



MERCHANT NAVY WELFARE BOARD

MERCHANT NAVY WELFARE BOARD STRATEGY 2018/19 and review of outcomes in 2017

"Supporting the provision of quality welfare services for seafarers and their dependants"

INTRODUCTION

Council: The Board's trustees are known as its Council. Members are appointed on the basis of the skills and experience required to carry out their responsibilities effectively in the best interest of the charity. Each is appointed for a three-year term of office but can seek reappointment. The Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected by Council.

Constituent Member Organisations: These consist of: Chamber of Shipping – representing the ship owners and ship managers; the two maritime trade unions – Nautilus International and RMT representing the seafarers; and 43 maritime charities. The Board works closely with its Constituent members to monitor, develop and improve welfare provision. To date, there have been no changes to Constituent membership.

KEY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

STATUS

The key objectives of the Merchant Navy Welfare Board are to:

Help improve the effectiveness of all those charities caring for merchant seafarers, fishermen and their dependants, irrespective of nationality, religion or ethnic background

Fundraising: The Board is not an active fundraiser and whilst it welcomes contributions and legacies, it is largely reliant on investment income. However, at the suggestion of the Board, in 2012 it went into partnership with Seafarers UK to set up the 'Merchant Navy Fund' using the combined expertise of both charities. The Board provides its unique knowledge and understanding of the Merchant Navy whilst Seafarers UK utilises their fundraising expertise. Whilst the Fund is administered by Seafarers UK, the Board meets half the costs. This initiative is intended to raise money from MN associated personnel and their families specifically to support those with an MN background.

Ongoing

Port levies or contributions to welfare provision: The Board worked in partnership with the Port of Tyne (PoT) and the Tyne Area PWC to establish a partnership port levy scheme. The scheme, entitled the Port of Tyne Welfare Fund began raising funds on 1 January 2016 and was formally launched in September 2017. The fund has distributed funds based a MNWB points distribution system (approved by societies) and provided funding to the principal welfare organisations serving seafarers visiting the Tyne. The PoT welfare fund has a MoU that could be used as a template for other ports that do not benefit from an existing levy scheme. Whilst there are already numerous successful schemes working in other ports, the MNWB considers the levy to be an excellent example of a modern partnership scheme between shipowners, ports and welfare providers to support and improve seafarers' welfare in port. The Board has circulated the project MoU to members of the Serving Seafarers Working Group (SSWG) for use in ports without existing levies and the formula for distribution of funds is also used in Southampton. As this benefits port welfare provision the Board intends to proactively promote this collaborative levy system via its PWC system.

Ongoing

Strive to ensure that all welfare needs are met through the most effective deployment of resources

Co-ordination: The Board endeavours to improve the level of co-ordination amongst Merchant Navy charities and voluntary organisations to identify gaps in provision and ensure that inappropriate duplication is reduced, through a number of sources that are included within this review. This is a core role. **Ongoing**

Working Groups and Forums: Working groups and forums are an important means of bringing together those maritime charities, with common aims, to review requirements and promote recommendations. There are now 2 working groups in place: *Serving Seafarers* and *Older Seafarers & Families*, which includes *Accommodation*. Each working group normally meets biannually. These groups share information of common interest; monitor the impact of changes; make recommendations on best practice; consider priorities, particularly in relation to funding arrangements; act as a co-ordinating lobbying force to make representation to maritime funding charities and other appropriate organisations. The working groups and their strategy will be reviewed in 2019 to ensure maximum collaborative impact. **Ongoing**

Evaluation studies: At the request of its Constituent members, the Board can arrange evaluations and/or feasibility studies of various ports and other seafarers' facilities. This is to help promote the most effective and highest standards of welfare services for both serving and retired seafarers within the UK and Gibraltar. During the course of 2016/17 the Board reviewed all jointly run centres and produced reports with recommendations. Following Board and societies trustee's approval, MNWB plans to conduct a jointly funded pilot project to improve the operations and support provided for UK seafarers centres in 2019. An inaugural Seafarers Centre Conference was held in 2018 and the Board is seeking to employ a Seafarers Centre Support Manager to manage a pilot project to support joint seafarer's centres and promote best practice between all UK centres. **Ongoing**

