



PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

MARITIME CHARITIES RESPOND TO COVID-19 CRISIS WITH EXTRA £3M FOR SEAFARERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, HOUSE OF LORDS HEARD TODAY

The maritime charity welfare sector has stepped up to support our seafaring key workers, the House of Lords heard today. Speaking on behalf of the sector, Jeffrey Lord Mountevans praised members of the Maritime Charities Group (MCG) who are digging deep and some of whom are raiding their reserves to ensure that seafarers are supported during the Covid-19 crisis.

“Now more than ever, we are dependent on the seafaring community to maintain the supply lines and keep the UK fed,” he said. “We are very fortunate in the maritime sector to have the MCG and its members to identify and meet greatest need, as well as spreading best practice. From Seafarers UK to Trinity House, the Group’s ten members are working together to co-ordinate their response, fund delivery partners working on the ground and fast-track grants to those in need. Initiatives range from emergency grants for individuals to revenue support to keep seafarer centres operating.”

Help is needed right across the seafaring community - merchant seafarers and fishermen, ferry and cruise ship crew have all been affected. With severe restrictions in place in ports around the world, including the UK, many seafarers working on merchant ships are stuck on board without access to shore-based help and all leave has been cancelled.

Thousands of miles from home, worried about their own health and that of their families, support from the charity community is needed even more than ever. Fishermen are suffering too with the market from the catering trade at home and abroad all but dried up and incomes dropping fast. That’s why support from the maritime charity sector is so vital.

Speaking about the combined effort of their members, MCG Chairman, Cdr Graham Hockley LVO RN said: *“Our members are working brilliantly together to respond to the Covid-19 crisis. Their job is to fund the front line charities so that they can respond to the unprecedented demand. And it’s not just working seafarers who need help; ex-seafarers are some of the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach in our society and seafarer families are suffering too.”*

Highlighting the difference between MCG and others in the charity and voluntary sector, he went to explain: *“We are different from many of our colleagues in that we are using our money to support the front line charities. Our members’ Covid-19 money is sustaining the infrastructure of seafarer welfare support around the world so that it can be up and running again when seafaring business gets back to a steady state. We are helping to keep the metaphorical welfare ship afloat at the moment but there’s a long-term funding crisis ahead that will require collaborative funding arrangements and government support.”*

MCG member support so far includes:

- **Seafarers UK** – has launched a £2m COVID-19 Emergency Fund, *in addition* to its budgeted £2m grants this year for charities and other organisations providing services and support for seafarers, as well as an emergency public appeal
- **Trinity House** – a significant portion of its annual grants budget has been earmarked for charities working on the front line
- **The TK Foundation** – over US\$300k so far given to seafarer centres around the world and welfare organisations supporting individual seafarers in need
- **Nautilus Welfare Fund** – supporting seafarers past and present including those in supported living and care homes
- **Seafarers Hospital Society** – working with frontline providers such as the Fishermen’s Mission and Shipwrecked Mariners’ Society to plug the gap while fishermen and their families wait for Universal Credit, and with those supporting merchant seafarers in need
- **Merchant Navy Welfare Board** – bringing together maritime charity welfare providers to exchange information and find solutions for seafarers and their families who are in hardship
- **Greenwich Hospital** – has established an emergency fund for individuals and partner organisations working with the Royal Navy and Royal Marines
- **ITF Seafarers Trust** – has set aside over £1 million for seafarers internationally and over £600,000 has already been allocated
- **Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity** – has created a Naval Hardship Fund for those charities who are responding to above anticipated need and a support line has been set up
- **Lloyd’s Register Foundation** – Lloyd’s Register Foundation grantholder CHIRP Maritime are leading an international campaign to get seafarers recognised as key workers by governments around the world. They have published a new series of papers about the impact of COVID-19 on seafarers which LRF are helping to publicise

ENDS

For all press enquiries, please contact Laura Simons, Consultant to MCG, on 0774 773 2039 or email laurasimons@lms2.demon.co.uk

For information about MCG see <https://www.seafarers.uk/about-us/partners/maritime-charities-group/> or contact Valerie Coleman, MCG Programme Development Manager by email on Valerie.coleman@seafarers.uk or call 07515 050 301

ABOUT MCG

The MCG fosters collaboration across the maritime charity sector. It does this by sharing information, commissioning research, supporting the education and welfare of seafarers and their families and by the promotion of best practice within the maritime charity sector. Our vision is for a maritime charity sector that works collaboratively to achieve the greatest impact for seafarers and their families.

