

BLUE PACIFIC

The official newsletter of DNR Offshore and Crewing Services, Inc.



MAR 2021 ISSUE

When the Pandemic strikes in 2020, the World Economic Forum reported on the status of the Leisure Cruise Industry:

- *Tens of thousands of passengers and staff were stranded as the outbreak hit.*
- *Ships are being scrapped at \$150 billion industry still waits to set sail again.*
- *Cruise destinations and related tourists activities are also badly impacted.*

It's been a year since the cruise industry was in the eye of the Covid storm as leisure ships proved themselves ideal places for the disease to spread.

On March 13 last year, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a no-sail order for ships plying American waters while major industry body Cruise Lines International Association voluntarily suspended all operations.

The resulting scramble to get passengers and crew members home dragged on for several months. Ports closed their doors to virus-hit vessels, on-board Covid cases spiraled and when passengers were returned home, crew members still stuck at sea were hit by a mental health crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic spread to a number of cruise ships, with the nature of such ships—including crowded semi-enclosed areas, increased exposure to new environments, and limited medical resources—contributing to the heightened risk and rapid spread of the disease.

The British-registered Diamond Princess was the first cruise ship to have a major outbreak on board, with the ship quarantined at Yokohama from 4 February 2020 for approximately one month. Over 700 people became infected, and 14 people died. At the time, the ship accounted for over half the reported cases of SARS-CoV-2 outside of mainland China.

Governments and ports responded by preventing many cruise ships from docking and advising people to avoid travelling on cruise ships. Similarly, many cruise lines suspended their operations to mitigate the spread of the pandemic.

As of 2 May 2020, over 40 cruise ships have had confirmed positive cases of coronavirus on board. The last cruise ship with passengers aboard during the first wave of the pandemic, Artania, docked at its home port with its last eight passengers on 8 June 2020. In addition, over 40,000 crew members remained on cruise ships, some in isolation, as of mid-June 2020. Many are unable to be repatriated because cruise lines refuse to cover the cost of doing so, and because countries have different and changing rules. The condition is stressful to many employees. Multiple suicides have been reported.

Today, the multi-billion dollar industry remains in limbo. While recent vaccine rollouts have brought optimism and, in some countries, Covid numbers are finally going down after a devastating second wave, international travel remains curtailed.

Most of the world's major cruise lines have canceled voyages until the northern hemisphere summer -- and there remain question marks over what cruising in the wake of Covid will look like.

Attempts to bring cruising back in certain markets have so far yielded mixed results.

While it's hard to know exactly when and how the world will reopen, here's what we do know about the future of cruising.

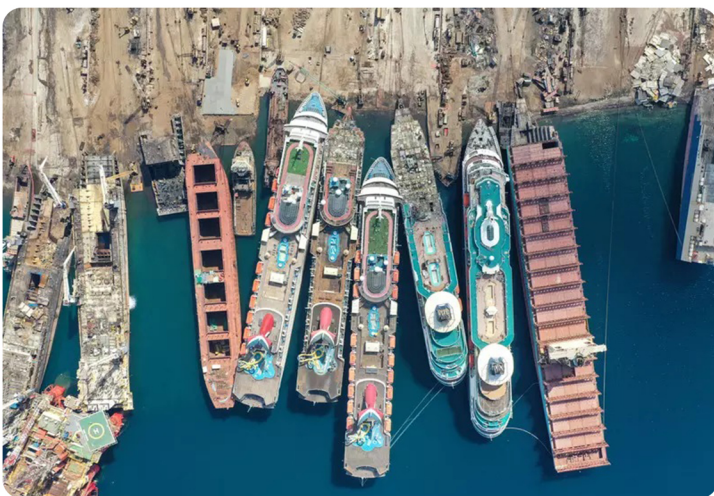
What are cruise lines and countries saying?

Right now, most of the world's major cruise lines remain out of action.

In Europe, some operations cautiously recommenced operations last summer -- including MSC Cruises and Costa Cruise Line. Both cruise companies ran Italian voyages with strict Covid protocols, but sailings were canceled when a second wave of Covid-19 hit Europe over winter months.

MSC recommenced voyages on its Grandiosa ship at the end of January 2021 and plans to start another European-only cruise on MSC Seaside in May. Meanwhile, Costa Cruises plans to restart its Italian sailings on March 27, 2021. Both will cater only to passengers living within the European Union's Schengen zone.

AIDA Cruises -- owned by Carnival Corporation -- is due to restart cruises around the Canary Islands in March 2021.



In the US, the CDC no-sail order was lifted in October 2020 and detailed regulations were subsequently announced for how cruising could return to US waters, including running "simulated voyages" designed "to replicate real world on board conditions of cruising."

The CDC rules were announced before the vaccine rollout gathered speed, so are focused on preventive measures including pre-boarding testing.

The CDC's official guidance is still that "all people" should avoid travel on cruise ships. Its regulations for cruising's return remain in effect until November 1, 2021.

