



# *Annual Review*

*2021-22*



## Message from our Chair



This report covers ISWAN activities from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, a period when a major element of our work, particularly early in 2021, was responding to the issues faced by seafarers due to the

continuing COVID-19 pandemic. It was heartening that our efforts in this were recognised through the receipt of an award from SAFETY4SEA. At the end of the period, the likely effects on seafarers of the war in Ukraine was just beginning to get our attention.

Our helpline SeafarerHelp continued to receive historically high numbers of contacts and the newly-established Yacht Crew Help received a steadily increasing number too. The number of bespoke helplines run on behalf of companies and organisations increased to 16, and we launched our new ISWAN for Seafarers app. Throughout the year we delivered an increasing amount of training on Mental Health Awareness for the Maritime Industry and our major research project: Social Interaction Matters, made significant progress. Its report and recommendations will be promoted worldwide soon.

None of this could have been achieved without the wonderful enduring support of our funders and sponsors – too many to list here but rightly recognised in this report. The Trustees are especially grateful to our long-term funders. We were delighted to appoint Simon Grainge to the post of Chief Executive in June 2021. With his broad experience, both within and outside of the charity sector, Simon immediately set about enhancing our management and governance arrangements: empowering staff, improving effectiveness and gaining support from funders.

It is the hardships endured by the world's seafarers that keep us all at ISWAN, Trustees and staff, focused on delivering support 24/7 throughout the year and, with your continued backing, we will continue to do so as long as it is required.

**Andy Winbow,**  
Chair of the Board of Trustees

## Message from our CEO



I welcome the task of compiling an annual review because it compels me to reflect on the achievements and challenges of the year. Our work can be consuming so it is easy to forget what has happened

previously or how much has been achieved. The year in question has been dominated by the aftermath of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine with both events having a major impact on seafarer welfare.

I am pleased to report that the ISWAN team has been able to meet every challenge thereby ensuring continuity of service to seafarers when they most need it. A particular challenge was the setting up of the Ukraine Crisis Support Fund on behalf of the Seafarers International Relief Fund. Working closely with our partners at Stella Maris and the Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine we were able to distribute emergency grants to seafarers affected by the conflict.

ISWAN is now working to its first ever strategic plan and this has helped us to focus our attention on a set of objectives rather than responding to events as they happen. For a small organisation like ISWAN with limited resources, this is essential and an important step forward. This has also helped to reassure our many wonderful funders without whom we can do very little.

As we move forward, we will be seeking ways to reduce our reliance on grant funding and strengthening our relationships within the industry. Partnership is essential in this day and age so we will do everything we can to collaborate and cooperate with our colleagues in the maritime welfare sector. Whatever we do, it is incumbent upon us to ensure we are at all times focused on the needs of seafarers. After all, they are the true heroes of the story. I hope you enjoy the review and we are always happy to receive feedback.

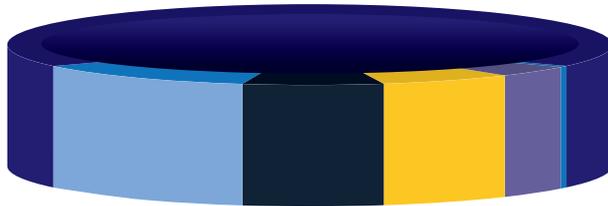
**Simon Grainge,**  
Chief Executive Officer of ISWAN

# ISWAN in one year

↑↓ Stats gone up, or down from previous year.

## INCOME

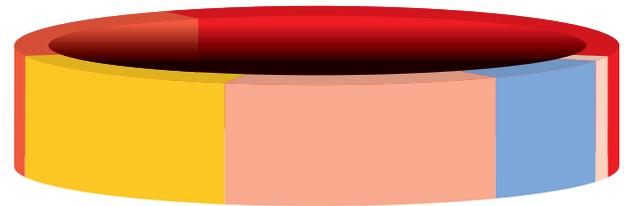
↓ Total £1,297,300



- Grants **£881,005**
- Commercial trading activities **£161,916**
- Mental health training **£98,914**
- Membership **£93,105**
- Ad hoc donations **£57,540**
- Other **£4,820**

