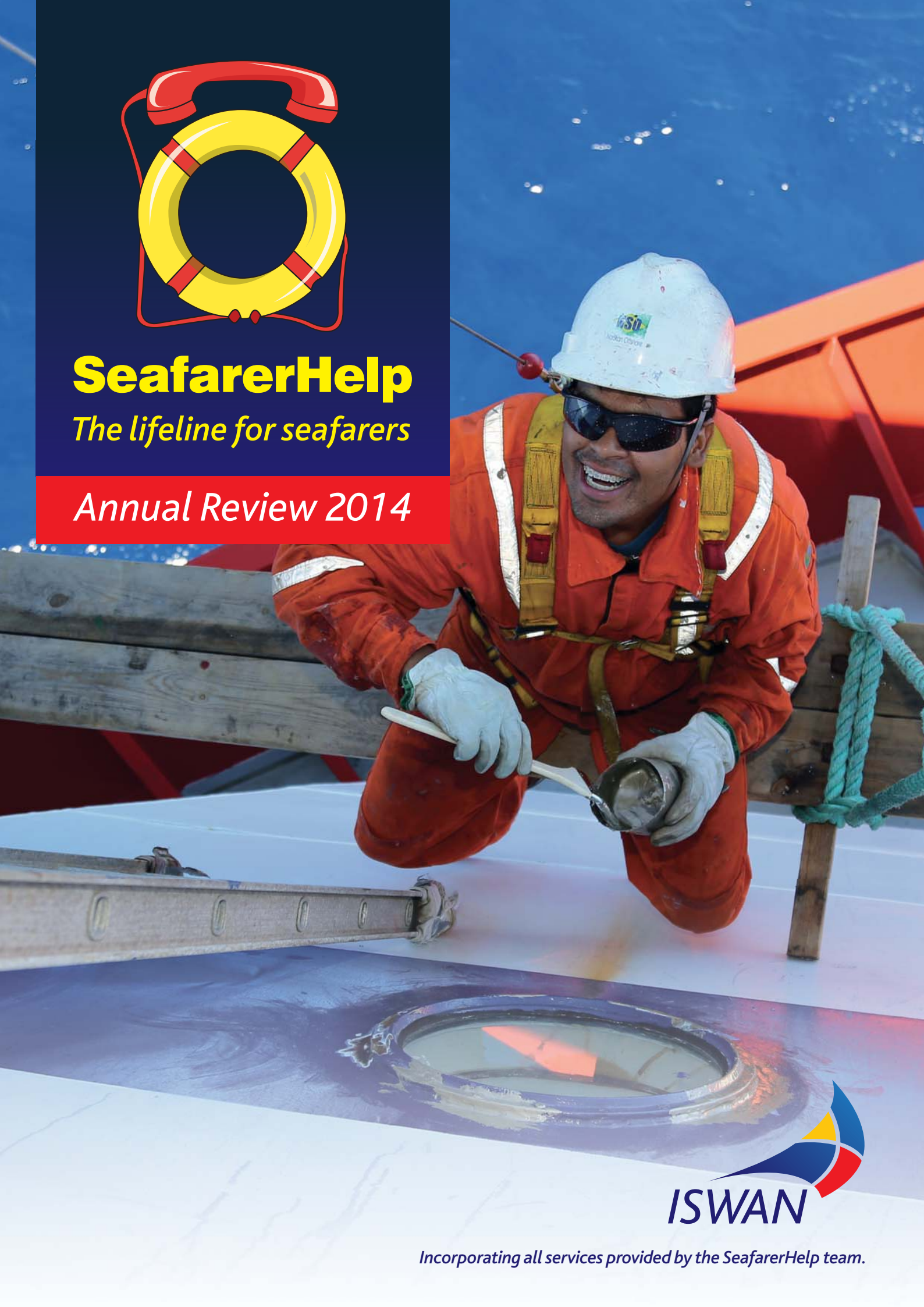




SeafarerHelp

The lifeline for seafarers

Annual Review 2014



Incorporating all services provided by the SeafarerHelp team.

Contents

Foreword.....3

The SeafarerHelp team and how we work4

2014 overview5

Case study – Help in a health crisis.....6

SeafarerHelp services7

Case study – Seafarers Emergency Fund comes to the rescue8

Number of cases9

Issues raised by seafarers10

Trends since 201112

Case study – Successful repatriation14

Seafarer nationalities.....14

Countries seafarers contacted us from.....16

Flag states17

Organisations we refer to18

Case study – Help following a seafarer’s death19

Methods of contact20

Feedback from seafarers about SeafarerHelp22

Conclusion23

Chairman’s Foreword

by Per Gullestrup
Chairman: International Seafarer’s Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN)



Once again it has been a very busy and eventful year for the SeafarerHelp team and ISWAN as a whole.

Since I took over as Chairman of ISWAN in November 2013 I have been impressed both with the language abilities of the SeafarerHelp team and their willingness to take on new tasks and to respond to seafarers’ changing needs.

ISWAN and SeafarerHelp are only able to help seafarers and their families because of the continuing support from our funders and other stakeholders. I would therefore especially like to thank The TK Foundation, the ITF Seafarers’ Trust and Seafarers UK for their funding and ongoing commitment.

The team faced the challenge of having to move to new offices at short notice, but I am pleased that we are now able to offer our employees a working environment which is of a far better standard than previously. As part of the office move we took the opportunity to upgrade our IT systems so that we are better placed to develop our services for seafarers and to take on new income generating opportunities. In July 2014 we made progress in diversifying our funding base by entering into a contract to provide a helpline for another organisation, through our subsidiary Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network Ltd (SWAN Ltd).

ISWAN’s overriding mission is to provide welfare services to our colleagues at sea. There are many organisations which provide various services to seafarers and it is ISWAN’s goal, not to duplicate this work, but to ensure that these efforts are optimised for the benefit of seafarers worldwide.

SeafarerHelp will keep on growing and developing its role to meet seafarers’ evolving needs. It will continue to improve its services, carry on its training programmes to professionalise the team and increase partnership working with other organisations. Although we are now co-operating with more organisations than ever before, we want to extend this activity even further. Developing more formal partnerships is particularly important because it allows us to provide more services to benefit seafarers and make more effective use of our funding. We are seeking effective partnerships with shipping companies, unions, welfare organisations, ports and flag states to ensure that seafarers’ rights are protected and that the provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 are implemented.

I believe that SeafarerHelp is a unique and valuable organisation that can play a central role in supporting and developing seafarers’ welfare around the world.



The SeafarerHelp team and how we work

“The SeafarerHelp service is confidential and free for seafarers and their families of any nationality or religion anywhere in the world”

There are 10 workers, mostly part-time, in the SeafarerHelp team. We provide a multilingual helpline service to seafarers and their families 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, from our UK offices in Croydon, south London. Within the team we speak 11 languages fluently, including most of the languages used by seafarers, such as Filipino, Hindi, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, Turkish, and Urdu. We can also communicate effectively in several other languages and dialects.

The SeafarerHelp service is confidential and free for seafarers and their families of any nationality or religion anywhere in the world. When a seafarer contacts us, we log the case details and any successive contacts from that person about the same issue. This means we can easily follow the contact history for each case we deal with and ensure the SeafarerHelp team is operating effectively. In this annual review, all figures relate to initial contacts, unless specifically stated otherwise.

SeafarerHelp is available through a range of media, including telephone, email, Facebook, Live Chat, Skype, Twitter and SMS text. The contacts the team receive vary in complexity from simple enquiries for information, such as the address of a seafarers' centre in a particular port, to very difficult cases where seafarers have been injured or even killed while at sea.