"Returning to passenger cruising is a phased approach and our current focus is on the protection of crew and working with cruise lines to implement the initial phase requirements of testing all crew and developing onboard laboratory capacity," a CDC spokesperson told CNN Travel. They said there was no date for when simulated voyages would begin.

In the UK, a government "global travel taskforce" is working to determine when international travel to and from the UK can restart, with the official roadmap stipulating it should be no earlier than May 17.

Some UK-based cruise lines plan to run domestic voyages this summer, in lieu of globe-spanning itineraries, including Viking Cruises, Fred Olsen Cruise Lines and P&O.

P&O Cruises, owned by cruising giant Carnival, is set to offer "cruises to nowhere" for vaccinated UK travelers this summer.

The voyages will depart from the southern port of Southampton, England from June until September, and navigate the UK coast. P&O said exact routes for each sailing will be determined on the day depending on weather.

Princess Cruises has said its longer cruises departing the UK are canceled until the end of September, and instead will launch a series of "new short cruises" departing from the UK port of Southampton on its Regal Princess and Sky Princess vessels.

P&O and Cunard have also announced plans for "staycation sailings" departing from the UK.

Australia, which has adopted a hardline on arrivals throughout the pandemic, has a cruise ship ban in place until June 17, 2021.

Canada, meanwhile, has extended its cruise ship veto until February 2022.

In Singapore, Royal Caribbean is due to restart so-called "cruises to nowhere" -- which previously took place in December 2020 on the Quantum of the Seas cruise ship -- in March.

Royal Caribbean will also start Caribbean voyages on its Celebrity Millennium vessel from June. All crew and all adult guests will need to be vaccinated, while children must have had a negative PCR test within 72 hours of boarding. Each voyage will start and end in St Maarten, with stop offs including Aruba and Barbados.

Also from June, Royal Caribbean's Adventure of the Seas will set sail from Nassau in the Bahamas, stopping off at Royal Caribbean's private island, as well as Grand Bahama Island and Cozumel in Mexico. Guests will need to be vaccinated, as will staff, while children under 18 will need a negative Covid test to board.

Roger Frizzell, a spokesman for Carnival Corporation -- which own Princess Cruises alongside Carnival Cruise Line, Costa Cruises, P&O Cruises, Cunard, Princess and Holland America -- told CNN Travel the cruise company will take "a staggered approach" to returning "with a limited number of our ships cruising initially."

SOURCES ; WEF CNN



A COURTESY CALL

Amidst this Pandemic, DNR Offshore's President & CEO paid a courtesy call to a trusted batch mate, Mr. Janvier Patrick F. Rosete of the formidable BEN LINE AGENCIES.

Informatively, BEN LINE AGENCIES was founded by Scottish brothers Alexander & William Thomson when they opened an account as ship brokers in Edinburgh in 1825. Afterwards, they became ship owners and ushered in the beginning of what will ultimately become Ben Line Agencies.

But why Ben Line when the owners were the Thomsons? Ben is the Scottish word for mountain. Still confused? In my two cents, I think this relates to DNR Offshore's current topic on marketing warfare, whereas mountains depicts a certain industry. Well, perhaps the brothers opted to send a clear signal using this theory that the owning company meant to become a force in the shipping industry.

Going back to the present time, Engr. Rosete is the incumbent Operations Manager that oversees offshore projects involving cable projects, reclamation, and dredging. For the past three years, C/E Rosete has contributed a lot in the success of the company.

For and during this trying times, allies, batch mates, Mistahs, whatever you may call it needs each other's talents and expertise to survive the onslaught of the pandemic, hence the "reaching out" of our beloved President & CEO, Engr. Nilfil L. Peralta.

BEN LINE AGENCIES



JOSE ARNOLD SARABIA
Crewing Manager II

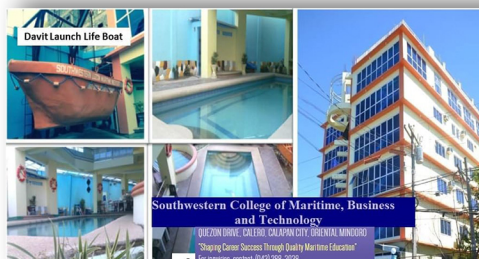
SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

Got locked down here in my hometown, though I was supposed to be on a short vacation with permission from the top management. I was not aware that the government will once again revert to ECQ or what they call Enhanced Community Quarantine, well that's another story. What worries me is the habit of our government people of extending its duration and will surely affect our business operation.

On the brighter side, of course I am with my entire family, clan if you may call it. What highlights my visit is meeting College Dean of Maritime College, C/E BILLY BOREGAS, PMMA Batch 81. A "Mistah" of our Bossman, Engr. Nilfil L. Peralta. Before settling in his teaching profession, Sir Billy was the former Crewing Manager of Scanmar, Sealane & Topover.

Actually I am not expecting to be on the same path as our College Dean, since I am resolved to continue working overseas, for my family of course but got lucky having been appointed as Crewing Manager for a pioneering offshore oil & gas company. Glad to know that our current College Director is Atty. Armando S. Fernandez. Much have changed since I graduated and for the better.

