

LIFE AT SEA

ITF SEAFARERS' TRUST PHOTO COMPETITION

The first seafarers' photography competition was launched during the height of the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020 when closed borders led to an estimated peak of 400,000 seafarers stranded at sea well beyond the terms of their contracts.

Seafarers were invited to submit photos of their experiences on board during the coronavirus pandemic with a view to raising awareness of the human consequences of the 'crew change crisis'. The idea was to collect an unfiltered record of seafarers' first-hand experience and provide a platform for their thoughts and reflections as well as images from daily life at sea. Many seafarers embraced the opportunity to share their innermost thoughts, as well as the daily routines and dramas of living and working as part of a crew far from home.

A number of recurrent themes stand out: the feeling of isolation, of being absent from key moments of family life, the need for connectivity to keep in touch with the people at home and a keen sense of the sacrifices made to support others. There is pride in carrying out a demanding job with professionalism and stoicism, but disillusionment at the lack of recognition and respect for the work.



On a lighter note, many images highlight the importance of camaraderie on board - teamwork and the joy of sharing a barbeque or playing games.

This is a unique collection of photographs, taken by seafarers of seafarers and the Trust is privileged to have been able to collate so many images and give these hidden workers the chance to tell their stories.

The ITF Seafarers' Trust is keen to make these photos available to the wider public through online and physical exhibitions across the globe so that those stories can be shared more widely.

The competition is now an annual event, tracking the consistent issues faced by seafarers and capturing key events of the moment and their unique impact on seafarers.

ABOUT THE ITF SEAFARERS' TRUST

The ITF Seafarers' Trust is a UK charity that funds programmes to advance the wellbeing of maritime workers, seafarers and their families.

Established in 1981, the Trust's vision is to be the leader in promoting and improving the wellbeing of seafarers worldwide, envisaging a world where all seafarers are healthy, happy and have decent work.

The Trust is funded by its own capital funds, and by the investment income of the Welfare Fund at the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), a global federation of transport workers' unions with over 20 million worker members.

www.seafarerstrust.org

