokai, Ichiyo Kai and Zennaiko. In late February, the JSU submitted requests to the oceangoing labor department of the Japanese Shipowners' Association (JSA), Nippon Car Ferry Roumu Kyokai, Naiko Roumu Kyokai, Ichiyo Kai and Zennaiko.

When first-round talks kicked off, business agents from labor and management were introduced. Then, addresses were given by shipping organization and labor union representatives, while the organizations of negotiation committees were confirmed. The JSU gave a briefing on the point of the requests that it had made. Clause-by-clause practical discussions will start at or after the next rounds.

An address given by JSU President Mitsuharu Yasuura on the start of negotiations on the amendment of the labor agreement between the JSU and Nippon Car Ferry Roumu Kyokai (summary):

The Japanese economy began showing signs of recovery around October of last year, as a decline in the number of coronavirus infections was experienced.

Due to the spread of the highly contagious Omicron variant, however, uncertainties are remaining now, such as administrative restrictions as well as production suspensions and curtailments in the auto-related and other industries resulting from semiconductor shortages.

There are many causes of concern outside Japan, too, including rises in crude oil prices triggered by increases in geopolitical risks, such as coordinated oil production cuts by OPEC Plus and unstable situations in the Middle East; the trade frictions between the U.S. and China; and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's administration, which was launched in November 2021, is demanding the business world to raise wages to develop an economy that will help Japan get out of deflation and begin expanding again. To realize a new form of capitalism based on a virtuous cycle of growth and distributions, the government says that wage increases and human investments by enterprises are main pillars of its distribution strategies.

The All Japan Seamen's Union, for its part, insists on the need to improve labor conditions through wage hikes and to build a society where workers can live without fear. We believe that what we insist will lead to enlarging consumption and contribute to further developing the domestic shipping business.

As for the current state of the car ferry business, we urge it to address many chal-



JSU President Mitsuharu Matsuura gives an address.



From left: JSU Acting President Shinichi Tanaka, JSU President Mitsuharu Matsuura and JSU Central Executive Board Committee member Hidehiko Hiraoka

lenges. It must deal with long-continued road-centric policies, soaring fuel prices, capital investment to realize carbon neutrality and the infection with no signs of blowing over.

To address environmental issues and labor shortages, at the same time, a modal shift is being advanced to use car ferries, and, therefore, the volume of shipments moved is expected to grow further. Also, their importance is clear as a means to transport emergency relief goods and carry out other tasks in times of major natural disasters.

The birthrate is on the decline, while the population is aging. In many industries, as such, labor shortages are becoming more and more evident. In respect to issues relating to seafarers, in such times, a

new statute was enacted in May of last year to enhance the maritime industry. To promote work style reforms for seafarers, in accordance with the new law, efforts are being made to more accurately understand working hours and manage them, encourage seafarers to take holidays and vacations, ensure health for them and so on.

The car ferry business is not an exception, as crewmembers are aging, while job retention rates are on the decline among young workers. To secure and develop successors, it is necessary and essential to improve working conditions and environments.

For negotiations on the amendment of our labor agreement, we have come up with bare minimum requests, taking the situation of our industry into full consideration



President Akira Ogasawara of Nippon Car Ferry Romu Kyokai



President Hiroyoshi Kuribayashi of Naiko Roumu Kyokai



President Takuo Kanda of Zennaiko

and facing the risk of being infected in the midst of the pandemic. To fulfill a role as a public transport system for the people and secure the stable transport in domestic logistics, we are making the requests to help union members who work hard day and night to ensure safe ship operations lead stable lives and to create attractive working environments for them.

This year, we are holding negotiations on the amendment of our labor agreement during the pandemic again. As we are in such difficult times, we hope that both sides will hold sincere talks to achieve an amicable settlement within the time limit, based on the relationships of trust that labor and management have built up. This is the end of an address that I am giving as the representative of the union.

Transport workers protest illegal oustings

Over 10,000 transport workers from almost 200 ITF affiliated unions today expressed their outrage at the mass sacking and outsourcing of 800 P&O seafarers through a “Global Letter of Protest” handed over to the global leadership of DP World, the owners of P&O Ferries.

ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton, who is leading the global unions’ delegation in Dubai, delivered the letter addressed to the CEO of DP World, Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem calling for the reinstatement of the sacked seafarers and a commitment to respect workers’ rights and engage with unions across their global operations.

“Over the past two weeks, we’ve seen protests at P&O ports from Dover to Hull, and across Eu-

rope from Dublin to Rotterdam in solidarity with these workers,” Cotton said. “Today we took the shock and condemnation of the world’s transport workers and their supporters directly to the global headquarters of DP World.”

In the face of brutal corporate decision making, transport workers and their unions across the world have stood up and are uniting to fight back for justice and respect for the critical role they play in global supply chains.

“Transport employers across the world should watch this dispute carefully,” said Cotton. “This fight that is playing out across the ports of the UK, is not just about the illegal firing of 800 seafarers, but a fight about respect and the future of the rights of seafarers globally. It is not something that the ITF,

the ETF, and our affiliates take lightly.”

The staggering admission from P&O CEO Peter Hebblethwaite that the company acted illegally when firing these workers, should be cause for the immediate reinstatement of these workers.

“The fact that despite admitting to their illegality, P&O and its owner DP World, can continue to refuse to reinstate these workers, and even say they’d do it again, should send alarm bells ringing for governments across Europe, but also everywhere DP World operates,” ETF General Secretary Livia Spera said.

“If governments cannot protect their people and hold corporations accountable, it raises serious questions about who is in charge,” she added.

The letter demanded that DP

World treat these workers with dignity, respect the laws that protect their rights, and:

Urgently convene a meeting with the two unions, Nautilus International and the RMT, together with the UK Government, to rectify the current situation.

Guarantee that this will not happen in any other DP World wholly owned subsidiary and that you will uphold your ESG commitment to the principles of the UN Global Compact and behave equitably and show respect to all workers in your supply chain.

Commit to social dialogue, respectful industrial relations and to develop a closer relationship with the ITF and our affiliates across all DP World owned subsidiaries that ensures that no worker has to ever endure being sacked via Zoom again. (Source: ITF)

Panama Canal body to simplify toll structure from 2023

Panama Canal Authority has proposed a simplified toll structure that provides price stability for customers with a long-term plan and a variable, demand-based structure for the value-added services.

Its gradual implementation will begin in January 2023 until 2025, “giving customers time to sign their contracts considering the structure,” Panama Canal Authority (ACP) Administrator Ricarure Vasquez told Seatrade.

“By making these changes, we recognise the value of extending greater predictability today, while renewing our commitment to improving customer experience,” Vasquez said.

The new structure is an invitation to customers to consolidate cargo in bigger ships through the neo-panamax locks, which will release capacity and use less water. “From all the global maritime routes, Panama is the only one using freshwater, any of the Canal’s decision today are geared towards improving freshwater utilization,” Vasquez said.

The proposed toll structure will reduce the number of tariffs from 430 to less than 60. The new system has three components: A fixed price, the vessel’s capacity and dynamic pricing.

The Panama Canal is eliminating toll bands and introducing simplified tariffs according to the locks used, as well as the vessel type and size category. Tolls will be determined by two components:

A fixed tariff per transit, according to the locks used and the vessel size category (Regulars, Supers, and neo-panamax), that will remain in place until year 2025.

Neo-panamax locks: All neo-panamax vessels going through the neo-panamax locks will pay a fixed tariff of \$300,000.

Neo-panamax Container vessels will pay \$200,000 if less than 10,000 teus, \$300,000 if over 10,000 teus.

Panamax vessels transiting through the neo-panamax locks will pay \$60,000 if Regular and \$100,000 if Super.

For some types and sizes of vessels, these categories are further divided to avoid exceeding the value the Canal provides to customers.

Replacement of tariffs for vessels in ballast: The Panama Canal is reducing complex tariffs for vessels in ballast that are not consistent with the value provided to customers. Under the proposal, vessels transiting in ballast will pay a percent of the regular laden toll, independent of the market segment, and the special return trip tariffs for container and liquefied natural gas (LNG) vessels will be phased out. (Source: Seatrade-Maritime News)

Russia’s war on Ukraine severely disrupting shipping and air freight, pushing up rates

The Russia-Ukraine war is severely disrupting shipping and air freight. Russian forces are cutting off shipping routes, logistics firms are suspending services and air freight rates are skyrocketing, supply chain firms said.