For more information go to www.seafarers.uk/about-us/partners/maritime-charities-group/

The current members are:

Greenwich Hospital

Greenwich Hospital, Her Majesty's unique Royal Naval Crown Charity, has been providing crucial support to serving and retired Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their families for over 300 years. Whether it's through educational support, advice, grants, sheltered housing, financial or hardship support, our focus is on proactive intervention to improve the lives of our beneficiaries. Working directly, or in close collaboration, with naval organisations and charity partners, our aim has remained unchanged since 1694; reaching out to those who would benefit from our support and helping them make a real and lasting difference to their lives.

www.grenhosp.org.uk

ITF Seafarers' Trust

The ITF Seafarers Trust is a UK charity established in 1981, which funds programmes that advance the wellbeing of maritime workers, seafarers and their families. They are funded by the Trust's own capital funds and by the investment income of the Welfare Fund at the International Transport Workers Federation, a global federation of 665 transport workers' unions representing 20 million workers in 147 countries, nearly 200 of which represent over 650,000 seafarers spread across the world. www.seafarerstrust.org

Lloyd's Register Foundation

The Lloyd's Register Foundation is a UK charity established in 2012 with a mission to protect the safety of life and property, and to advance transport and engineering education and research. The Foundation promotes scientific excellence and acts as a catalyst working with others to achieve maximum impact. We meet our aims by awarding grants, by direct activity, and through the societal benefit activities of our trading group, which shares our mission. Through our grant making we aim to connect science, safety and society by supporting research of the highest quality and promoting skills and education. www.lrfoundation.org.uk

Merchant Navy Welfare Board

As the umbrella charity for the UK Merchant Navy and fishing fleets, Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB) supports and promotes co-operation between organisations that provide welfare services to merchant seafarers, fishermen and their dependents. The Board has over forty Constituent member charities and maintains sixteen Port Welfare Committees covering all UK

ports and Gibraltar, organises maritime charity conferences, working groups and also provides support for the Falkland Islands. www.mnwb.org.uk

Nautilus Welfare Fund

The Nautilus Welfare Fund is a UK-registered charity administered by Trade Union, Nautilus International, offering a range of specialist services to support retired seafarers and their dependants. These include a care home and independent living on the Mariners' Park Estate as well as specialist support projects and financial assistance to those in need.

www.nautiluswelfarefund.org/en/

Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity

As the national charity of the Royal Navy, the RNRMC recognises the demands on those who serve and their family members. It is the charity's belief that while one person joins, the whole family serves. The charity is continuing to work hard to meet the needs of the entire Navy family during the pandemic. Through grants given to ships and units deployed, post-service transition, family support and care in old age, the RNRMC is helping to create a world in which the sacrifice that our serving men and women have made is recognised, no matter what.

www.rnrmc.org.uk

Seafarers UK

Seafarers UK is a charity that has been providing vital support to the men and women who work at sea and are in need, and to those in maritime education or training, for over 100 years. The charity does this by giving grants to organisations and projects that make a real difference to people's lives. Seafarers UK receives no government funding and is heavily dependent on public donations and legacies. Last year Seafarers UK was able to give £2.2million in funding to more than 40 maritime welfare and youth charities. www.seafarers.uk

Seafarers Hospital Society

The Seafarers Hospital Society (SHS) is a maritime welfare charity that has been caring for the health and welfare of seafarers since 1821. Today the Society provides a range of health and welfare services to UK-based seafarers and their dependants, including emergency grants for anything from stairlifts to washing machines, free, rapid-access physiotherapy and access to free mental health and wellbeing support through Big White Wall. The Society is also working on the SeaFit programme, a joint initiative with the Fishermen's Mission and funded by Seafarers UK, which aims to deliver sustainable improvements in the health and wellbeing of fishermen and their families around the UK. www.seahospital.org.uk

The TK Foundation

The TK Foundation is a private independent foundation organised in the Bahamas in 2002. The Foundation is named for J. Torben Karlshoej, "T.K.", who grew up on a farm in Denmark and later founded the Teekay Shipping Company, now Teekay Corporation. The TK Foundation's mission is to fulfil TK's legacy by enabling disadvantaged youth to succeed and promoting maritime education and safety. Since its inception in 2002, The TK Foundation has awarded over \$46 million in grants to non-profit organisations and projects to improve the maritime realm and the lives of disadvantaged youth. www.tkfoundation.bs

Trinity House

Trinity House is a charity dedicated to safeguarding shipping and seafarers, and providing education and support to the seafaring community with a statutory duty as a General Lighthouse Authority. As one of the UK's largest endowed maritime charities, the welfare of mariners and of those who depend on them has always been at the heart of its reason for being.

www.trinityhouse.co.uk