One of our core principles is that we will only refer a case to a particular organisation with

the seafarer's consent. We are aware that some seafarers are concerned that their employment prospects might be harmed if a particular union is involved, or do not want to be referred to a particular faith group. In each case we do our best to balance the individual's needs and requirements to achieve the most satisfactory outcome for them.

The SeafarerHelp team answer basic requests for information themselves but refer more complex contacts to our colleagues in specialist agencies who can provide assistance in the port or country where the seafarer is located. In this way, we help the seafarer receive the most appropriate support.

The agencies we use mainly specialise in the maritime sector and have shore-based personnel in ports around the world. This enables them to give valuable, direct personal support to the seafarer. Most of our referrals are to the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and port welfare providers such as the Apostleship of the Sea, Mission to Seafarers, the Sailors Society and the Deutsche Seemannsmission.

Where these maritime specialists do not have a presence in the country the seafarer is in, we work with organisations such as unions, welfare bodies, embassies, harbour or port authorities and medical service providers.

We are greatly indebted to the invaluable help that all these organisations provide to both seafarers and the SeafarerHelp team.

2014 overview

In 2014 the SeafarerHelp team:

- ☎ Received 1,920 new cases, involving 7,710 seafarers and their families. In addition, we received a further 2,305 successive contacts.
- ☎ Helped seafarers of 84 different nationalities making contact from 113 different countries.
- ☎ Provided assistance free of charge, often in the seafarer's own language, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Caseload review

- ☎ Compared to 2013 there was a 52.7% increase in the number of new cases and an increase of 19.1% in the number of seafarers assisted.
- ☎ On average 5.3 new cases and 6.3 successive contacts for existing cases came to the SeafarerHelp team every day.
- ☎ The average number of seafarers involved in each case was four.
- ☎ Female seafarers accounted for 3.24% of those who contacted SeafarerHelp, where gender was known.

- ☎ The most common reasons for seafarers contacting us were: requests for information, wages not being paid, seeking employment, problems over repatriation, contract problems and health issues.
- ☎ The contacts we received came from 113 countries, including 27 in the Commonwealth.
- ☎ Seafarers from 18 European Union countries contacted the team during the year.
- ☎ Of the 84 nationalities assisted, the largest number of seafarers were Filipinos, followed by Indians, Ukrainians and Russians.
- ☎ We were contacted by seafarers of 20 different Commonwealth nationalities – the largest number were Indian, followed by British, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Ghanaian, Bangladeshi, Nigerian and Kenyan.
- ☎ Although many cases involved more than one referral agency, we referred most contacts to the ITF Inspectors, followed by the ITF Maritime Operations (MOPs) team, employment agencies, the Apostleship of the Sea and the Mission to Seafarers.

Case study – Help in a health crisis

A Filipino seafarer was taken ill while on board a ship in South Africa. He was admitted to hospital, where it was discovered that he needed urgent heart bypass surgery. His wife was in the Philippines and could not visit her husband so she contacted SeafarerHelp to see if we could arrange for someone to visit him and let her know how he was, as his operation was scheduled for the next day.

Our team contacted the Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) and arranged for their port chaplains to visit the seafarer both before the operation and several times following it. We passed on their reports about his recovery to the man's wife. When the seafarer was fit enough to travel a flight was arranged from Johannesburg to Hong Kong and then to Manila.

When the flight reached Hong Kong the connecting airline refused to allow the seafarer on board without oxygen. His wife contacted us again to ask if we could arrange for someone to help as she wanted him home as soon as possible so that she could look after him. The SeafarerHelp team contacted the ITF inspector in Hong Kong, who quickly resolved the issue with the airline so that the seafarer was able to board the flight to Manila.

The seafarer arrived safely home in the Philippines and is now recovering satisfactorily following his surgery. The seafarer and his wife were grateful for the assistance that had been provided by SeafarerHelp, the AoS and the ITF.



Photo: Arild Lillebo

The SeafarerHelp Services

It has been another productive but challenging year for the SeafarerHelp team and ISWAN as a whole. Here are just some of the important events in 2014.

The office move. The building in which our offices were located was taken over by a new landlord who decided to convert it into flats. As a result we had to move to new premises at relatively short notice and arranging the move was a complex project that required significant staff resources. However, we were lucky to find alternative, and better, offices very close by and we moved on 1st November.

Promoting SeafarerHelp. Throughout 2014 we made more effective use of social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, to promote our services directly to seafarers. We also continued to distribute our SeafarerHelp posters and cards. As a result, we saw another significant rise in the number of contacts coming to SeafarerHelp this year.

Diversifying our funding arrangements. We want to be less reliant on grants to fund SeafarerHelp and ISWAN so for some time have been exploring opportunities to generate income by providing services to other organisations through our subsidiary company, Seafarers' Welfare Assistance Network Ltd (SWAN). We already ran services for the ITF and Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response

Programme (MPHRP) and in July 2014, we began providing a 24/7, year-round helpline service for the Nautilus International trade union. We continue to pursue similar possibilities with other organisations.

Training. The professionalism and expertise of our team is essential to the service we offer, and we continued to provide a varied training programme for them in 2014. This included the Ship Welfare Visitors Course from the Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB), specific helpline training through the Helpline Partnership and visits to ports. Unfortunately, the office move limited the amount of training that we were able to undertake but we are developing an increased training programme for 2015.

IT systems. The upgrade of our IT and telephone systems to fibre optic has improved our internet connectivity, allowed us to rationalise the number of telephone line providers and put us onto Voice Over Internet Provider (VOIP), which will allow us to provide our service from any location.

Data. This was the first full year in which we were able to gather better quality data following the upgrade of our case-handling software. As a result we are able to provide a wider range of statistical information in this review.

Our sponsors

The SeafarerHelp service and ISWAN receives financial support from the ITF Seafarers' Trust, The TK Foundation and Seafarers UK whose generosity allows this vital service for seafarers and their families to continue. We are very grateful to them for their continued support.



Case study – Seafarers Emergency Fund comes to the rescue

A Filipino seafarer was taken ill in the USA with an acute medical situation. Following major surgery, he was kept in the intensive care unit for two months and remained in hospital for a further month. The shipping company that owned his vessel paid his daughter's travel expenses to the United States so that she could help support her father in his recovery.

She was worried, however, that when they got back home, her father would not have any money to pay for food, medical care and other essentials. It was highly possible that he would