MNWB Data Integration System (DIS) Project and UK Port Survey: This major project will enable societies and PWCs to review, on a port by port basis, welfare provision against any gaps or duplication. The Board originally commissioned Southampton Solent University to create the online software platform to enable all interested organisations to review the activities in each port. Following delays, the development of the software has been transferred from the University to Rareloop Ltd, a company that possess extensive experience in maritime welfare applications. The software platform will be populated in early 2019 and updated on an on-going basis utilising local PWC knowledge. The software package will be made available for use in other parts of the world under the IPWP Programme (*see later in this review*), strictly under agreed terms under the Board's copyright. The MNWB database and survey data will be an integral part of the International Port Welfare Partnership programme software to produce a global software solution. Numerous volunteers from the PWCs have volunteered to help beta test and feedback on this innovative software. Following testing, each welfare provider will be autonomous with their own database Administrator/s. **Ongoing**

Lone Worker Alarms – Following advice that Ship Welfare Visitors should consider wearing appropriate Lone Worker Alarms to enhance Health & Safety at work, the Board has undertaken a trial project to compare the leading lone working devices that are currently available on the market. A number of societies trialled the leading items of equipment with mixed results. Notwithstanding, societies have gained valuable knowledge and experience of the devices available on the market and, in a fast changing market, have launched their own trials. **Complete**

IT Support for Older Seafarers: The Board secured a grant from the Merchant Navy Fund in 2014 to provide low cost user friendly IT hardware and software for older people with an MN background and no previous experience with IT. A successful trial was completed in 2016 in three seafarers' homes and the Board continues to identify further ways of providing IT support to the retired MN community. The Board is currently running the "Sea-Shed Digital" project with Aberdeen Seafarers Centre (ASC), which started in January 2018. In liaison with the RNA who are running a much larger project, the Board has provided ASC with IT equipment, training and support to enable retired, local seafarers to get on-line and develop computer skills through a weekly computer club. Club attendance has been good and it has been proven that

connectivity through social applications does lessen isolation and loneliness (a factor which is aligned to higher mortality rates). Albion Computers Plc, London, who provide the RNA project has built iPads to MNWB specifications provide ASC with a dedicated service and training package.

Ongoing

GDPR & Cybersecurity: The EU GDPR became regulation in May 2018 and, following the engagement of an external consultant, undertook an audit of its IT practices and databases to ensure compliance. To assist its constituent members to also comply, the Board has reviewed GDPR training and awareness software platforms to develop staff understanding and consciousness around cyber security. Although GDPR requires continuous compliance, the Board has achieved 'Cyber Essential' accreditation.

Complete and Ongoing

Facilitate the work of Constituent organisations through the provision of grants and specialist support services

Vehicle Replacement Programme: The Board in partnership with three other funders: ITF Seafarers Trust, Seafarers UK and Trinity House continues to fund and manage the port based vehicle replacement programme on an annual basis. The Board secured sufficient funds for the port welfare vehicles listed for 2018. Recognising the VRPs importance to many constituent members and taking into consideration the ever changing funding and maritime landscape and personalities, the Board undertook a comprehensive review of the VRP over the past 8 years in order to modernise and optimise the chance of project longevity. As a result, the VRP MoU has been updated to include, where appropriate, Electric Vehicles and, due to relatively low average mileage, has extended the programme from a 5 to a 6-year renewal cycle albeit grants are applied for on an annual basis. The review, MoU and port welfare vehicle 'master list' of vehicles (updated on a constant basis) and the VRP grant applications will be submitted to the funding partners for 2019 with a plan for subsequent years. As in previous years only vehicles on the master list that are used on a full time basis will be replaced and any proposed new vehicle will require a full port welfare review.

Ongoing subject to annual reviews

Central Register of Grants to Individuals: The AlmReg database did not comply with GDPR. As a result, sensitive personal data was removed and the AlmReg will no longer be used. The Board intends to work with the Older Seafarer & Families Working Group to investigate alternative methods of assessing the level of overall demand for individual grants in the MN/FF sector.

Ongoing

Training: The Board has refurbished its training room in order to host a number of courses in 2018. The Board provides and arranges the following training courses, subject to demand, for the benefit of its Constituent organisations and PWC members:

- ***Mental Health and Bereavement Awareness (new):*** 10 people attended this new, bespoke 2 day combined course in April 2018
- ***A Welfare Guidance Workshop (new) 11 people attended this popular course which was held in July 2018***
- ***Advanced Safeguarding: (new):*** The Board has held 3 courses at MNWB Southampton offices during the summer and to date, 87 delegates had participated in the new bespoke course. As a result of excellent feedback received from participants, Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest (QVSR) had arranged 4 courses for their staff and volunteers, which will be held later October & November 2018.
- ***Caseworking:*** SSAFA opens up this course, held in various locations around the UK to MN and fishers' welfare workers. Only 5 persons attended in 2018. The course remains available in 2019
- ***Basic Health & Safety:*** This e-learning course was launched in 2013. 8 persons received training in 2018. The course remains available on request during 2019
- ***Managing Aggression & Violence:*** Courses will be arranged subject to demand
- ***Managing Volunteers:*** Courses will be arranged subject to demand
- ***Personal Safety at Work:*** 12 people attended this course June 2018
- ***Understanding the Merchant Navy:*** This course was successfully presented to Care Ashore staff in April 2018 and remains available on request during 2019
- ***Substance Abuse Awareness:*** Whilst no courses were run in 2018 due to lack of demand, further courses can be arranged in 2019 subject to demand
- ***Ship Welfare Visitors (online):*** The on-line training package was launched in 2017. This is in partnership with the North American Maritime Ministries Association (NAMMA) who transferred the contents of the MNWB tutor led course to an on-line training package. Each applicant, outside the UK and Gibraltar, was approved

