



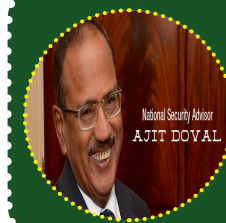
Sagar Sandesh

Guiding Spirit to Shipping Industry

Maritime Tabloid English Weekly Thrice E - Paper

In association with R L Institute of Nautical Sciences, Madurai, Tamil Nadu. | RNI No. TNENG/2012/41759 | Monday, July 04, 2022 | Voyage 11 Wave 61

Published & Released on Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday



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Indian Ocean region has become a zone of concern



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Shipping Minister Sonowal asks NMPA

The human element in maritime digitalisation

A new report published by Inmarsat, the world leader in global, mobile satellite communications, indicates that seafarers are largely in favour of greater digitalisation but that a sizeable proportion of those working at sea also fear shrinking job opportunities.

Compiled by maritime innovation consultancy Thetius, *Seafarers in the Digital Age – Prioritising Human Element in Maritime Digital Transformation* draws on the results of a survey of 200 maritime professionals.

After canvassing seagoing and shore-based shipping personnel for views on the impacts of digitalisation on their health and welfare, on training, careers and job retention, and on performance, Thetius describes the relationship between seafarers and emerging maritime technologies as “broadly positive”. However, responses also reveal that shipping companies and technology providers have work to do to change crew misgivings over digital transformation at sea.

In a standout finding, the report informs that over 1 in 3 seafarers choosing personal access to digital technology as the key factor when considering a new employer. In fact, as an inducement, internet access ranks higher than pay (chosen by fewer than 1 in 4). The *Seafarer Happiness Index (SHI) for Q1 2022* indicates crew well-being dropping to its lowest level since the SHI was founded



in 2015, with limited access to basic internet connectivity given as a primary cause, Thetius notes.

Encouragingly, *Seafarers in the Digital Age* captures a shipping industry responding quickly to crew connectivity needs: 78% of ship operators surveyed report having installed internet connectivity on board for the personal use by crew in the last five years.

However, the report also highlights the way seafarers see risks in the wider deployment of digital technologies. Half of the seafarers responding expected job opportunities to decline by 25% within five years.

“If half of our seafarers believe that traditional job opportunities at sea are disappearing, as this research suggests, more needs to be done to highlight how digitalisation will help jobs to evolve or create entirely new roles,” said Matthew Kenney, Head of Research and Intelligence, Thetius. “Digital tools and connectivity can create happier and more productive ships, while newer, better ways of working are possible. Instead of allowing maritime professionals to become distrustful or even fearful of digital and emerging technologies, the sector must

recognise the continued importance of human capital and work hard to bring crews along on the journey.”

Ben Palmer, President, [Inmarsat Maritime](#) said: “The inclusion of mandatory internet access to the Maritime Labour

Convention in May represents a paradigm shift for seafaring rights, putting into law what responsible owners already fully understand: high-quality onboard internet has become a key indicator of crew welfare and hence recruitment and retention of high-quality personnel. Today, it also provides the basis for new and exciting next-generation job roles at sea, as well as supporting safer operations, greater sustainability, and productivity gains.” Courtesy Inmarsat.

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