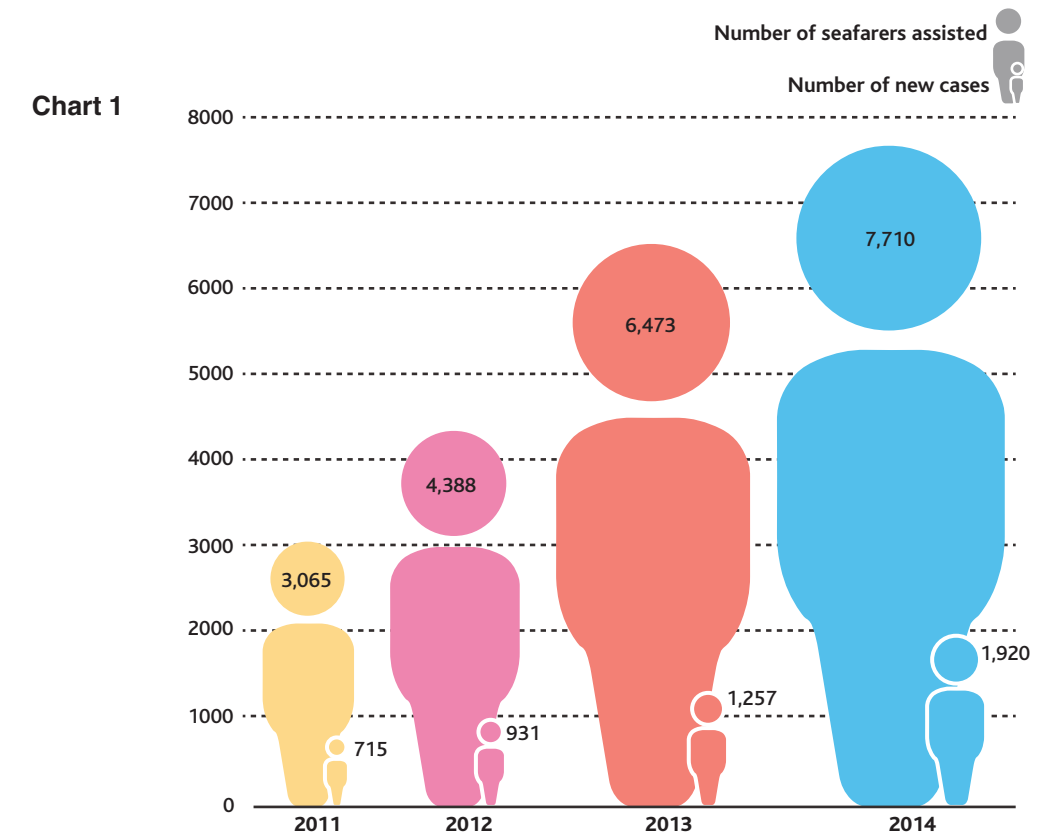
be unable to work again and she did not think that he would receive support from the authorities in the Philippines.

The SeafarerHelp team told her that ISWAN administered the Seafarers Emergency Fund (SEF) which was available to help seafarers in emergencies. They explained that it could only be paid to a welfare agency and suggested that she approach the AoS to make an application on her father's behalf. A SEF application was made and within days a grant of USD4,700 was approved and sent to the AoS to be used to support her father and his family.

Number of cases

In 2014 the number of new cases dealt with by the SeafarerHelp team was 1,920, involving 7,710 seafarers. These figures represent a significant increase on 2013, and as Chart 1 below shows there has been a sustained high level of growth in the number of cases and the number of seafarers we have

assisted over the last four years. During 2014 there were an additional 2,305 successive contacts relating to those new cases. Unfortunately, we were unable to record successive contacts separately in 2013 and so no comparison can be made.



Trends since 2011

From Chart 1 it is clear to see that there has been a large increase, some 268.5%, in the number of contacts coming to the SeafarerHelp team since 2011, with a corresponding increase of 251.5% in the number of seafarers assisted over the same period. There are a number of reasons for these significant increases:

1. Most importantly, we have improved the promotion of the SeafarerHelp service through a range of methods, but particularly through Facebook. We started to direct Facebook more effectively towards seafarers in October 2013 and have run campaigns to specifically target seafarers from the Philippines, India and the Ukraine in their own languages. At the same time we have continued to promote the service through posters, SeafarerHelp cards and by working in partnership with other organisations.
2. We also provide helpline/out of hours services to both the ITF and Nautilus International. These have increased our business and between them accounted for some 19.3% of our contacts in 2014.
3. It appears that the new Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC) has had an impact by making more seafarers aware of their rights and the standards they should expect. As a result, when those standards are not met we believe that seafarers feel more empowered to try and do something about it, including contacting organisations such as SeafarerHelp for assistance.

Issues raised by seafarers

"I am a slave... he is a master. I have to clean bridge toilets in free time and forced to sign worksheets for 8 hours but have worked for 12. There is no internet or mail facilities on board ship. I am a experienced 4th engineer... I fell in to depression and weak day by day... mind somewhere, and body somewhere... I started having health problems – dysentery, vomiting, weakness... I was frustrated, out of mind, weak, no one to help... Some people want to get the favour of the Captain, they warned me not to call the ITF because the OWNER is very

Powerful, you will have problem going home, may be they will keep your documents.

I am forcibly working every day.... captain does not force the company to get me to the doctor else he tells me that it is too much expense.... Company has a tendency of sacking officers and crew without warning letter, without wages. Too many sacking in the last 6 to 7 months, no salary paid to them....

Now I just want to go home, I don't want to stay single moment..."

These heart-wrenching words came from a seafarer during a Live Chat with SeafarerHelp in 2014. We contacted the ITF, who resolved the case and helped get the seafarer off the ship and repatriated home.

Seafarers contact the team for a wide range of reasons, including when they are in great distress like this man.

In 2014 the top three reasons for contact concerned information requests, failure to pay wages and seeking employment.

The most frequent contact was to request information – this accounted for 17.7% of all enquiries. This is a positive development because it confirms that promotion of our services is successful, that seafarers know we exist and are confident about contacting us if they have a problem.

Failure to pay wages came next, and accounted for 15.7% of all cases. Interestingly, in previous years this was the

most frequent reason for contacts and in 2013 it accounted for 28.5% of all enquiries. We believe this major reduction is due in part to the deletion of the 'no first referral' category (see page 18). This has resulted in cases being allocated to other categories and therefore changed the relationship between the different types of cases.

Seeking employment requests accounted for 15.1% of all enquiries, a marked increase on 3.6% in 2013. We believe that this is also due to the success of our Facebook promotion.

Other reasons

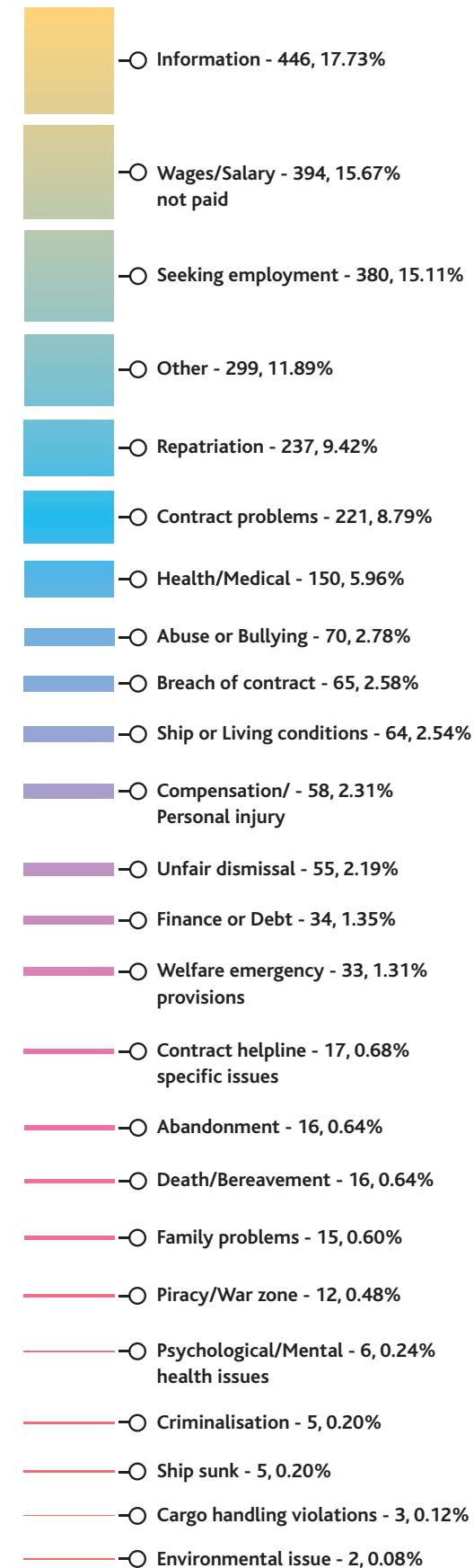
Problems of no specific category accounted for 11.9% of all cases, a slight reduction from the 12.5% recorded for 2013.