## EXPENDITURE

↑ Total £1,150,452



- SeafarerHelp **£436,992**
- Relief funds **£238,744**
- Membership support **£182,474**
- Projects **£172,375**
- Commercial trading activities **£98,736**
- Governance **£21,131**



**11,744**

seafarers and family members assisted



**US \$252,917**

granted via relief funds



**46**

training sessions delivered



**9,966**

downloads of health resources for seafarers on our websites

## Our work this year

Summary of all of ISWAN's areas of work over the year:

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# ISWAN Helplines



**11,744**

seafarers and family members assisted



**6,255**

new cases



**16,882**

calls and messages handled



**90**

nationalities assisted

## Top 5 seafarer nationalities:



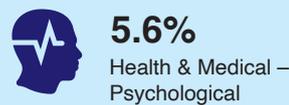
## Top 5 flag states of vessels involved:



## Top 5 contact methods:



## Top 5 types of query:



\*This number was noticeably higher this year due to the large number of calls and messages we received from seafarers affected by COVID-19, many of whom were enquiring about ISWAN's COVID-19 grants programme).





- SeafarerHelp is the **no. 1** free, confidential, multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- Having more than doubled in 2020/21, the number of calls and messages to SeafarerHelp fell by 13% in 2021/22 as the COVID-19 crisis eased. The number of calls and messages related to:
  - ↓ Repatriation fell by 69%
  - ↓ Fatigue fell by just over 50%
- However, the number of calls and messages remains 81% higher than in 2019/20. The number of calls and messages related to:
  - ↑ Illegal recruitment and fraudulent manning agents have increased strongly since 2019/20 as a result of ISWAN's campaign to address this issue in India
  - ↑ Information increased by 53% year-on-year, primarily due to a substantial increase in health-related enquiries about COVID-19 and ISWAN's work on the COVID-19 vaccination drive in India, as well as an increase in queries about seafarer centres as the crew change crisis eased
- Demand for this service shows no sign of reducing – this is partly due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the conflict in Ukraine but also because the reputation of SeafarerHelp has grown



- Yacht Crew Help is a free, confidential, multilingual helpline for crew working in the superyacht industry, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- 2021-22 was the first full year of operation for Yacht Crew Help and demand for the service is growing steadily, alongside a greater understanding of the challenges crew face
  - 📊 **190** new cases up to end of March 2022
  - 👥 **207** crew assisted up to end of March 2022
  - 🌐 **4,624** visitors on Yacht Crew Help website
  - 👁️ **10,290** page views on Yacht Crew Help website
- Key issues raised include concerns relating to psychological health (26% of all calls and messages in 2021/22) and abuse, bullying, harassment and sexual assault/sexual harassment (SASH) (10%)
- Issues relating to employment rights also accounted for a high proportion of calls and messages – failure to pay wages (15%), other contract issues (12%), and unfair dismissal (8%)



- Under our trading subsidiary SWAN Ltd, we operate a number of independent, tailored helplines for companies and organisations in the maritime industry. These helplines offer free, confidential, multilingual support and assistance to crew, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



We operate **16** bespoke helplines (**5** new this year)

## International activities

As well as operating from our base in the UK, we also operate through our international teams, providing practical humanitarian support (including financial support and counselling) to seafarers and their families facing crises and traumatic events in South and South East Asia.

Our international network of support including partnerships with welfare organisations, shipping companies, crewing agencies, unions, hospitals, and government departments has grown and strengthened over this year.