by an ICMA member or ISWAN. The Board retains a register of all those who have successfully completed the course and hold an identity card. We charge a small administration fee to cover costs. The popular, well supported course has had 509 local & International registrations to date.

- **Social Media Practitioner Course (new):** Course content for this new course will be reviewed in 2019 8 people have already registered their interest

The Board remains open to suggestions for other training packages that will be of benefit to its Constituents.

New and ongoing

Publications. The Board, on behalf of its Constituents, publishes and distributes the following:

- **'Remembering those left behind':** This booklet provides advice for both those seeking to make funeral plans before their death, and for people who are faced with making the arrangements with no plan in place. Further copies will be printed on demand and the booklet will be reviewed regularly. *Ongoing*
- **'Arrested and Detained Vessels and Abandoned Seafarers – A Guide to Who Does What':** The Board publishes this booklet, both in hard copy and on-line. It is intended to be a simple guide explaining the duties of the various authorities when voluntary societies encounter seafarers on arrested, or detained vessels, or who have been abandoned. This will be reviewed regularly and updated when necessary. ICS have informed MNWB that they will be producing an international version of this welfare publication in 2018. *Ongoing*
- **Port Information Leaflets:** The Board currently publishes (and updates) 36 Port Information Leaflets for seafarers throughout UK ports and Gibraltar. These are welcomed as they focus on seafarers needs, when ashore, in the limited time that most have available. These are also included on the Board's website. So far during 2018, 9 updated versions of leaflets have been produced. *Ongoing*

Ongoing

Provision of Information:

- The Board maintains a database of Merchant Navy related bodies, such as company and school societies, Merchant Navy Associations, etc. This was intended to be updated in 2019. *Ongoing*
- The Board acts as an information provider by circulating updates and information on welfare issues and policies to the maritime sector, through its Constituent members and PWCs. *Ongoing*
- Additional Lobbying: Subject to demand, the Board will provide support for Constituents on issues of national policy such as proposed charity legislation from the Charity Commission and liaising with appropriate Government departments and agencies, on behalf of the maritime charities sector, as necessary. *Ongoing*

Provision of Grants - The Board currently provides 2 Capital Grant Programmes

- **Small (Minor) Grants Programme:** This is available for grants of up to £5,000 (up to an agreed overall maximum of £50,000 in any one year) at any time during the year, subject to the approval of its Chief Executive and Chairman. Applications can be made by local organisations, but where applicable they must be supported by their parent organisation. This programme has proved extremely successful and is expected to continue in 2019/20. *Ongoing*
- **Larger Grants:** Larger grants towards capital projects and start-up costs for its Constituent members are awarded towards the end of each year.

The total amount awarded in grants in 2017 was £328,585 (2016 - £233,016). Just over £300k will be available in 2018 for capital projects.

Ongoing

Provide a dedicated welfare support and referral service for UK seafarers and their dependants

Seafarer Support & Maritime Charities Welfare Guide: The Board maintains a central point of contact for all seafarers entitled ‘Seafarer Support’, on behalf of the UK maritime charities sector. This referral line is for working and retired seafarers and their dependants (or those acting on their behalf), who are seeking advice and help from the maritime charities and elsewhere. It is open to all those with a Merchant Navy, Royal Navy and fishing background (and the dependants of each), although the largest number of enquiries are from the Merchant Navy and their families. The ‘Maritime Charities Welfare Guide’ is also part of the interactive Seafarer Support website. This guide enables any person seeking assistance to identify the maritime charity, or charities, best able to help. It also provides a definitive guide to all maritime charities. The service is part funded by the Board and supported by grants from Seafarers UK, Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity and Trinity House. In 2018 the Board printed and distributed a number of hard copies of the Guide and will redistribute inserts on an annual basis in 2019. The military charities now use Veterans Gateway for their referral and signposting and are not expected to contribute to Seafarer Support in 2019. The Seafarer Support programme is the central point of contact for the MN/FF sector and, with its technology now nearly 10 years old and new welfare categories, will need a complete overhaul and update in 2019. *New & Ongoing*