Repatriation accounted for 9.4% of all cases, compared to 14.5% in 2013.

Contract problems accounted for 8.8% of all contacts, an increase from 6.5% in 2013.

Chart 2

Issues raised 2014



"In 2014 the top three reasons for contact concerned information requests, failure to pay wages and seeking employment"



Trends since 2011

The main changes in issues raised are detailed in Chart 3.

Please note, however, that in 2013 there was a change in the software which altered how some of the statistics were gathered and in 2012 and 2013 additional categories were added. The categories for 2011 were broader and as a result they are not all directly comparable with subsequent years, although they do give an indication of general trends.

In addition to the increase in the number of new cases and the number of seafarers assisted, there has also been a change in some of the types of enquiry we receive. We have already explained the significant drop in the percentage of contacts concerning unpaid wages and the increase in contacts regarding seeking employment.

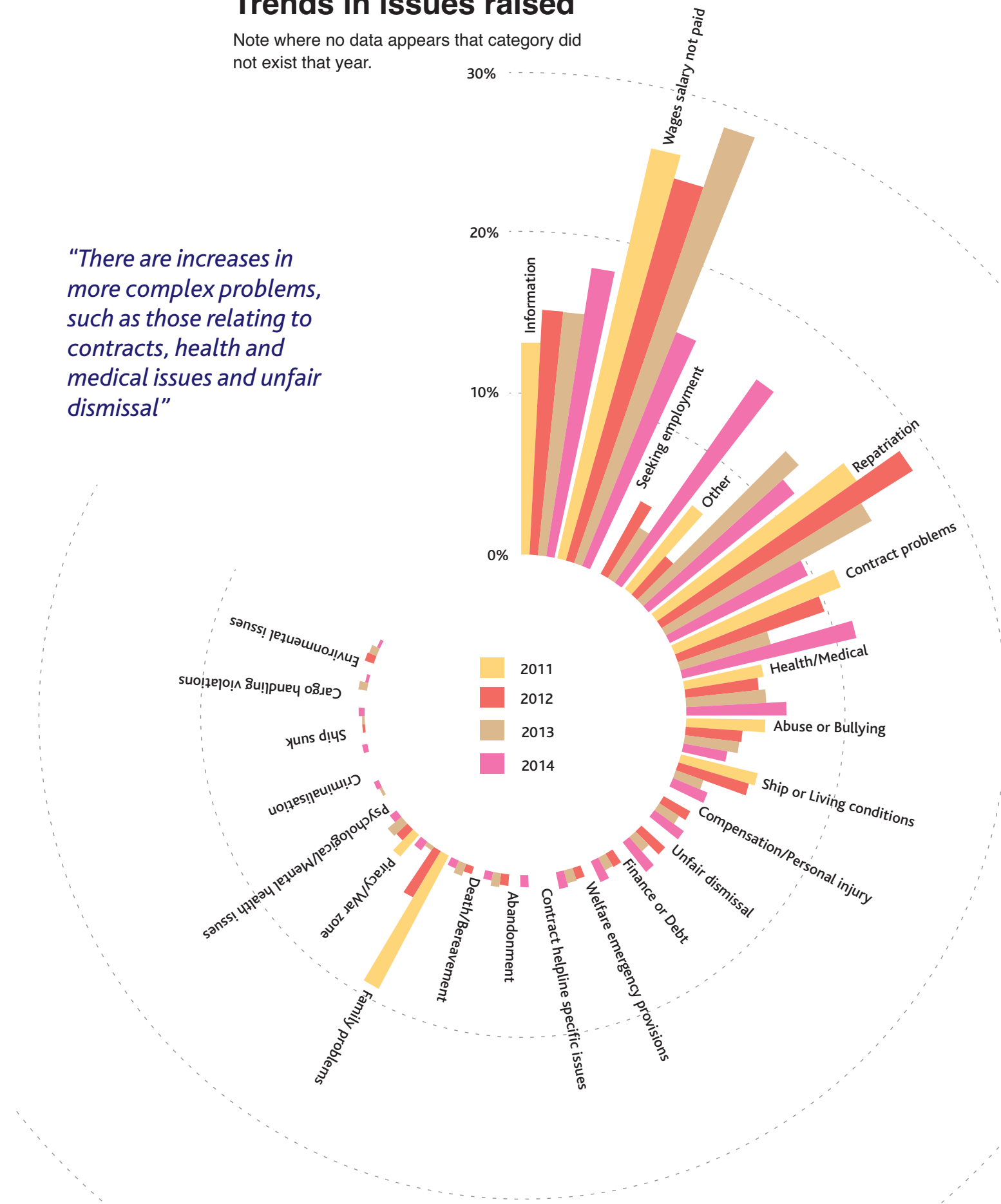
The percentage of issues around repatriation, bullying and ship living conditions have also fallen over the years, perhaps a reflection that ship owners are taking their responsibilities more seriously following the implementation of the MLC. Other good news is that the percentages of both family problems and piracy contacts have reduced – these may respectively result from better communication between seafarers and home, the international naval forces patrolling the Indian Ocean off Somalia and the use of armed guards aboard ships.

There are also increases in more complex problems, such as those relating to contracts, health and medical issues and unfair dismissal. It is therefore clear that the demand for the SeafarerHelp service continues to grow.

Chart 3

Trends in issues raised

Note where no data appears that category did not exist that year.



Case study – Successful repatriation

Two Indian seafarers contacted SeafarerHelp via Live Chat from Brazil to request assistance regarding repatriation. Their contracts had ended months before but their company would not send them home, despite repeated requests.

The company had apparently told the seafarers that it was impossible for them to sign off from the port where they were, but the men knew that the company had signed off seven seafarers from that same port the

previous year. The seafarers alleged that their company was delaying their repatriation to save money. They missed their families and wanted help to get home as soon as possible.

With the seafarers' consent, SeafarerHelp contacted the ITF in Brazil, which quickly raised the issue with the company. Within days the seafarers were returned to India and reunited with their families. They later sent an email thanking SeafarerHelp and the ITF for helping them.