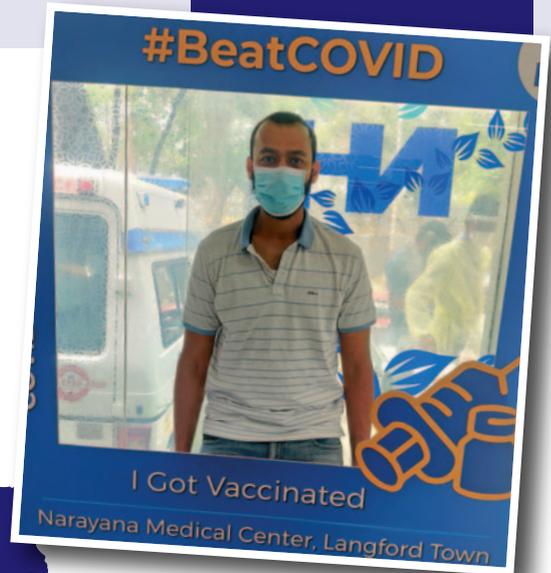
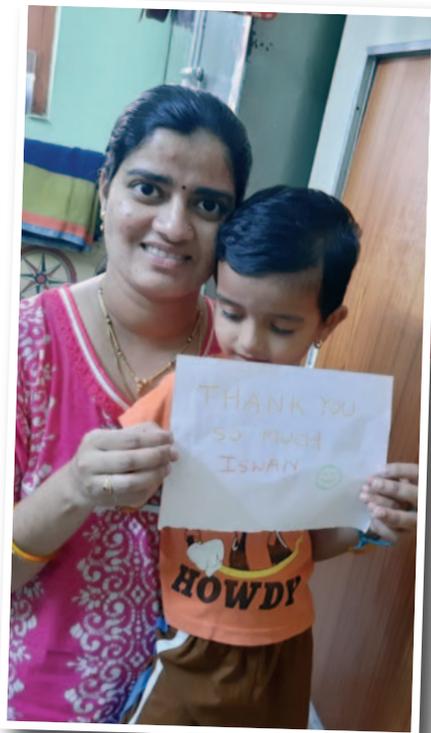
The number of SeafarerHelp helpline cases received through social media channels managed by our international teams has increased as our reach has grown, and regular training of our staff has enhanced our ability to offer in-house support and improve the quality of services for seafarers.

**2,700**  
cases handled across  
all three regions

**4,643**  
seafarers and their  
families provided  
with practical support

### India & South Asia

- **2,893** Indian seafarers and their families assisted
- As the COVID 19 pandemic took a hold on India, a major labour supply nation, our team facilitated access to COVID-19 vaccinations for nearly **1,500** Indian seafarers to ensure their livelihoods and avoid serious illness



- **494** seafarers assisted with unpaid wages and abandonment issues
- **204** seafarers assisted when they were duped by fraudulent crewing agents in India

## Philippines & South East Asia

- **1,690** Filipino seafarers and their families provided with practical assistance and guidance
- **29** in-person pre-departure orientation seminars delivered to **1,328** seafarers and **18** webinars delivered to **1,900** seafarers



ISWAN received the 2021 SAFETY4SEA COVID-19 Resilience Award at the 2021 SAFETY4SEA Virtual Awards for assisting more than **44,000** seafarers worldwide since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**5,044** of ISWAN's Good Mental Health Guides distributed ➡