Russian naval forces have closed shipping in and out of the Sea of Azov — one of the few access points to ocean trade in Ukraine, said Dylan Alperin, head of professional services at supply chain software platform Keelvar.

“This has created a heavy buildup of vessels waiting to get through the Kerch strait. With 70% of Ukraine’s exports distributed via ship, the congestion is worsening by the hour,” he told CNBC.

Christian Roeloffs, CEO of container booking firm Container xChange, said: “Parts of the Black Sea and Sea of Azov are now dangerous or unpassable. There have been missile attacks on vessels and ship arrests and lane closures for commercial shipping.”

The situation on the ground in Ukraine is extremely fluid, and reports from the area are difficult or impossible to confirm.

“Multiple ships have been hit by munitions, seafarers have been killed and injured and seafarers of all nationalities are trapped on ships berthed in ports,” the International Chamber of Shipping has warned.

Supply chain firms told CNBC that cargo movements are at a standstill as the Ukrainian ports of Odessa and Mariupol are closed, damaged or under attack. Roeloffs added that container movements

have stopped, with cargo stuck at ports.

The port of Odessa is Ukraine’s largest and a major grain export port. The country is one of the biggest exporters of grains such as wheat, barley and corn. Russia and Ukraine account for about 29% of the global wheat export market.

Mariupol, an important port city and industrial center, has been experiencing heavy shelling.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is now in its third week, and fighting continues in major cities.

Skyrocketing prices

Limited air capacity presents a double whammy for shippers. With airspace over Ukraine closed to civilian flights and airlines avoiding Russian airspace, air freight rates are spiking, according to the firms.

“The flying ban has canceled many of these flights and removed 10 million miles of airspace from international freight routes,” Alperin said. “With airlines responsible for flying around 20% of cargo, this will dramatically decrease capacity provided by carriers.”

Judah Levine, head of research at freight booking company Freightos Group, said that as airlines avoid Russian airspace, they will take alternate, longer routes — jacking up fuel costs.

Record price spikes for oil will worsen the already bad outlook for carriers as fuel costs rise, Alperin said. “We’re in for record backlogs and delays while experiencing some of the highest prices

on record for transportation and beyond.”

Oil prices have been rising for weeks and surging to record levels.

Levine said that the Freightos Air Index’s China-to-Europe rates climbed more than 80 percent in late February to \$11.36 per kilogram, with some carriers already imposing war risk surcharges.

Bindiya Vakil, CEO of supply chain risk management firm Resilinc, said some insurers are also increasing premiums for shipping goods in the Black Sea.

Many logistics companies have also suspended deliveries to and from Russia as well as Ukraine, while container shipping firms are shunning Russia.

DHL said it has closed offices and operations in Ukraine until further notice, while UPS told CNBC that it has suspended services to and from Ukraine, Russia and Belarus.

Alperin noted that the growing number of carriers that have suspended services in Russia make up about 62% of total ocean freight capacity.

Meanwhile, tanker rates have “skyrocketed,” with a spike from 157% to 591%, Alperin said.

Stranded shipping crew

The International Chamber of Shipping warned on Thursday that the supply chain disruptions are set to be worsened by a shortfall in shipping crew due to the war.

Ukrainian and Russian seafarers account for 14.5% of the global shipping workforce, it said.

“To maintain this unfettered trade, seafarers must be able to join and disembark ships (crew change) freely across the world. However, flights have been cancelled to and from the region, making this increasingly difficult,” it said in a statement. It added that some crews have abandoned their ships in Ukraine due to security worries.

“Fears over crew safety and increasing insurance premiums to send ships to Ukraine or Russia have also discouraged shipowners from sending vessels to these countries,” the association added.

In February, the association, which represents 80% of global merchant fleets, said “the ability to pay seafarers also needs to be maintained via international banking systems.”

The United States, European allies and Canada have agreed to cut off key Russian banks from the interbank messaging system, SWIFT, which connects more than 11,000 banks and financial institutions in over 200 countries and territories.

As the value of the Russian ruble drops, that’s also set to have other knock-on effects.