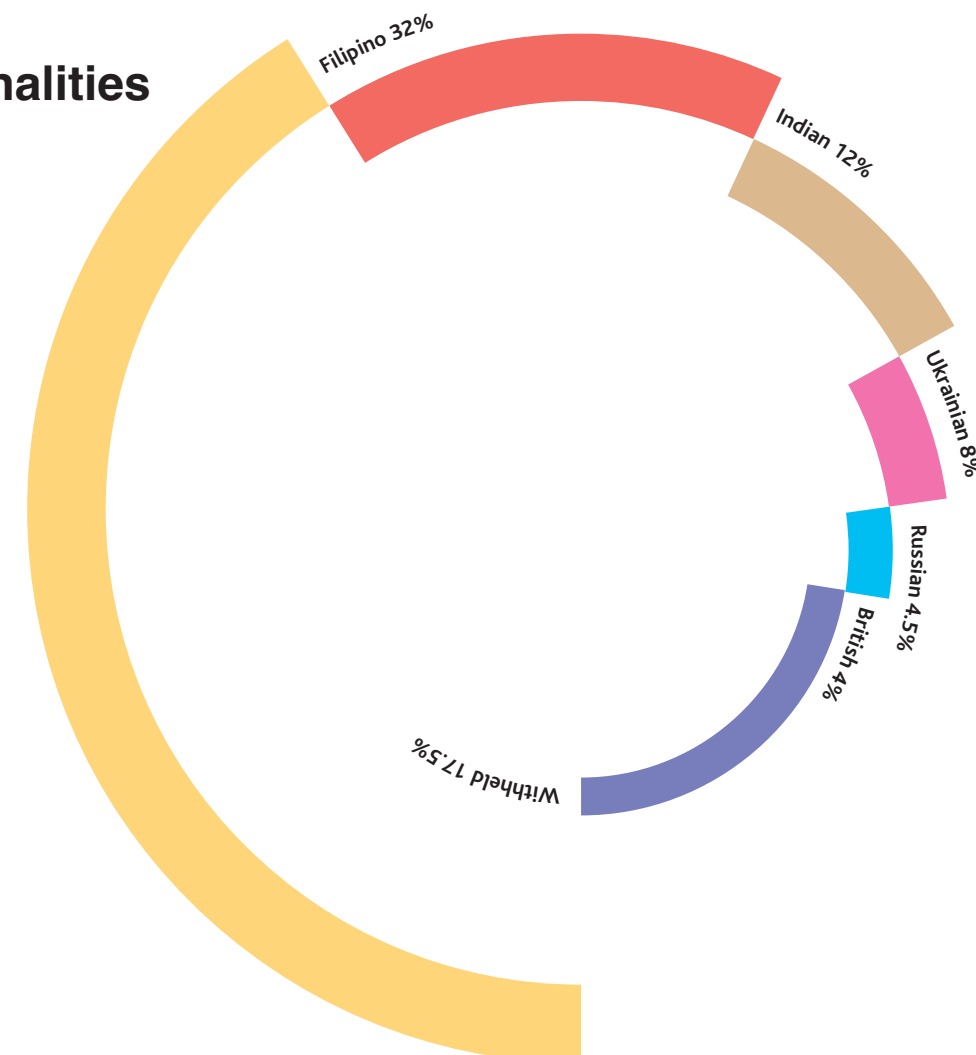
Seafarer nationalities

In 2014 the team assisted seafarers of 84 different nationalities, including 20 from Commonwealth countries and 18 from European Union countries. Chart 4 records

the main nationalities, where they were provided. It also shows that a significant number of seafarers, 17.4%, withheld their nationality.

Chart 4

Top 5 Nationalities



Trends since 2011

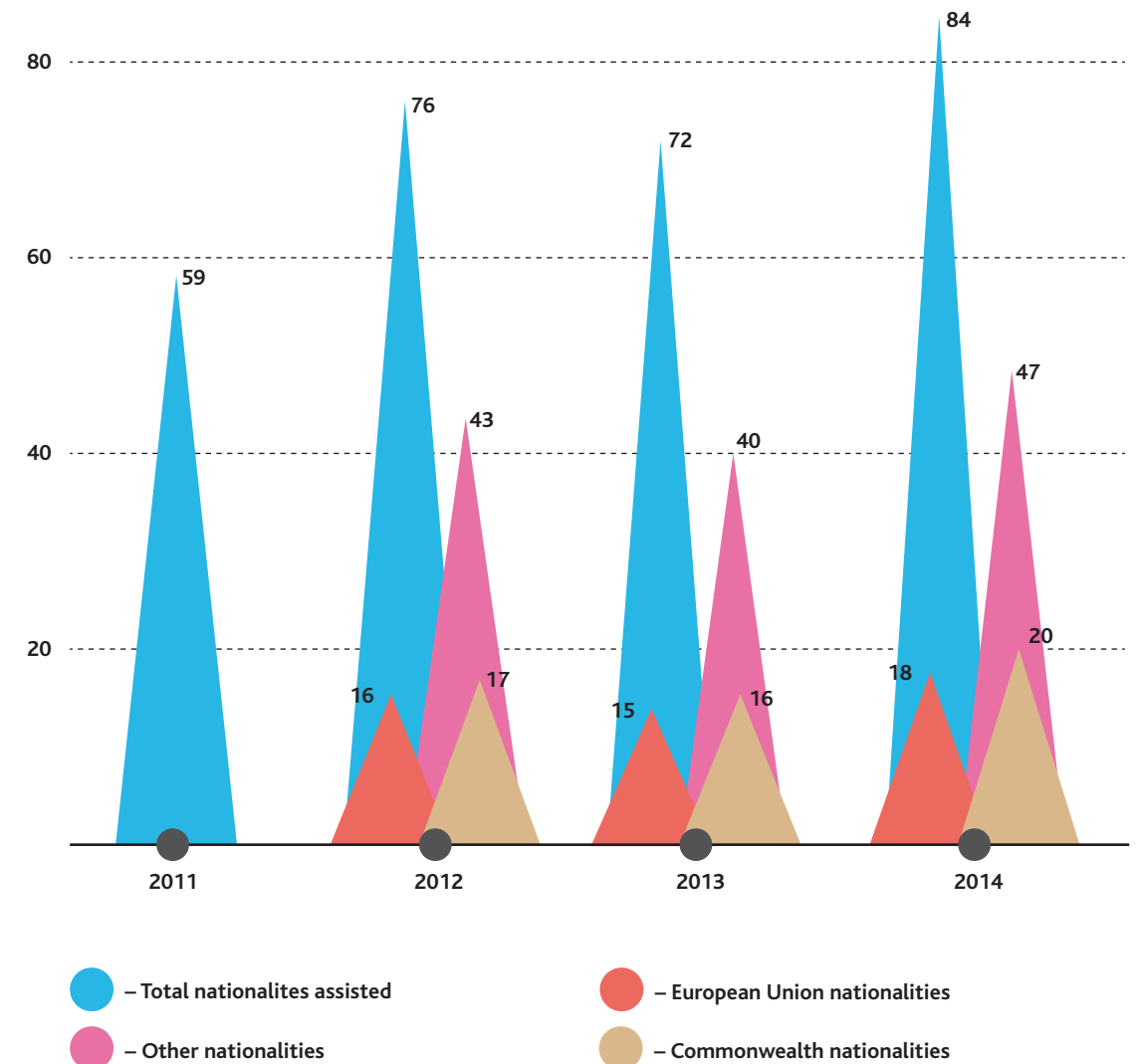
From 2011 to 2013, the nationality of the highest number of seafarers who contacted the team was Filipino, followed by Ukrainian, Indian and Russian.

In 2014, however, the main changes were that the numbers of Filipino and Indian seafarers contacting us increased significantly, as a result of the Facebook campaigns, while those from the Ukraine fell sharply, into third place, probably as a result of the political situation there.

Other notable increases in 2014 are in the number of Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Turkish and Indonesian seafarers. Chart 5 shows an increase since 2011 in the number of nationalities we have dealt with from 59 to 84, reflecting the success of our promotional campaigns and wider awareness of our SeafarerHelp service.

Chart 5

Nationalities assisted



Countries seafarers contacted us from

In 2014 the team received contacts from 113 different countries, of which 27 were Commonwealth and 21 were European Union countries. This year 8.8% of seafarers who contacted us withheld the name of the country they were in, a reduction from 12.3% in 2013. Contacts from the Philippines accounted for

20% of all cases; 9% of contacts emanated from India; 6.5% contacted whilst at sea; and 5.1% of contacts were in the United Kingdom, 3.2% were in the United Arab Emirates and 2.4% were in Turkey and the United States of America.