I guess it is indeed divine intervention. Having trained from somebody from the same alma matter where my present boss likewise was a fine product. Southwestern College of Maritime Business & Technology, Inc. may not be comparable to our one and only Philippine Merchant Marine Academy where both of these dynamic men gained their individual degree but I believe through their guidance it will still be possible.





MICHELLE G. VALENCIANO
HR Manager

HR Managers Role During the Coronavirus Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted organizations and caused human resources managers to think differently about their role as they adjust to social distancing practices and a new work environment that they may never have imagined.

To prevent the spread of the coronavirus, companies have switched to a remote work model at a rate and scale they've never experienced. As face-to-face collaboration is replaced with e-mail and videoconferencing, HR managers have to do difficult work under difficult circumstances.

Not only are HR professionals concerned about employees' health and well-being during the pandemic, they are also under the strain of processing the paperwork and providing solace to the millions of workers who have been laid off or furloughed. For employees still on the job, HR managers are trying to keep their workers productive, motivated, engaged and connected—all factors that are moving targets in the new normal.

The global Covid-19 pandemic has presented serious mental, physical and financial complications to people everywhere. Organizations now have to rely more than ever on their HR departments to ensure their workforce feel as safe as possible during this unprecedented and unpredictable time.

These are the three main challenges faced by HR professionals along with advice on processes that can be implemented to overcome them during this period.

Communication

With information from governments, health authorities and labor organizations continually changing, companies need to communicate with their employees quickly as they react to changes even quicker.

CEOs and managers should connect with their staff daily to reassure them that the business is reviewing government guidelines and how they plan to comply with them. They should also update employees on a weekly basis on how the business is performing and reassure staff that they are investigating all government assistance in order to protect employees. Finally, a space should be provided for employees to chat as if in the office such as a virtual coffee break. Talking things through with others will really help during this distressing time.



Save the date for Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference 2021

Offshore Energy Exhibition and Conference (OEEC) will take place in Amsterdam RAI on Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 October 2021. The 14th edition of OEEC will have a physical exhibition floor and content programme combined with an online event and matchmaking environment. The dates for the event were selected after an inquiry amongst our community.

For more than a decade, OEEC has been a focal point of industry knowledge, bringing together prominent speakers, innovations, commercial and networking opportunities under one roof. OEEC is about connecting the energy industry and this year's event will enable just that.

The energy industry is changing; a long-term process with global impact. The energy transition has both technical and geopolitical implications. These play out on a practical level, for example with how to reduce CO₂ emissions or the efficient deployment of one's fleet. As well as on a strategic level through the desired pace of the transition, or policies on innovation. OEEC addresses all these topics and levels in its conference program, company showcases and on the exhibition floor.

At OEEC, companies involved in hydrogen, natural gas, renewable marine energies, offshore wind and other sources of energy can expect opportunities for exposure, lead generation and knowledge sharing. Visitors experience the state of the industry and network with highly qualified experts and professionals. By bringing industry professionals together, Human Capital will also play a substantial part at OEEC. Navigo Career Event will take place simultaneously on the 26th and 27th of October 2021 on the exhibition floor at Amsterdam RAI.

Already, leading companies such as Neptune Energy, Damen Shipyards, Boskalis, TrustLube, Holland Shipyards, Swets Nautical Services among others, have committed to participate in OEEC 2021. The combined strength of the event's content programme and professional matchmaking brings participants 2 packed event days with relevant visitors and a positive atmosphere. Indeed, the event is the place for companies to show that they play a leading role as a manufacturer or services and solutions provider.

Trust

Where possible, many companies have now moved to remote working and unfortunately this was not by choice. This is a major culture change to a lot of businesses that has just happened overnight. Trust is an essential element of working from home.

Some techniques can increase trust across departments. Daily stand ups can be scheduled where managers discuss work priorities per day for the team and themselves and enquire from employees if there are any blockers preventing the execution of their work. Team and employee performance should be measured by KPI metrics (Key Performance Indicator) which should be reported weekly by each team to the CEO. Managers and the CEO should facilitate and enable frequent and honest communication from and to employees.

Rapid policy change

As these are extraordinary times nearly every company policy has been affected and needs to be updated for Covid-19 clauses. As HR departments are accountable for the lion's share of company policies, they have a lot of work on their plate with very little time.

There are some elements that HR departments should consider. Fast communication is key at this time and they should ensure that the business has the ability to communicate to all staff (even out of hours) when an important immediate policy change is needed due to new government guidelines. They should take advantage of the numerous webinars that companies are providing in order to arm people with advice and the tools necessary to get through the business disruption that has been experienced. They should try to be flexible and empower managers to make decisions in relation to their teams as it is too difficult to have a policy for absolutely everything that has changed over the past few weeks.

We have seen and heard of many acts of kindness during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is very important that businesses listen to their HR Departments during this time as they have the best experience in protecting employees.

References:

OXFORD BUSINESS GROUP
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