“With the Ruble devaluation, a lot of Russian companies cannot afford to pay for merchandise that is in ships and it is going to cause a lot of abandoned shipments and unpaid debts for orders on the water,” said James Coombes, CEO at digital freight forwarder company Vector.ai. “Freight forwarders are going to get stuck with a lot of unpaid freight bills.” (Source: CNBC)

IMO receives sewage sludge disposal ban proposal

A global ban on the dumping of sewage sludge at sea is a step closer, following the submission to IMO of a proposal to amend the 1996 London Protocol on the prevention of marine pollution by the dumping of wastes.

Sewage sludge is a waste that currently may be considered for dumping at sea under both the London 1996 Protocol and its precursor 1972 Convention. In the past, a substantial number of States permitted the dumping of this waste at sea.

Under the London Protocol all dumping is prohibited, except for possibly acceptable wastes on the so-called "reverse list" (Annex 1).

The proposal, submitted by the Republic of Korea and Mexico, would amend the Annex to remove sewage sludge from the permitted list. If the proposal is agreed by the Contracting Parties, then the dumping of sewage sludge at sea would be prohibited worldwide.

The Contracting Parties already agreed at their last meeting

in October 2021 that there was sufficient evidence and justification for amending Annex 1 of the London Protocol to remove sewage sludge from the list of permissible wastes.

This followed a world-wide review of current practices of managing or dumping sewage sludge at sea. The review indicated that the practice had declined considerably over recent decades that it was already prohibited under many regional conventions and through domestic legislation, and that alternatives existed for

the use of the sewage sludge.

The next meeting of Contracting Parties is scheduled for October 2022. If adopted at that meeting, the amendment would enter into force 100 days after adoption.

The London Protocol entered into force on March 24, 2006 and there are currently 53 Parties to the Protocol.

This year marks 50 years since the 1972 London Convention was adopted - The London Convention was the first global treaty to recognize that the oceans could

no longer be a dumping ground for any kind of waste. Bans on the dumping of radioactive wastes at sea and industrial waste were implemented in the 1990s.

The 1996 Protocol introduced a precautionary approach, moving from a banned list to a smaller, permitted list. Since then, the London Convention and Protocol have evolved to regulate emergent technologies, including carbon sequestration and marine geo-engineering - very much relevant to today's ocean and climate change agenda. (Source: IMO)

UN nations renew call to collaboratively support seafarers

Four United Nations agencies have issued a joint statement urging stakeholders to collaborate to prevent undue hardship to seafarers during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The International Labor Organization (ILO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have today issued a joint statement asking stakeholders to take action to support the world's 1.9 million seafarers from being unduly impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions.

The statement comes in the wake of the Omicron COVID-19 variant of concern (VOC), which

has, once again, caused many countries to close their borders, curtail crew movements, require additional vaccinations and approved paperwork, and, in many cases, deny seafarers access to appropriate medical care.

The UN agencies warn that the impact of these actions would not only cause seafarers (many of whom are from developing countries) undue hardship but could also create supply chain disruptions that would affect the global population.

"The full impact of the Omicron variant and related response measures on crew changes is not yet clear and further VOCs may yet emerge," the statement says.

The United Nations agencies call for common and proactive

approaches to address evolving challenges to international shipping and its key workers, minimize adverse impacts on seafarers and their families, as well as on global trade, supply chains and sustainable development, while continuing to protect local communities.

Calls to action

The agencies reiterated 10 actions that can be taken, summarized below:

1. Ensuring seafarers can access medical care and medical evacuation if needed

2. Granting seafarers "key worker" designation, removing barriers to crew change and safe movement across borders, and recognizing relevant documenta-

tion for this purpose.

3. Prioritizing seafarer vaccination in national COVID-19 vaccination programmes and exempting them proof of vaccination as the only mandatory condition for entry, in accordance with WHO recommendations.

4. Providing access to COVID-19 tests and appropriate PPE.

5. Ensuring consistent application of internationally agreed protocols and standards and avoiding punitive measures, fines and excessive costs.

6. Adopting the latest legal instruments, including the MLC, 2006 and the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003, as amended (No. 185), and ensure their implementation.

7. Implementing WHO sector-specific guidance for the management of COVID-19 on board cargo ships and fishing vessels

8. Provision of public key certificates associated with any health proof to relevant trust networks, such as ICAO for international travel.

9. Regularly updating relevant guidance and mechanisms in line with developments and evolving scientific insights on medical emergencies at sea.