Flag states

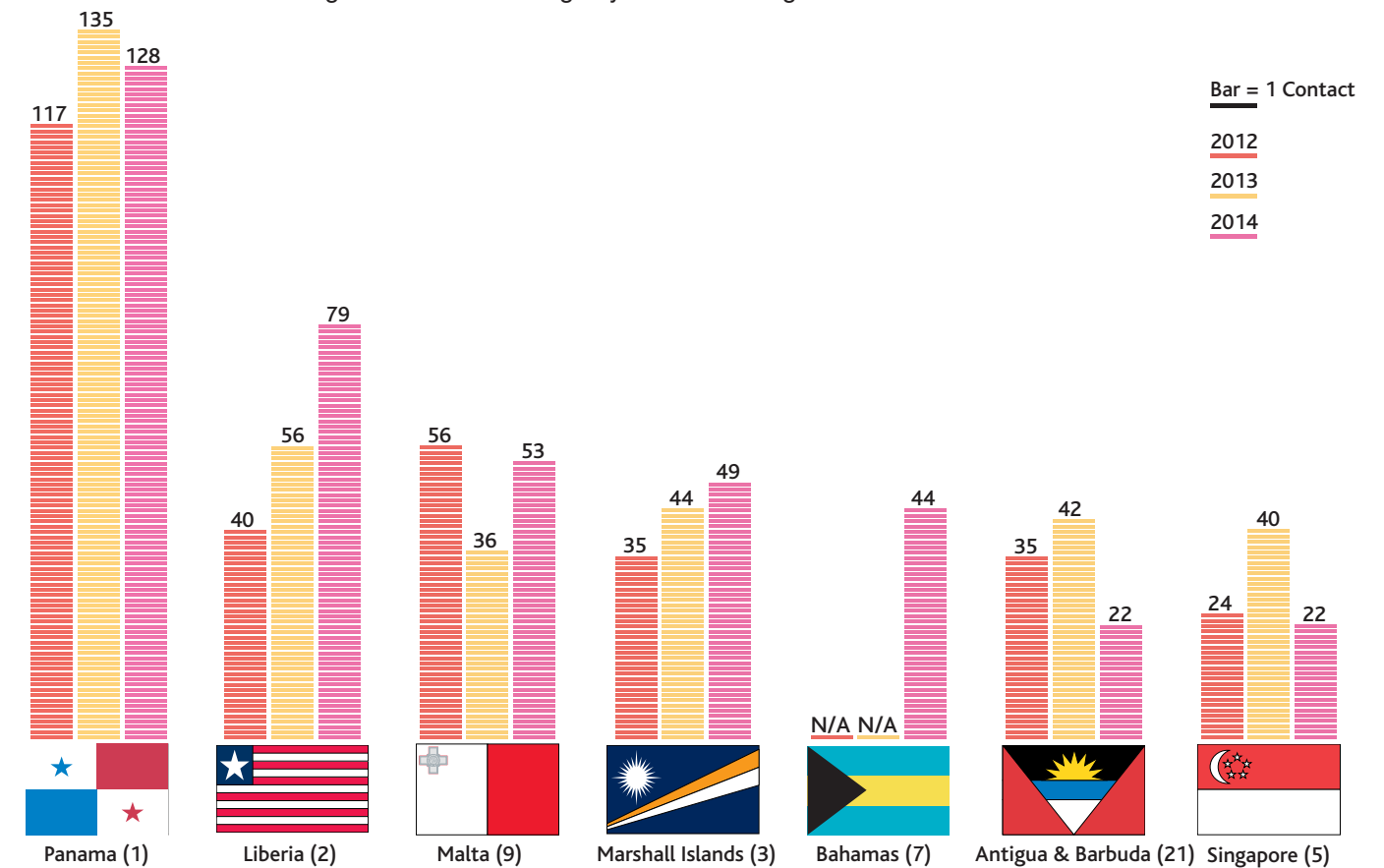
In 2014 the SeafarerHelp team dealt with ships that were registered in 63 countries, of which 15 were from the Commonwealth. The six most frequently encountered registries are shown in Chart 6, together with the number of

cases that relate to them and their relative position in terms of their size in the world fleet table, according to the UNCTAD Review of Marine Transport 2014.

Chart 6

Top six reported Flag states

Note Figure in brackets: Registry size according to UNCTAD 2014



Trends since 2011

Chart 6 shows that the trend for flag states since 2012 is mostly as would be expected, with the largest registries occupying most of the top seven spaces. However, Antigua and

Barbuda appear in a disproportionately high number of our cases, given their UNCTAD registry size ranking.

Organisations we refer cases to

The SeafarerHelp team will deal with any simple enquiry that it can so that the seafarer's issue is addressed as quickly as possible. However, we are essentially a referral agency and in 2014 we referred cases to over 70 different organisations around the world for more specialised help.

The trends in Chart 7 show important changes from previous years. In the past we were often unable to refer a case as a result of the very first contact because we had not been able to gather enough information. Our software was unable to record which organisations those cases were eventually referred to and they were held in a category called "No first referral". Following the upgrade of our software we can now record exactly where cases have been referred and that category has been removed.

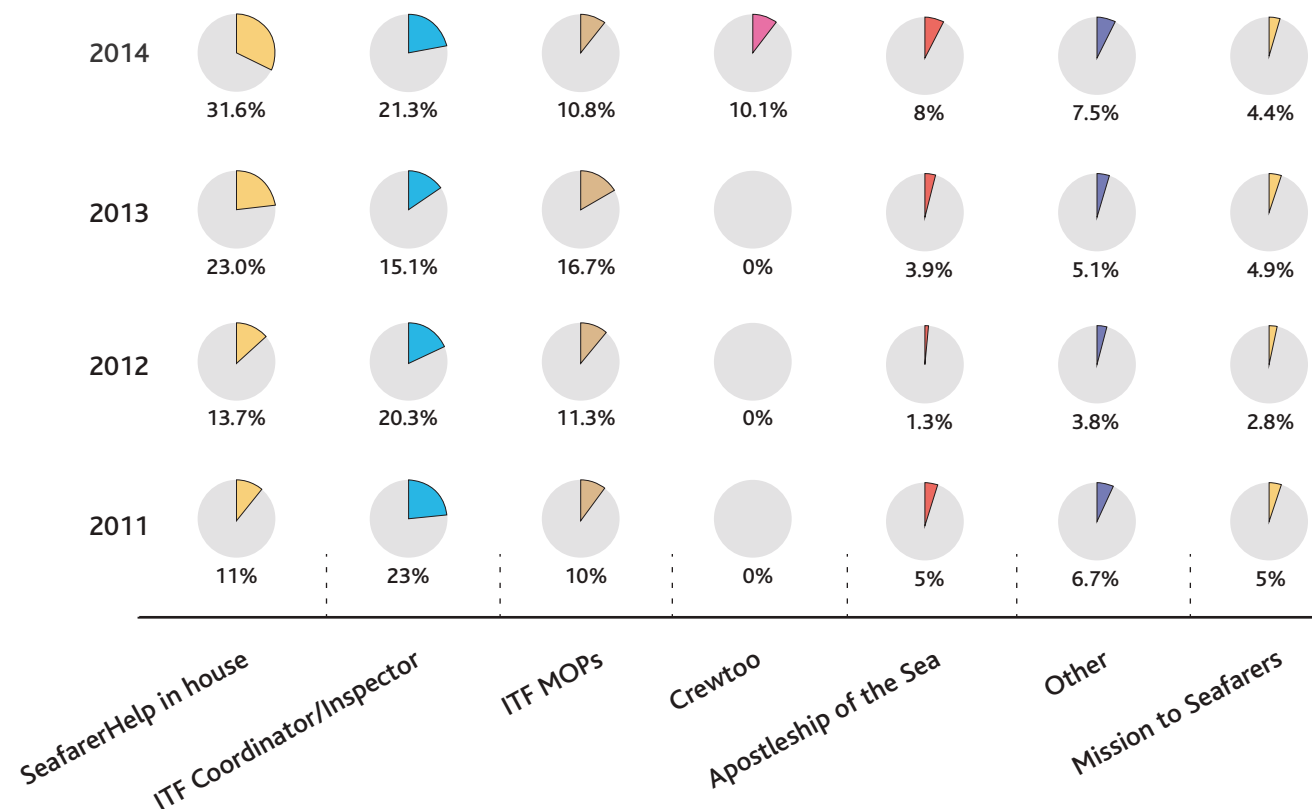
Chart 7 shows the trends for referrals since 2011. It also shows that the SeafarerHelp team is now dealing with more cases in-house, a result of the increase in the number of contacts requesting general information. Similarly, the number of referrals to the Apostleship of the Sea has increased significantly because of the large increase in the number of contacts from Filipino seafarers, who are mostly Roman Catholic.

