



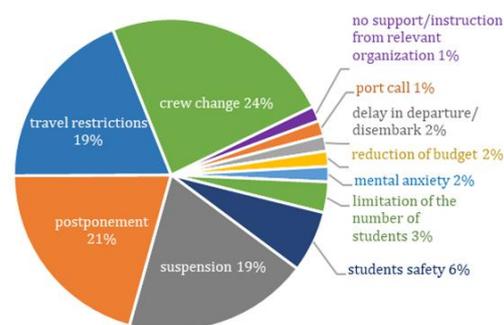
Statement of the International Association of Maritime Universities (IAMU)

**Call for collaborative action to support prospective officers in the organization of their on-board training in the context of challenges arising from COVID-19 and its long-term impacts**

The future sustainability of the shipping industry is overwhelmingly dependent on the availability of an adequate pool of capable and effective human resources. Taking this into consideration, it is imperative that prospective officers (as future “key workers” at sea) are trained comprehensively on board in order to acquire the necessary knowledge, understanding and proficiency to handle critical and emergency shipboard operations appropriately and with confidence. Such onboard training is a necessary corollary to the training received in shore-based institutions for the achievement of optimal competence.

Recognizing the serious impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the shipping industry and on Maritime Education and Training, the IAMU conducted an online survey on the impact of COVID-19 on IAMU member universities and their response to the pandemic. One of the important goals of this survey was to reach a common understanding of the situation faced by member universities and their students in delivering Maritime Education and Training in the context of the pandemic.

Particular attention in this survey was devoted to on-board training in accordance with the regulations of the STCW Convention 1978, as amended. The universities responded to the question: “What specific difficulties are you encountering with on-board training programmes due to COVID-19?”. Responses are indicated below:



The responses show that on-board training, which is mandatory per the STCW Convention 1978, as amended, remains a real challenge for most IAMU member universities which do not own training ships. This state of affairs tends to unduly delay the issuance of certificates of competency and could have serious long-term consequences for the industry with respect to the supply of qualified and competent crew.

COVID-19 will undoubtedly have a possible long-term negative impact on MET processes. With this in mind, it is necessary to assess the risks that may arise from these types of pandemics for the industry as a whole. It is also critical to ensure support for prospective officers as future "key workers". The IAMU therefore strongly requests all stakeholders to recognize the seriousness of the issues and seek collaborative and flexible measures, including adapting the training processes, where applicable, and ensuring that prospective officers are supported in their acquisition of the requisite sea-time through on-board training programmes. This support should also address the challenges seafarers face with respect to their deployment and repatriation.

The IAMU has been active with the support from the Nippon Foundation since November 1999.

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