10. Working to keep seafarers safe, limiting disruption to supply chains, and preventing the unchecked spread of emerging VOCs, which could prolong the pandemic and its wide-ranging socioeconomic consequences. (Source: IMO)

Container ship reduces emissions through synthetic fuel

MAN Energy Solutions reports that the 1,036-TEU container ship, *ElbBLUE* has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 27% by operating on a blend of climate-neutral, synthetic natural gas (SNG) and conventional liquefied natural gas (LNG), compared to LNG alone. Compared with heavy fuel oil (HFO), GHG emission reduction was even as high as 34%. The data has emerged from measurements initially carried out on board the ship in September 2021 when *ElbBLUE* became the first container ship worldwide to replace a portion of its bunkered gas fuel (around 50%) with SNG.

Dr Uwe Lauber, CEO of MAN Energy Solutions, said: "With this project, we have proven the technical viability of our concept of the maritime energy transition. Today, more than ever, we are convinced that climate-neutral, synthetic fuels point the way to green shipping - and even further beyond.

"The current, global, political situation underscores the future role that synthetic fuels can play in a diversified energy supply in that they point the way toward

less dependence on raw material deposits, suppliers and price fluctuations. As a result of the military attack on Ukraine in violation of international law, LNG prices, for example, have risen massively in recent weeks and are now at a similar level to SNG."

Stefan Eefting, Senior Vice President and Head of MAN PrimeServ Augsburg, said: "With this pilot project, we have proven that any LNG-powered ship can also operate with green SNG from power-to-X. Even with a blend of just 50% SNG, GHG and pollutant emissions are significantly reduced. When operated exclusively on SNG, we would expect a reduction of at least 80% in GHG emissions for modern ships."

Gas operation also drastically reduces other polluting emissions compared to HFO. In the case of *ElbBLUE*, nitrogen oxide emissions (NOx) dropped by almost 87%, while emissions of sulphur oxides (SOx) and particulates were almost completely eliminated (-99%). These values were achieved in both the exclusive operation on LNG and on a blend of

LNG and SNG.

Measurements were carried out on a voyage between Brunsbüttel, Germany and Rotterdam, the Netherlands with SNG comprising approximately 50% of the bunkered gas at 85% engine load. *ElbBLUE* is powered by an MAN 51/60DF four-stroke engine. As a multi-fuel engine, the unit allows operation with either HFO or liquid natural gas (LNG) as fuel. The ship's test-run proved that the latter can be replaced by SNG without engine modification.

Owned by German shipping company, Elbdeich, and operated by charterer, Unifeeder, *ElbBLUE* sails the North and Baltic Seas. It made headlines back in 2017 under its former name, *Wes Amelie*, when its MAN 8L48/60B main engine was converted to the current MAN 8L51/60DF four-stroke unit, which enables dual-fuel operation with gas. This was the world's first conversion of a container ship to multi-fuel operation with climate-friendly LNG.

In September 2021, the ship reached another milestone on the road to climate-neutral ship-

ping when, in the Elbe port of Brunsbüttel, it became the world's first container ship to bunker climate-neutral synthetic marine fuel - some 20 tons. The liquefied SNG was produced in a power-to-gas plant operated by kiwi AG in Werlte, Germany and generated from 100% renewable energy.

SNG is considered a carbon-neutral fuel as its combustion releases only as much CO₂ as captured during its production using power-to-X technology. However, just like LNG, SNG consists largely of methane (CH₄) and, during operation, small unburned quantities of the gas can escape - so-called methane slip. Methane is considered a greenhouse gas that, when released unburned into the atmosphere, is 28 times more harmful to the climate than CO₂. MAN already offers solutions for methane-slip-free operation in two-stroke engines. For four-stroke engines, the company is working on various solutions to further reduce the escape of methane from the combustion chamber.

Eefting added: "We have already been able to halve methane slip in

our dual-fuel, four-stroke engines in recent years through internal engine measures, and we see further potential in the area of exhaust gas after-treatment. We are currently developing special oxidation catalysts with which we have been able to reduce methane slip by a further 70% in laboratory tests. Next year, we will test the catalyst on board a ship for the first time and expect to have a market-ready technology by 2025."

