INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE SEAFARER

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO OF TRANSAS, FRANK COLES

‘As an ex-seafarer, I know of the often challenging circumstances that the seafarer faces in their daily working life. Conversely, I also know how rewarding a career at sea is and therefore, during Seafarer Awareness Week, I implore the younger generation to consider a career at sea when examining their future options.

‘Imagine that video game you are playing across the internet, challenging someone to a strategy game, communicating with several others in a world domination game.... If you can do this, if you like this, then you should be running a ship, or managing a ship from ashore, or directing ship traffic in today’s modern connected world.

‘Seafarers truly are the beating heart of the shipping industry. On this International Day of the Seafarer, I would like to take the opportunity to applaud and give recognition to the great contribution of seafarers to the global economy and society.

‘The work that seafarers carry out shifts 90% of world goods around the globe day in-day out, year-upon-year. They keep the world in motion and are truly indispensable. However, it is a role that is often invisible or taken for granted. The important role that seafarers play in enabling the economy must be recognised. Seafarers are truly "At Sea For All".

‘In today's evolving industry the role of the seafarer must not be overlooked. It is a fallacy to assume that the talk of autonomous ships will make seafarers a thing of the past. There will still be seafarers on-board. People will continue to dedicate their life to a career at sea on-board the global shipping fleet. Proponents of the unmanned ship speak of it for self-serving purposes and without real appreciation of the value of the seafarer on a long ocean voyage.

‘The modern navigator uses computer games to learn to navigate, to train and to take the world’s largest ships into the busy ports and through the busy channels of the world’s trade highways. Technology is becoming the lifeblood of economical shipping and shipping needs modern seafarers to handle this technology.
‘Therefore, as industry leaders, we must continue to empower these seafarers. Digital innovation and technology should not be considered to be an additional burden. In fact, the advantages that can be reaped from technology and digital integration are innumerable.

‘The work that we (Transas) are doing will make an immense impact on the lives of seafarers. Lessening the administrative burden that currently sits on the shoulders of ship officers is one challenge that we are tackling, as is the promotion of shared responsibility between the crew and between the ship and shore. We are also working to change current attitudes. Criminalisation must be moved from the captain or master; they have a crucial role but not the ultimate role – responsibility must be shared.

‘Give the seafarers the tools to do their job, give the seafarers the automation to take away the monotony and allow them to focus on the main task. Improve efficiency by leveraging technology, and also giving empowered seafarers the ability to work with their colleagues ashore in a truly modern connected world. On this day of recognition, I would like to thank seafarers for being at sea for all.’

FRANK COLES, TRANSAS CEO 22.06.16