Caseworker Home Visits: The Board arranges for, and funds the costs of MNWB and SSAFA trained volunteers to carry out caseworking, via home visits for both new applicants and reviews of annuitants, on behalf of those nautical charities responsible for making financial grants to individuals. In 2017 – 151 (2016 – 134) visits were carried out at the Board’s request. In addition, the Board funds some of the cost of visits for the Shipwrecked Mariners’ Society, which continues to make its own arrangements for home visits. The Board pays £30 per case to cover all home visits undertaken by SSAFA, which is increased when exceptional travel is needed. This provision also enables appropriate charities to review their existing annuitants. The Board, through its Working Group, continues to review caseworking models to identify any gaps in the quality of provision. The Board has set aside funds to allow visits by trained caseworkers including a grant to Shipwrecked Mariners to assist with covering their costs. *Ongoing*

Manage and support Gibraltar Seafarers’ Welfare Board, Falklands Port Welfare Board and UK Port Welfare Committees to develop local welfare services

The Board administers 15 PWCs in the UK, the Gibraltar Seafarers’ Welfare Board (GSWB) and supports the Falklands Port Welfare Board. Membership for all committees is taken from local organisations with a direct or indirect role in seafarers’ welfare provision. Each committee (and Board) usually meets three times annually, one of which includes an AGM. A Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected by the members at the AGM. The PWCs role is to review the provision of seafarers’ welfare locally, share expertise and make recommendations for changes and improvements. *Ongoing*

The Board ensures that membership of its 15 PWCs and GSWB is, where possible, representative of organisations concerned with issues of seafarers’ welfare within the designated geographical area. These assist voluntary societies and others to ensure that seafarers’ welfare services are deployed in the most effective manner within their area. In 2017 there were 48 general meetings and 16 AGMs in the UK and Gibraltar and the same number are planned for 2018. The Falklands will be visited biennially, commencing 2019. Issues and ideas, that have a wider impact, are shared both between all the PWCs and when appropriate, the Council. *Ongoing*

All welfare boards are encouraged to interact as follows:

- PWC and SWB members have a unique local knowledge and therefore are asked to comment on appropriate local grant applications (to all maritime funding charities). Subsequently they should monitor the impact of these capital projects. Information is disseminated among appropriate members of the MCG. *Ongoing*
- Evaluate the need for port welfare services and centres. *Ongoing*
- Endeavour to facilitate better interface with professional and trade organisations (such as port users) and port authorities. *Ongoing*
- Encourage the establishment of voluntary port levy schemes, where applicable, to assist in support costs on behalf of the local voluntary societies. *Ongoing*

The Board recognises that it is good practice for any organisation to review its strategy at regular intervals. To that end, the Board has conducted a PWC survey, the results of which were made available on the Board’s website www.mnwb.org in early 2018. *Complete*

Consideration to extending the network

At the request of Constituent members, the Board reviewed the need for a PWC in the Channel Islands (currently covered by the Southern PWC) and the Isle of Man (currently covered by the Northwest PWC). There is currently no evidence of demand, but this can be revisited at any time. *Completed*

Encourage the establishment of PWCs in Red Ensign Group states: Consider advising on the establishment of PWCs in UK Protectorates, when requested and provide on-going support if appropriate. A PWC was established in the Falklands and Antigua and Barbuda. The latter through the IPWP programme. The Board remains open to further requests for support from other UK Dependencies within the Group. *Ongoing*

Review the changing needs of seafarers locally: The PWCs are being encouraged to take a more proactive approach to reviewing the changing needs of seafarers locally and any impact on welfare provision. One PWC has established a local strategy and others are considering this with the support of the Board. *Ongoing*

Encourage and enable closer collaboration amongst both Constituent organisations and Port Welfare Committees

Conferences for its Constituents and PWCs: The Board normally alternates biennial conferences for its Constituent and PWCs members. However, the Board held an inaugural Seafarer Centre Conference in 2018 following its PWC conference in November 2017. The next Constituent members conference will be held in November 2018. To remain relevant and provide the optimum support to its members, the Board will review its Conference/s in 2019. *Ongoing*

Maritime Charities Group (MCG) The Board is an active subscribing member of the MCG and regularly attends meetings. The Board will review its strategy in relation to MCG during 2018. *Ongoing*