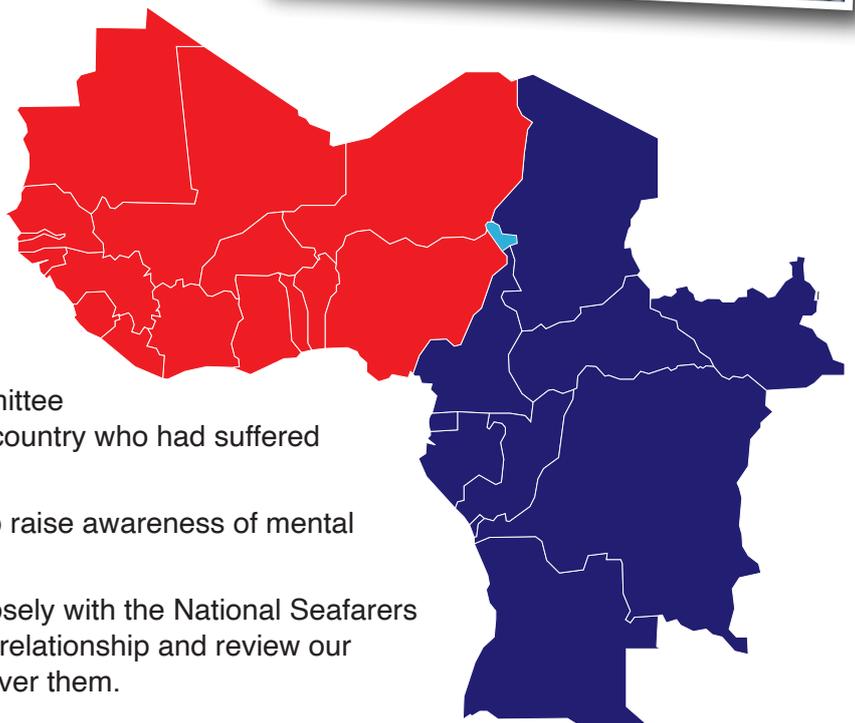


## West & Central Africa:

Over this year, our social worker in Nigeria:

- Provided emotional support and took supplies including food and ISWAN's mental health resources to seafarers in prison
- Visited ships in port to offer emotional support to the crew on board
- Worked with the local Port Welfare Committee members to assist seafarers around the country who had suffered traumatic incidents
- Visited local maritime training institutes to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing among seafarers

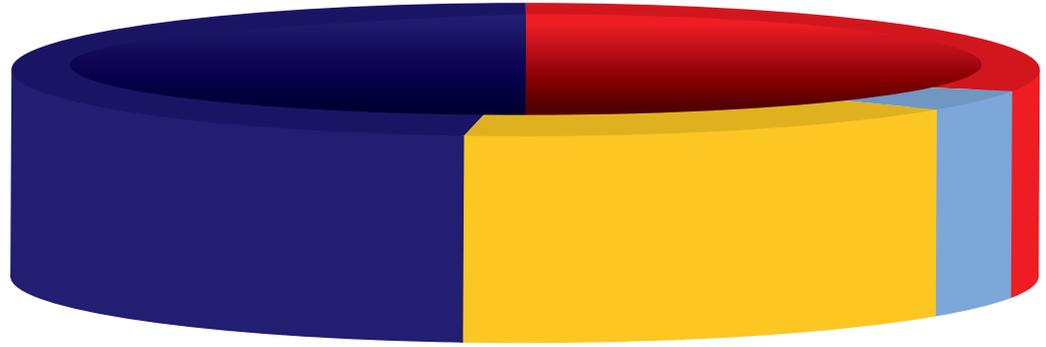
Since July 2022, we have been working closely with the National Seafarers Welfare Board in Nigeria to strengthen our relationship and review our activities in this region and how best to deliver them.



## Relief Funds

**US \$252,917**

Total amount granted via relief funds administered by ISWAN



**● US \$121,000**

Seafarers International Relief Fund (SIRF) – ISWAN Grants Programme (Philippines)  
**137 grants**

**● US \$77,227**

Seafarers’ Emergency Fund (SEF)  
**31 grants**

**● US \$42,690**

ISWAN Hardship Fund (for Filipino seafarers affected by COVID-19 and Typhoon Rai)  
**285 grants**

**● US \$12,000**

Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia’s (CGPCS) Piracy Survivor Family Fund  
**3 grants**



## Ukraine Crisis Support Fund

At the end of March 2022, driven by the impact of the war in Ukraine on seafarers and their families, we launched the Ukraine Crisis Support Fund, which we managed on behalf of the Seafarers International Relief Fund.

The Ukraine Crisis Support Fund provided immediate and urgent financial support to those affected by the crisis, including one-time financial grants of up to US\$500 to seafarers and their families in need of help with medical, rent, living costs or educational support for children, and up to US\$1,000 to next of kin if a seafarer has died as a direct consequence of the Ukraine crisis.

## ISWAN for Seafarers app

On 30th June 2021, we partnered with The Shipowners' Club to launch a new free mobile app which offers a direct line to our helplines, SeafarerHelp and Yacht Crew Help, and offline access to resources for seafarers.