MAN Energy Solutions has been committed to a Maritime Energy Transition aimed at climate-neutral shipping for many years. From the company's perspective, this requires the industry-wide and massive use of climate-neutral fuels as direct electrification of ocean-going shipping via batteries is not technically feasible. The development and conversion of the infrastructure and global fuel-supply chains required for this can only be successfully achieved in close cooperation between the shipping industry and political regulation, a scenario MAN Energy Solutions vigorously advocates for. (Source: MAN Energy Solutions)

ILO guide focuses on gender equality in crises settings

A virtual panel discussion organized during the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women provided the platform for the launch of a new guide designed to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in fragile, conflict and disaster settings.

The new publication will guide ILO staff, constituents, and other stakeholders on integrating gender-responsive and conflict-sensitive approaches in initiatives related to employment and decent work across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, i.e. the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions.

The new guide, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the World of Work in Fragile, Conflict and Disaster Settings, provides an overview of how fragility, conflicts and disasters affect gender equality in world of work-related areas. It also presents the key global frameworks and contains practical guidance – both general recommendations and

technical area-specific guidance on gender mainstreaming in crisis settings.

To enhance the impact of action both in terms of gender equality and peace and resilience, the Guide recommends, among others:

- Recognizing that crises affect women, men, girls, and boys differently, and the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling sustainable recovery and building resilience.

- Avoiding stereotypical portraying of women, men, girls, and boys and always taking into consideration that women, as well as men, are not a homogeneous group. Different personal characteristics such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, caste, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, indigenous or tribal belonging and others may intersect resulting in compounded discrimination.

- Supporting positive gender-related changes that may have occurred in the labour market.

- Working with men. Addressing gender inequalities and strengthening women's empowerment, participation and leadership cannot be done by working with and for women only. Including men and working on gender and patriarchal norms in an inclusive way is critical to achieve positive and sustainable change.

- Leveraging the institutions of work and social dialogue.

- Giving due consideration to the interconnectedness of conflict, environmental degradation and climate change, and gender inequality, and ensuring interventions leverage the mutually reinforcing dynamics of gender, peace, and resilience.

- Working at upstream and downstream levels and considering the needs for both immediate job creation-, income- and livelihoods support and for action to build long-term resilience, sustain peace and bring about transformative change in terms of gender equality.

The Guide also reinforces the strong mandate of the ILO

through the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) to promote gender equality in the world of work in all types of settings, including those characterized by fragility, disaster, or conflict.

Women and girls often suffer the most during conflicts and disasters, including pandemics. Crisis-related hardships combine and compound pre-existing disadvantages; for example, they often cause women's working conditions to worsen while increasing their overall workload and care responsibilities.

At the same time, crises can give rise to changes that enable women to take up roles that were previously available only to men, and crises can open opportunities to address existing gender-based discrimination and violations of rights.

"Women's empowerment and gender equality in the world of work is more closely interlinked with peace and resilience than one may think", says Mito Tsukamo-

to, Chief of the Development and Investment Branch of the ILO Employment Policy Department. "For example, in addition to contributing to sustainable development, programmes that increase women's employment and decent work opportunities, responding to their immediate and long-term needs, can enhance social justice, cohesion and contact, yielding positive dividends for peace and strengthen women to act as agents of peace".

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, about 1.8 billion people across the world were already living in fragility, and the pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of people who were already in the grip of disaster and conflict.

The guide was developed by the ILO Coordination Support Unit for Peace and Resilience (CSPR) in the Development and Investment (DEVINVEST) Branch, in collaboration with the Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI) and will be available in English, French and Spanish. (Source: ILO)

Omicron wave impacts crew change

The March Crew Change Indicator confirms increasing trends since January in percentage of seafarers onboard vessels beyond contract expiry, as the industry is feeling the full effects of the Omicron wave.

The latest Indicator shows that the number of seafarers onboard vessels beyond the expiry of their contract has increased from 4.2% from 5% in the last month, while the number of seafarers onboard vessels for over 11 months has remained stable at 0.4%. The number of seafarers onboard beyond the expiry of their contracts is the highest number since the December 2021 Indicator. The Neptune Indicator also reports a 6-percentage point increase in seafarer vaccines, from 66.8% in February to 72.8% in March, as seafarers are increasingly gaining access to first and second shots. However, there are calls for increased access to booster shots for seafarers.