Represent and raise awareness of seafarers' welfare issues at national level

Promotion: The Board actively continues to promote and raise awareness of the work of the Maritime Charities sectors, both on its own and as part of the Seafarer Support (see below) programme managed on behalf of MCG. The Board is represented annually at 'The Gathering' – a Scottish annual charity fair in Glasgow, social worker's conferences and at various venues during Seafarers' Awareness Week. The Board promotes and profiles the services available through all forms of media both regionally and nationally. It also cascades information through its Constituent members and PWCs. It makes available small grants for each PWC, GSWB and FPWB to enable them to promote and raise awareness regionally. In 2017, the Board presented an overview of the MN & FF charity sector to the All Party Parliamentary Maritime Group in the House of Commons *Ongoing*

In addition, the Board will:

- Monitor the impact and effectiveness of the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention 2006 by the governments of the UK and Gibraltar. *Ongoing*
- Maintain membership of appropriate charity umbrella organisations. *Ongoing*
- Continue active participation, as a member of the International Seafarers Welfare & Assistance Network (ISWAN). *Ongoing*
- Support agreed campaigns to improve awareness of the maritime sector. *Ongoing*

Merchant Navy Medal for Meritorious Service: The Board, on behalf of the maritime sector, administers the Merchant Navy Honours Consultative Committee (formally Merchant Navy Medal Committee). In 2015 HM The Queen graciously signed a Royal Warrant that established a National Honour for the Merchant Navy and the first such awards were presented in 2016. The committee, by agreement with the Department of Transport, acts in an advisory capacity and can recommend awards to persons, from the maritime industry, which will include higher Honours and medals for acts of courage. The Board will continue to provide the Committee secretary, create a new MNM website and administer the MNM restricted fund. *Ongoing*

National Memorial Arboretum – Merchant Navy Convoy Grove: The Board was originally responsible, in 1998, for raising funds to plant a wood in the National Memorial Arboretum to commemorate all those personnel from the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets who have sacrificed their lives in conflicts from the beginning of the

20th Century. The wood is known as the ‘Merchant Navy Convoy’ representing vessels and more importantly the seafarers lost in World War II. The Arboretum is managed by the Royal British Legion and the Board regularly monitors the Convoy and represents the interests of the Merchant Navy if required. **Ongoing**

Fulfil any additional objects for which MNWB was established

Ongoing

In addition to core objectives

Managing, on behalf of ISWAN, a project to establish National Seafarers’ Welfare Boards and Port Welfare Committees internationally: With effect from September 2014, the Board began managing a pilot project, on behalf of the International Seafarers Welfare & Assistance Network (ISWAN), to assist and mentor national seafarers’ welfare boards and PWCs around the world. This Board received external funding for the pilot project, which proven a considerable success. The Board is ideally placed to act in this capacity with its long expertise and because the ILO and others see it as a template for a welfare board with PWCs. The project originally intended to establish up to 5 PWCs or national seafarers’ welfare boards over a period of 18 months, but it actually achieved establishing 11 in 10 countries within budget, notably: Antigua & Barbuda; Australia (Brisbane and Gladstone); Porto Novo (Benin); Canada (Toronto); Tema (Ghana); Mauritius (Port Louis); Rotterdam (Netherlands); South Korea (Busan) and Spain (Barcelona). Subsequently the Board has been commissioned, by ISWAN, to undertake a three-year programme. Funding for this is being provided through ISWAN, in equal part by ITF Seafarers Trust, Seafarers UK, TK Foundation and MNWB itself. The IPWP programme was officially launched during London’s International Shipping Week (LISW17) at a formal Business Breakfast in the historic setting of Trinity House on Wednesday 13 September 2017. As part of the same event the four LISW17 supporting charities (Seafarers UK, Sailors Society, Mission to Seafarers and Apostleship of the Sea) were invited by MNWB to hold their debate (entitled ‘Fair Shipping: does it exist?’) directly afterwards. The event proved a great success with over 90 representatives attending from across the sector. Brandt Wagner of ILO launched the programme and recognised the invaluable contribution voluntary organisations made to seafarers’ welfare in ports, worldwide. In 2018, the IPWP programme will look to create 10 new PWCs, train Programme Ambassadors and organise a Welfare Board Conference late in the year. Directly and remotely using Ambassadors, the Board has already reached its target having established new welfare boards in Australia, Nigeria, Senegal and Russia with visits planned to Kenya and Cameroon. The Board has also presented at numerous events such as the IMPA Congress and IHMA biennial conference in London in front of HRH Princess Royal. The IPWP Excom met in Sept 18 and approved the budget for 2019. ISWAN is aware that MNWB can only start work on aspects of the IPWP programme when funds have been received from funding partners Seafarers UK, ITF Seafarers Trust and TK Foundation.

Ongoing

Ends