
Promoting and supporting the welfare of seafarers

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Safety Alert is issued by The Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) to bring to the attention of seafarers, owners, managers and interested parties the ongoing work of the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) and its members.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The work of ISWAN is recognised internationally with the aim to promote and support the welfare of seafarers all over the world. The BMA would like to raise awareness and access to assistance rendered by members of ISWAN through the publication of their recent poster which provides details of several organisations who are able and willing to assist seafarers during their time of need.

3. Awareness

- 3.1. During this unprecedented time the BMA has seen an increase in the number of mental health related issues amongst seafarers.
- 3.2. A number of measures can and should be considered and implemented on board; the below list draws attention to some areas that can be easily addressed:
- i. Greater access to sources of communication
 - ii. Recognise the signs of seafarers under stress and the impact of extended contracts, job security and repatriation is having on those seafarers
 - iii. Be mindful of the need for community support on board
 - iv. Be aware of the pressures placed on seafarers to provide for family and friends
 - v. Ensure where possible that social structure on board is maintained, such as ready access to stores and essentials
 - vi. Ensure access to Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) is readily available and widely publicised.
 - vii. Provide resilience training to all seafarers

- 3.3. Any attending inspector must be conscious of the welfare of seafarers and raise any concerns to the appropriate authority.

4. Access to assistance

- 4.1. The poster attached to this Safety Alert should be made available to all seafarers.
- 4.2. Additionally, any seafarer concerns in regard to Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) matters can be sent directly to the BMA at: MLC@bahamasmaritime.com.

5. Validity

- 5.1. This Safety Alert is valid until further notice

If you or someone you know is finding it difficult to cope at the moment... It's OK.



It's common to feel this way. You are NOT alone. Many people are going through a range of emotions during this time.

The current restrictions may be placing extraordinary pressures on you. You may be worried about your family, feeling isolated or lonely, feeling scared about your health, your finances or facing an uncertain future, which can be very hard.



Avoiding others, being irritable, anxious, not sleeping well, not eating properly, headaches, nausea, body pains, feeling restless or exhausted, listless or on edge: all these things can be signs of stress.

If you notice these or other signs of stress in yourself, don't be afraid to ask for help.

If you notice these or other signs in a crew mate, you can also help.



When we are finding it hard to cope, we often don't want to burden others with our problems.

Don't be afraid to reach out. Asking for support early can stop things from getting worse.

Ask: Are you OK? You will not make things worse by asking. Be prepared to listen. Just listening and being there is incredibly important. Be kind, empathic and non-judgemental.



Be kind and compassionate to yourself – this is hard.

Connect with people around you and people you can confide in.

You might be able to help your crewmates to:

- Access information
- Tackle practical problems or talk them through to look for solutions
- Access resources, services and other sources of help →

Sources of help:

INTERNATIONAL:



Free, confidential, multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families anywhere in the world

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

- TELEPHONE: +44 (0)20 7323 2737
 - E-MAIL: help@seafarerhelp.org
 - LIVE CHAT: www.seafarerhelp.org
 - WHATSAPP: +44 (0)7909 470732
 - FACEBOOK: facebook.com/seafarerhelp
 - SMS: +44 (0)7624 818405
 - SKYPE: [info-seafarerhelp.org](https://skype.com/seafarerhelp)
 - VK: vk.com/seafarerhelpclub
 - VIBER: +44 (0)7741 594549*
- *Available Monday – Friday, 08:00-18:00 GMT only

AMOSUP MEMBERS:

Seamen's Hospital Manila:
Tel/Health (with Mental Health Helpline):
+632 3310 6641
+632 8527 8116 to 20 (local 2061)

AMOSUP Medkonek:
amosup.medkonek@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL:



An online messenger service providing 24-hour holistic and spiritual support both for seafarers and their families wishing to speak to a port chaplain



NUSI MEMBERS:



NUSI SAHARA:
24/7 free of cost
Psychological Counselling
Helpline telephone service

All ranks of seafarers and their families can call and talk one-to-one or chat to a professional counsellor

For seafarers and their families in India:

Call on 1800-102-5110 (toll free) and talk to a counsellor

For seafarers on board outside India:
Search for 'NUSI Sahara' on Skype (see NUSI logo) to speak to a counsellor