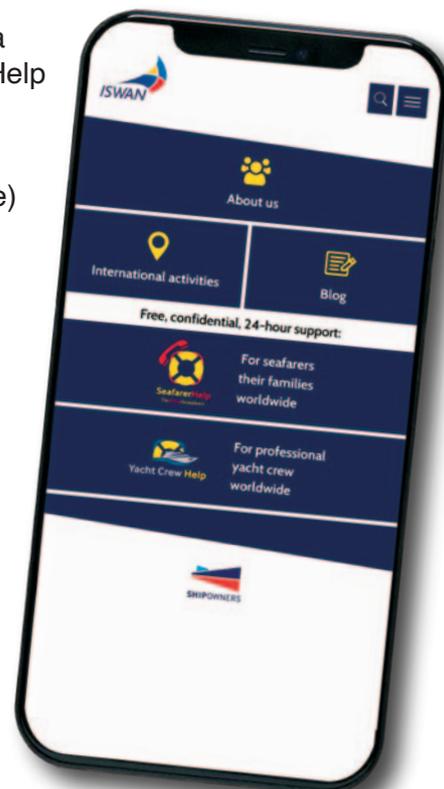
The app does not use data when open and an internet connection is only needed to contact our helplines (where phone signal is not available) or update features of the app such as the blog containing recent news and articles.

**2,838** downloads up to end of March 2022

**70** nationalities among the **75%** of users who provided information about their nationality, age, rank and vessel type



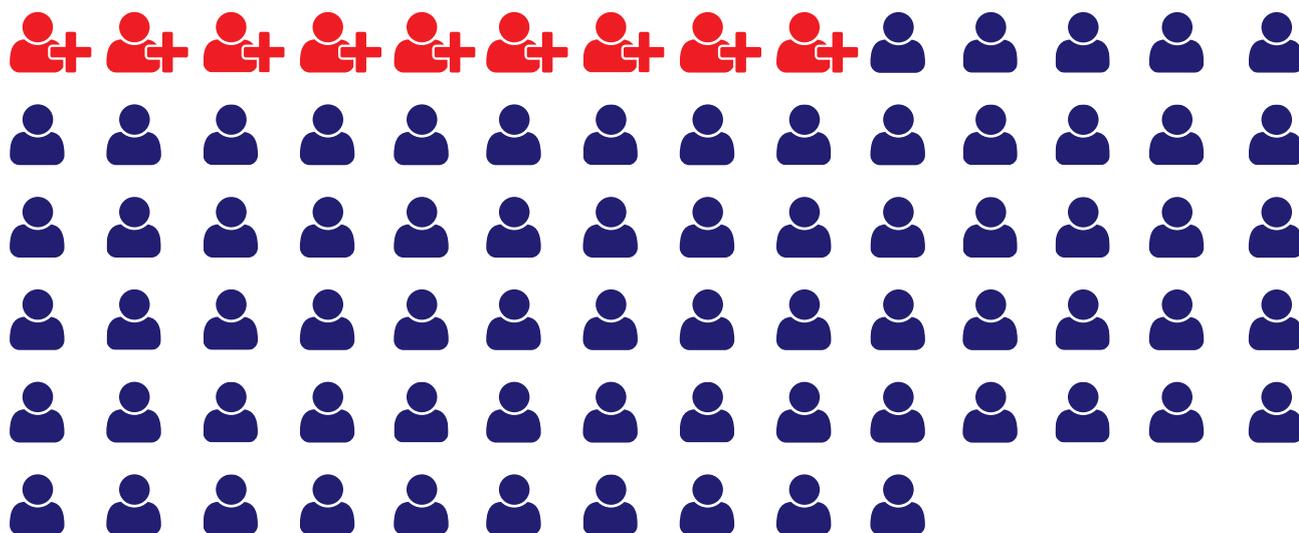
In partnership with



## Membership

ISWAN is a network of international organisations committed to improving the welfare of seafarers. Our members reflect the diversity present in the shipping industry today, from shipping companies to unions, insurance groups to welfare organisations. Our members possess a wealth of different experience and include key influencers in the field of seafarers' welfare.

We welcomed **nine** new members this year, bringing the total to over **80**.



We are currently carrying out a review of membership to better understand the needs and expectations of our members, and we are planning a membership drive in the coming year to expand our network.