The number of referrals to non-maritime organisations has increased because the team is now much more proactive in seeking out a wider range of agencies that can more effectively assist seafarers. The statistics show that we work in close co-operation with the ITF Inspectorate and MOPs team, the Apostleship of the Sea, the Mission to Seafarers, maritime unions, and government agencies all around the world.

Chart 7

Main organisations referred to

* Included in Other maritime agencies.



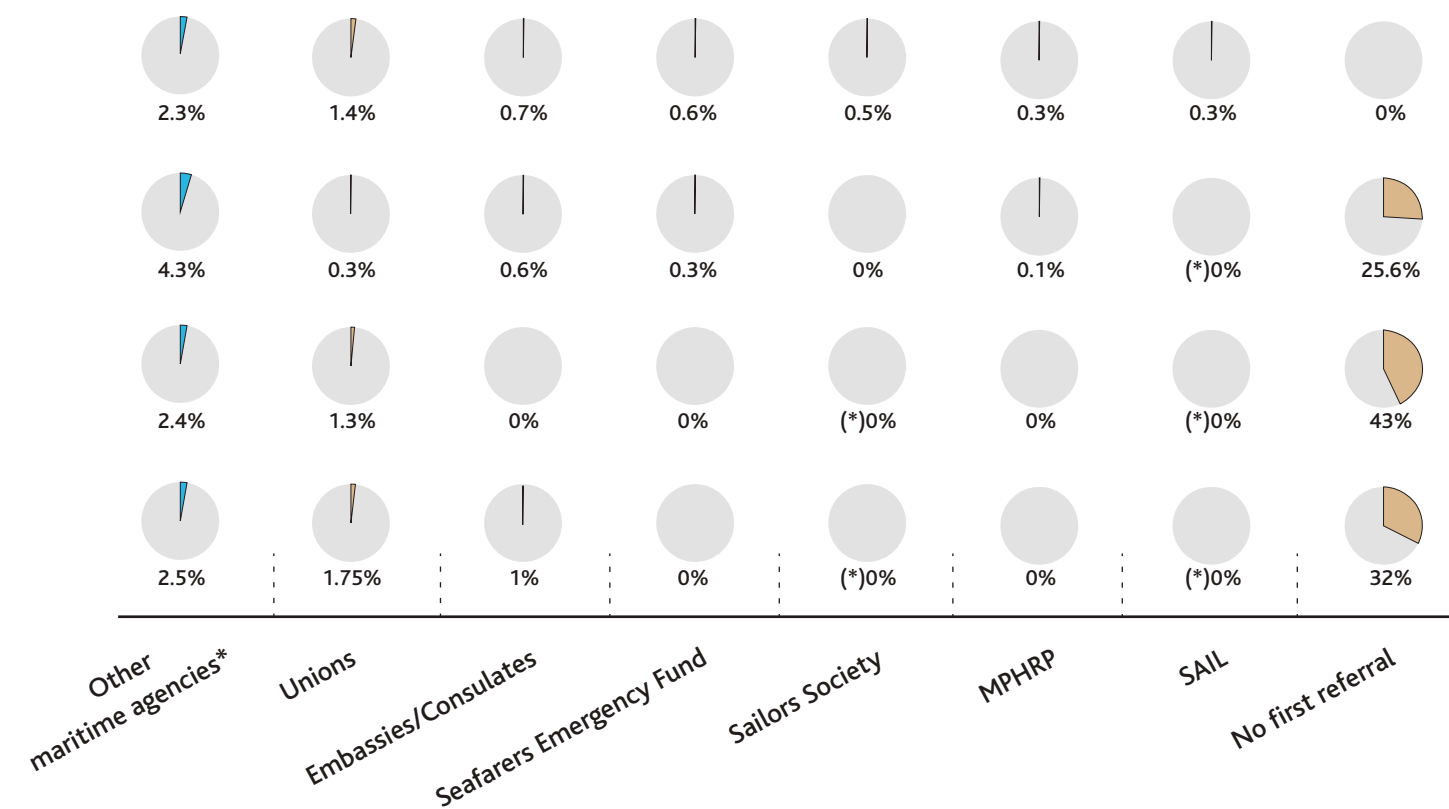
Case study – Help following a seafarer's death

SeafarerHelp was contacted by an Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) seafarer centre in the Philippines after a Filipino seafarer had died of natural causes in Taiwan. His body had been in a funeral parlour for two weeks and his wife wanted help in speeding up his repatriation, but she was not getting assistance from the manning agency in the Philippines. The AoS contacted SeafarerHelp to see if we could help in any way.

The AoS and the seafarer's wife had no contact details for the ship's agent in the city where the funeral parlour was. Our Chinese speaker researched the situation, found a telephone number and spoke to the agent. The agent told her that there had to be a

police investigation to confirm the cause of death but that once they were satisfied it was natural causes, they would liaise with the Philippine embassy in Taiwan to repatriate the seafarer's body. The agent said repatriation was likely to take two weeks from the conclusion of the police investigation. Our Filipino speaker then relayed the information to the seafarer's wife and the AoS in the Philippines.

A few weeks later the seafarer's wife contacted us to say that her husband had been repatriated and buried, and thanked us for our help. She said that their family was still adjusting to life without him but they were trying to move on.



