



Shaping the Future of Shipping

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21 March 2022

LA(22)10

TO: LABOUR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

COPY: ALL FULL AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (FOR INFO)

ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND TO SUPPORT THOSE AFFECTED BY THE BLACK SEA CRISIS

Action Required: ICS kindly requests member associations to share the information below with their respective members. Members are invited to encourage donations to be made as quickly as possible to support relief efforts on the ground.

The Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) has launched a new appeal to the maritime industry to urgently support seafarers and their families impacted by the crisis in Ukraine. Support will be provided to both third country seafarers currently stuck onboard vessels in the Black Sea and the Sea of Asov and also family members of seafarers who have also been caught up in the situation.

TK Foundation have already generously donated \$50,000 donation to the new appeal. However, in order to meet the continuing emerging welfare needs Shipping companies are encouraged to make donations as soon as possible. The SIRF is currently addressing basic human welfare – shelter, food, water, transport, access to medical services, along with practical financial help. Support for seafarers and their families will be funded by the SIRF and delivered by maritime charities, trade unions and other not for profit organisations working in various countries.

The SIRF was established in 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in India. Managed by [The Seafarers' Charity](#) and supported by [The Mission to Seafarers](#), [ISWAN](#), [Sailors' Society](#), [Stella Maris](#), and other charities – urgent support was delivered in key seafaring communities.

Catherine Spencer, Chief Executive, The Seafarers' Charity and Chair of the SIRF Stakeholder group said, 'We were impressed by the immediate response from the maritime sector to the SIRF to provide relief from COVID-19. Funds were distributed very swiftly to alleviate need. More funds are now urgently needed to support seafarers and their families affected by the Ukraine Crisis. The maritime industry is impressive when it comes together to help their own, and we hope that it will once more generously donate to the SIRF.'

Initial grants have been made to the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) and the welfare fund of the Ukrainian Marine Transport Workers Trade Union, Mortrans to provide immediate financial support to seafarers and their families impacted by the crisis.

Guy Platten, Secretary General, International Chamber of Shipping, said, 'Our number one priority is the safety of our seafarers and their families. Ships and their crews in the area are under threat, while seafarers with families in Ukraine are rightly concerned. Ongoing conflict, violence and uncertainty are causing people to flee their homes and become separated from their families. In some areas, water, electricity, and phone connectivity have been affected with many people now unable to contact their loved ones at sea. I urge the maritime industry to give generously to this important cause and help our seafarers at this time of crisis.' In addition to their existing and established delivery partners, The Seafarers' Charity and their delivery partners are establishing new contacts to deliver support on the ground in Ukraine, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Germany, Moldova, and operations are expanding as more is understood about the need.

Small grants are already available to seafarers and their families who have been impacted by the Ukraine crisis and need immediate and urgent financial support through the Ukraine Crisis Support Fund, administered by ISWAN on behalf of the SIRF. Seafarer-centred organisations - including maritime welfare charities, maritime unions, port welfare committees, ship management companies and manning agents - must apply to the Ukraine Crisis Support Fund on the seafarer or their family's behalf. More information on the Fund and how to apply can be found [here](#).

The Seafarers International Relief Fund is a collaboration of maritime charities including Sailors' Society, Stella Maris, The Mission to Seafarers, the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA) and ISWAN. The Fund complements existing work by charities and provides funds to appropriate new partners who can meet specific identified needs.

The Seafarers' Charity provides robust governance to the Fund, ensuring that charities awarded funds meet stringent governance requirements, can deliver effectively and efforts are not duplicated. Donations can be made here: <https://theseafarerscharity.enthuse.com/cf/seafarers-international-relief-fund-1>

100% of funds paid into the Seafarers International Relief Fund are used to support seafarers and their families in desperate need. The Fund is managed free of charge by The Seafarers' Charity.

The Seafarers International Relief Fund, a central charitable Fund to respond to emergencies affecting seafarers and their families, is now supporting seafarers and their families impacted by the humanitarian disaster caused by the crisis in Ukraine. We urgently call on the maritime and shipping industry to contribute to this Fund and help seafarers and their families, now and through the crisis.

For any further information please contact Kezia Cunningham at The Seafarers Charity at kezia.cunningham@theseafarerscharity.org

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