## Maritime Mental Health Awareness Training

This interactive, online training consists of three core modules designed by Dr. Pennie Blackburn, a Consultant Clinical Psychologist, and has been delivered online since November 2020.

We have received excellent feedback from course attendees, and stakeholders from across the shipping, superyacht and cruise ship industries continue to approach ISWAN to deliver the training to both their shoreside and seagoing staff.

From 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, trainers located in the UK, the Philippines and China delivered **46** online courses.

"It was a well run and well put together course with a great combination of information, practical advice and the opportunity to discuss and practise what we had learnt."

"I loved the course and Dr. Pennie Blackburn was extremely good at her job. She was an eloquent speaker and very good listener. The course was designed very creatively to pass on the knowledge about this topic and include participants in every step of the process. Loved it. And very happy to have this information which I will surely use on the ships in times of need."

"I loved the course, it opened my awareness to the seriousness of the Mental Health issues and because of this, I will be able to pass on this knowledge. All the information and skills in the course are going to be useful in the work and my private life."

# Social Interaction Matters (SIM) Project

## September 2021:

Phase Two trials ended after commencing in November 2020 – 9 different shipping companies and a total of 21 vessels were involved

The trials monitored the impact of social interaction (or lack thereof) on overall crew wellbeing, welfare and cohesion

## November 2021:

Ambassadors' Round Table to obtain feedback from the SIM Ambassadors on their experiences of the trials and their knowledge of the industry to help us develop guidance and recommendations in Phase Three

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and stated that vessel involvement in the trials (and subsequent increased focus on social interaction on board) had a worthwhile and tangible impact

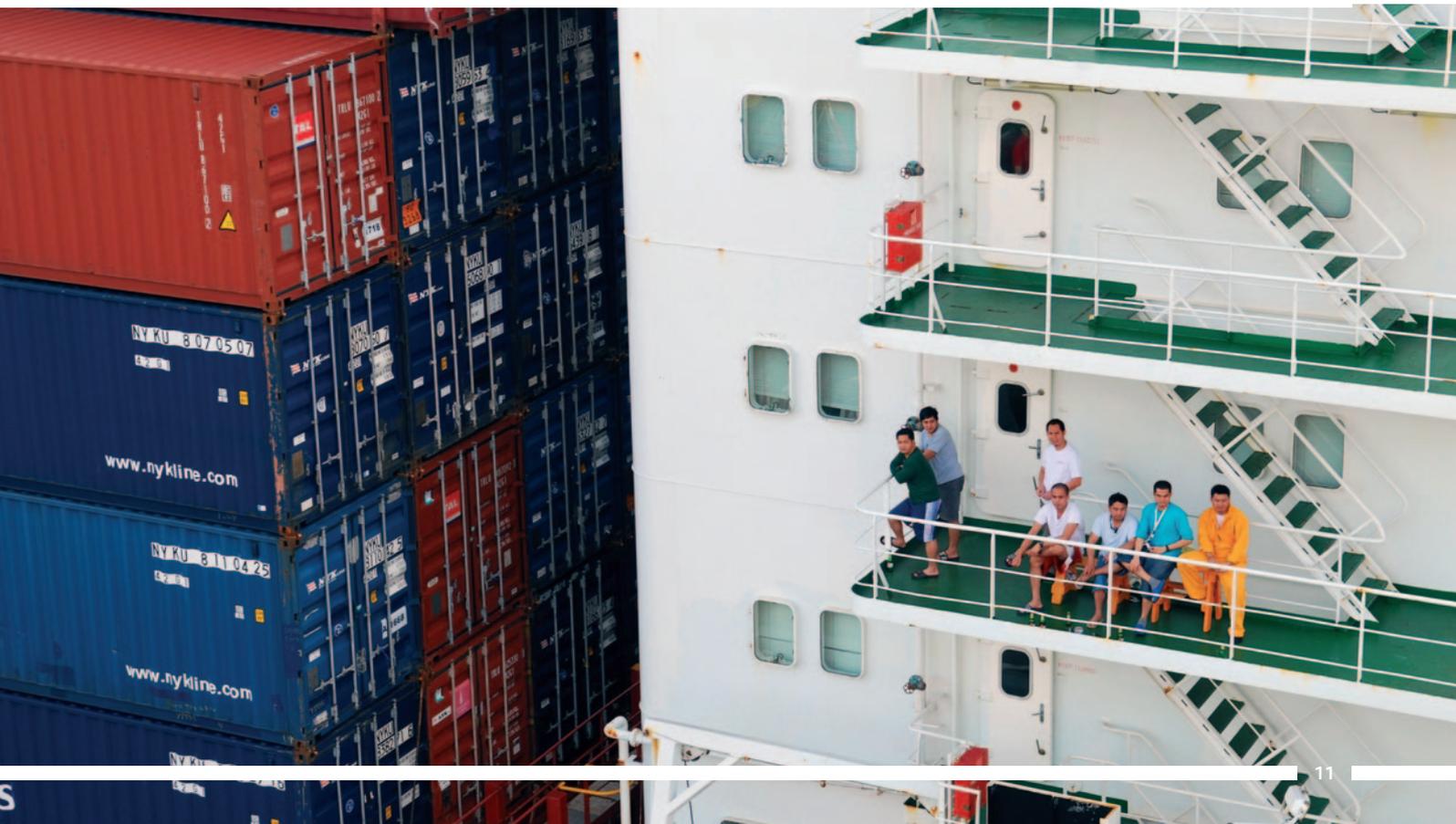
## February 2022:

