

MARINE TRANSPORT WORKER'S TRADE UNION OF UKRAINE E - BULLETIN



Dear All!

JULY 2020

The Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine is always there to take care about its members – seafarers and their families. The Union extends its social coverage to seafarers, both when they are at sea and ashore. In order to keep you informed of our activities, we have developed this monthly E-BULLETIN, aimed to guide you through our most recent and significant achievements and activities, provided by our Union. Any suggestions and proposal are very welcome. Stay tuned for more information!

The MTWTU team works every day, striving to do its best for the Ukrainian seafarers and their families. Significant efforts are still focused on keeping them abreast of the most crucial industry developments concerning the Ukrainian seafarers and their employment onboard the foreign-flagged ships worldwide during COVID-19 crisis.

Furthermore, all Ukrainian seafarers-MTWTU members, are entitled to apply for financial assistance from the Union, if they are unable to get employment onboard the ship for more than 6 months from the end of last contract, as well as if they are facing employment delays due to COVID-19 quarantine measures and travel restrictions.

Your sincerely, Oleg Grygoriuk
First Vice Chairman MTWTU
Vice President IFSMA,
Goodwill Maritime Ambassador IMO



THE MTWTU WORK DURING THE LAST MONTHS

The number of appeals and calls for advice and practical involvement has grown significantly. Therefore the Union leadership decided to redeploy staff to handle numerous claims from seafarers, their relatives, crewing agencies' representatives, shipowners and cadets and their parents. In addition, the Union launched a chat-bot "ITF Inspector in Ukraine: Assistance & Guidance" to optimize the data collection process. Of course, most of the claims concern seafarers' replacement, disembarkation and repatriation due to the ban on crew changes and travel restrictions

imposed by governments due to the pandemic. Before, wage arrears ranked most common reason for seafarers' claims, but today, undoubtedly, the very first place belongs to off-signing from the ship upon completion of employment. Worth noting is that due to pandemic and closed borders, many seafarers were forced to stay onshore deprived off an opportunity to join the ships and earn their living. Thus, in 130 days the Union has processed 179 claims for financial assistance received from the MTWTU members-seafarers (whereof, 116 were due to the long voyage delay).

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AN INDIVIDUAL APPROACH AND TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY



A recent appeal from the family of the Ukrainian seafarer, 2nd Engineer, who died of a heart attack between the voyages, became an example of the said individual approach and vivid illustration of international trade union solidarity.

In March 2020, the seafarer arrived home from his last contract. A month later, he had a first stroke; he underwent surgery and was discharged from the hospital. However, a few days after, the seafarer suffered a second heart attack, which caused his death, and his wife and 2 children, 10 and 14 years old, lost their breadwinner.

The seafarer completed his last (and only) contract onboard a ship covered by the ITF collective bargaining agreement of the Hong Kong trade union Merchant Navy Officers' Guild (MNOG), while he has not even been registered with the MTWTU.

Under the respective CBA, the employer was not to bear any financial responsibility for the seafarer's illness and death after the voyage, however, the MNOG trade union responded to the MTWTU request to consider the provision of financial assistance to the seafarer's widow and children, and decided to grant ex-gratia financial assistance to the seafarer's family in the amount of USD 15,000.

"This kind of help is a real lifeline for our family. I am immensely grateful for everything you

have done for us," - the widow said.

The MTWTU, in turn, is extremely grateful to the MNOG for their grand gesture as a sign of trade union solidarity and fraternity.

UNION DEFENDS SEAFARERS' INTERESTS IN COURT

At the very beginning of the global quarantine, 16 Ukrainian crew members, registered with the Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine, got repatriated from several ships off the Norway coast. After the flight from Norway, the company arranged a bus transfer Minsk-Odessa for the crew. When crossing the border, all crew members agreed for self-isolation at their places of residence and signed the appropriate documents. Before the flight, the seafarers went through 14-day quarantine on their ships, and none of them had coronavirus symptoms.

On the way home, already in Odessa, the bus with the seafarers was stopped by police. The officers illegally demanded for compulsory observation in the state sanatorium, where, by the way, the coronavirus outbreak took place. The crew members addressed the MTWTU for help and all their further actions were coordinated by the Trade Union lawyers.

Despite all the arguments, the police officers made up administrative offence protocols. The cases were sent to the court and each of the seafarers was subject to a fine for violating quarantine rules.

On behalf of the seafarers, the lawyers developed explanations and sent them to the court. Also, the necessary evidence was collected to confirm the absence of corpus delicti in the seafarers' actions. As a result, the issue was resolved; the case proceedings were closed due to the lack of corpus delicti and the elements of the offense. None of the seafarers was fined.

ENTERTAINMENT

The Marine Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine resumes social projects for our members who are currently ashore after a forced break.

Thus, the Union invited seafarers and their families to the «Nemo» dolphinarium for a spectacular performance «United Planet».



The show once again reminded everyone about the importance of the harmony between the humanity and nature, and how important it is to treat our planet with care. Another brand-new initiative of the MTWTU is meeting a new day on kayaks at sea. We believe that our members and their families will remember the sea breeze with first rays of sun, as well as a good company, for a long time!