With increased numbers of seafarers onboard beyond contract expiry, ship managers cite challenges to crew changes. The effects of the Omicron wave are causing a high number of infections among crew members onboard vessels as well as among crew members who are due to join vessels. This has caused the postponement of many crew changes. Additionally, crew change and entry restrictions remain in place in many countries. Crew changes in China and repatriation of Chinese seafarers are especially hard as the country

has tight restrictions in place. This has led to increased costs, operational disturbance, and delays as owners try to accommodate crew changes.

There are, however, some positive reports of eased restrictions. The Philippines have removed the quarantine rule for inbound travelers, but still require PCR testing. Australia, whose borders have remained tightly shut throughout the pandemic, has announced it will open borders and this is expected to ease crew changes in the region.

Simultaneously, seafarer vaccination rates are still increasing at an encouraging pace. The seafarer vaccination rate is at 72.8%, which is similar or above to the percentage of some large North American, Asian, and European shipping nations. Despite this overall good progress that ship managers note, they also highlight some continuous challenges. Vaccine hesitancy remains strong in certain geographies. Additionally, an increase in breakthrough infections among crew has caused some seafarers to raise questions on vaccine effectiveness. Practical challenges also remain in ensuring seafarers' access to vaccines. Short and overnight port stays make it hard to find the time for seafarers to benefit from vaccine opportunities while on land, and some countries lack flexibility in crew change protocols to allow for seafarers to be vaccinated. (Source: *Global Maritime Forum*)

Climate change could cost shipping and port industries \$25 bil. a year

Climate change has the potential to cause \$25 billion in losses for shipping every year if no tangible actions are taken to cut emissions, a new report by RTI International and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) suggests.

The report suggests that the global shipping and port industry is susceptible to massive infrastructure damage and trade disruption due to climate change impacts.

Climate change has the potential to cause annual damages to port infrastructure that could reach nearly \$18 billion by 2100. Worse still, storm-related port disruptions could add another \$7.5 billion each year, reflecting the economic losses incurred by ports, shippers and carriers due to port closures and the costs to shipping customers.

Together, these added future costs due to climate change are roughly equivalent to the total annual net earnings for the container port sector in 2019, according to the report.

"Just as the COVID-19 pandemic threw our ports and the global supply chain into crisis mode, the climate emergency will have major consequences for international shipping. In the face of climate breakdown, however, the shipping industry has an early

warning bell and an opportunity to act," said Marie Hubatova, senior manager for EDF's Global Transport team.

She added that by stepping up to reduce emissions and invest in zero-carbon fuels, shipping leaders could help avoid the costly consequences and build a more sustainable future for the critical maritime industry.

The EDF report contends that international shipping has grown enormously over the past quarter of a century, more than doubling in annual trade volume. Due to the growth in combination with shipping's reliance on heavily polluting fuels, the industry has become a large emitter of greenhouse gases (GHGs), currently accounting for roughly 20 percent of global emissions from transportation.

Effectively, sea level rises, increase in storms and inland flooding that are an impact of climate change are posing direct threats to shipping infrastructure and operations.

With global trade expected to grow in the future, which translates to an increase in the volume of goods transported by sea, climate change is emerging as a major risk to maritime trade volume.

Assuming a steady growth rate, global trade is expected to grow

to reach 120 billion tons in 2100. Under the worst-case climate scenario, that growth could be stunted by up to nearly 10 percent.

Global shipping emits two to three percent of global GHGs emissions. Top shipowners and ports are leading the transition to green shipping in order to reduce future climate change costs, making new investments in zero-emission fuels and technology.

Many shipping leaders have already endorsed a climate call to action through the Getting to Zero Coalition, which aims for the development and deployment of commercially viable deep sea zero-emission vessels by 2030. (Source: *The Maritime Executive*)

ALL JAPAN SEAMEN'S UNION
15-26, Roppongi 7-Chome,
Minato-Ku, Tokyo 106-0032

Tel.: (03) 5410-8320
Fax: (03) 5410-8336
E-mail: iss@jsu.jp
Internet: <http://www.jsu.or.jp>

Publisher: Hiroshi Saito

Send inquiries to the attention of
Mr. Hiroyuki Watanabe,
Director, International Dept.