Social Activities Focus Group, where project supporters shared their insights and thoughts with ISWAN on the social activities undertaken on board in certain scenarios and on particular vessel types

The aim of the focus group was to help us develop our guidance and recommendations and make it as inclusive as possible

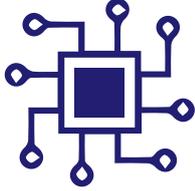
## June 2022:

Final Phase Two report released



# Our Strategy, 2021-24

1



*Improve our processes and make better use of technology to meet the changing needs of seafarers*

2



*Develop timely responses to the most prevalent issues identified through helplines, regions and membership to educate the sector and influence change*

3



*Raise profile and position of ISWAN as a catalyst for delivering change to improve the lives of seafarers and their families*

4



*Develop a truly international organisation that is financially and operationally sustainable*



# Thank you to our funders, partners and sponsors

## International activities



## SeafarerHelp

## Yacht Crew Help

Primary Partner



Official Yachting Partner



## Additional support



Hadley Shipping Group Ltd



We could not do the work we do without our partners. We rely on partnerships with others in the maritime welfare sector to deliver our services for seafarers, and the Seafarers International Relief Fund (launched by The Seafarers' Charity in May 2021) is a great example of what can be achieved when we work together – a big thank you to all our friends.





# SeafarerHelp

*The lifeline for seafarers*

Do you have a problem with unpaid wages, repatriation, a welfare issue, or do you just want to talk to someone? If so we are here to organise help for you.

SeafarerHelp is the only worldwide helpline for seafarers and their families that is:

- Free
- Confidential
- Multilingual
- Available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year

## Contact us:



Email us:

[help@seafarerhelp.org](mailto:help@seafarerhelp.org)



Find us online at:

[www.seafarerhelp.org](http://www.seafarerhelp.org)



Request call back:

+44 (0)207 323 2737



WhatsApp:

+44 (0)7909 470 732



Skype us at:

[info-seafarerhelp.org](https://www.skype.com/contact/seafarerhelp)



Service provided by:



Find us on:





# Yacht Crew Help

the *lifeline* for crew

## Feeling low?

## We are here to listen.

Our helpline is:

- Free
- Confidential
- Multilingual
- Available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year

Yacht Crew Help is operated by ISWAN



Contact us:



Email us:

[help@yachtcrewhelp.org](mailto:help@yachtcrewhelp.org)



Live Chat at:

[www.yachtcrewhelp.org](http://www.yachtcrewhelp.org)



Request call back:

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Find us online at:

[www.yachtcrewhelp.org](http://www.yachtcrewhelp.org)

Find us here:



## *Would you like to work with us or become a member of ISWAN?*

Please contact Alan Croft, Business  
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