Methods of contact

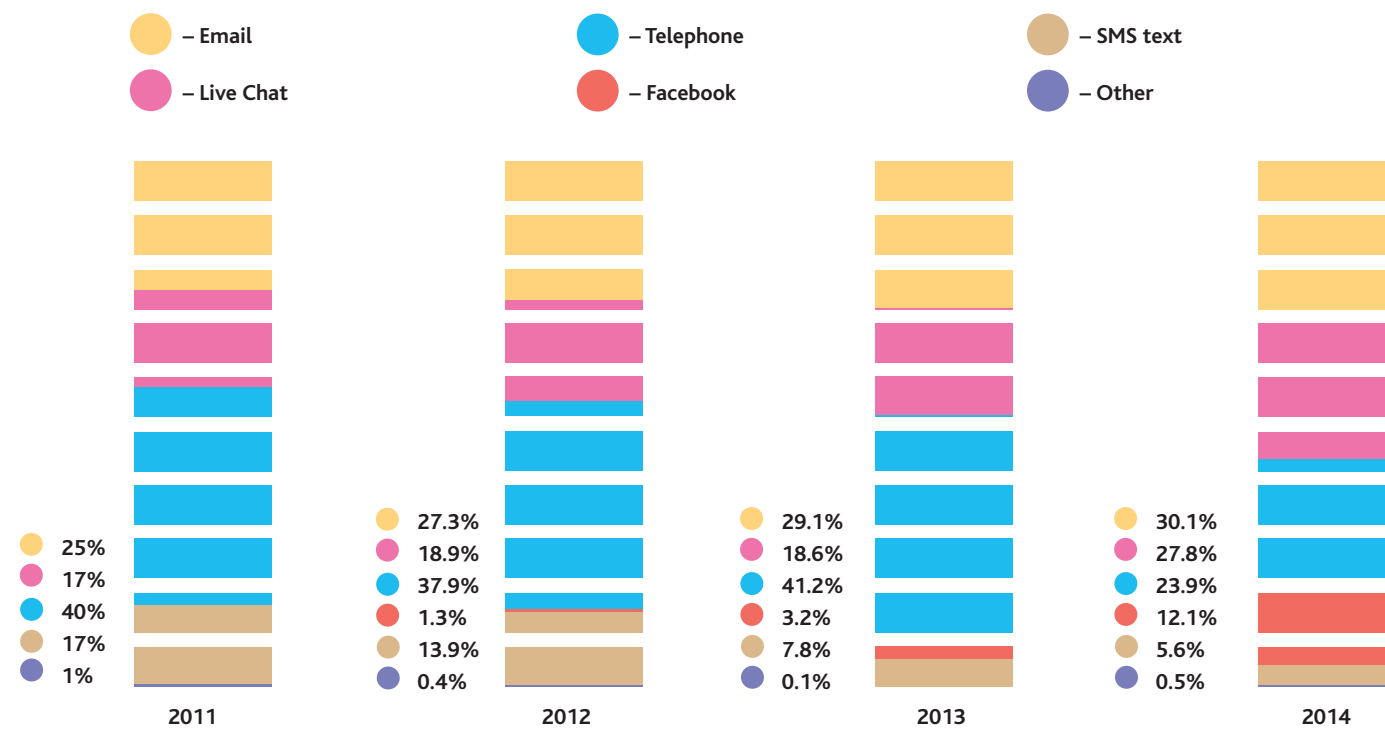
At SeafarerHelp we try to make it as easy as possible for seafarers to contact the team through a variety of means. These include by telephone on international toll-free lines, email, SMS text, Live Chat, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, fax and by post.

The information regarding communication is presented in two ways. Chart 8 shows the method that was used to make the initial contact and the trends since 2011, while

Chart 9 shows the ways that successive contacts were made in 2014 only. Once we have established contact with a seafarer or whoever is contacting on their behalf, we prefer them to use email or the telephone for successive contacts, as they are easier mediums through which to gather information. However, where this is not possible, we will use any method of contact that they wish.

Chart 8

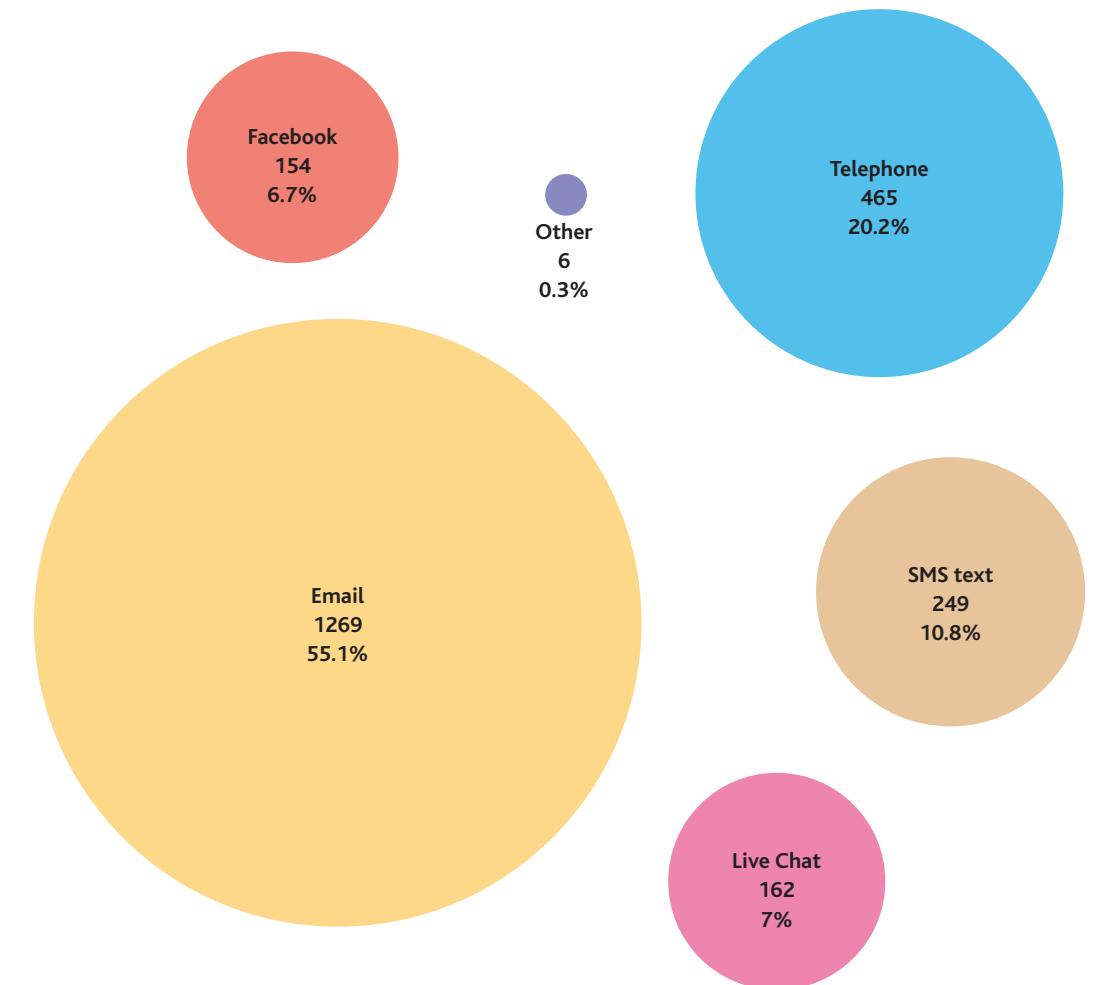
Initial contact methods



"It seems that seafarers are tending to use methods of contact that are cheaper or free"

Chart 9

Successive contact methods 2014



Trends since 2011

Since 2011 the initial methods of contact have changed dramatically.

In the past the most frequent initial method of contact was by telephone but in 2014 this was relegated to third position after email and Live Chat.

Interestingly, although SeafarerHelp dealt with 1,920 new cases in 2014, an increase of 663 on 2013, the actual number of initial contacts by telephone dropped from 523 in 2013 to 458 in 2014. The number of contacts by email increased from 370 in 2013 to 577 in 2014, the number of Live Chats increased from 236 in 2013 to 534 in 2014 and the number of Facebook contacts increased from 41 in 2013 to 233 in 2014.

These notable changes reflect three things:

- ☎ The use of the internet is increasing because seafarers' access to it has improved through the availability of mobile devices such as mobile phones, tablet computers and laptops.
- ☎ Access to the internet is improving all the time, both on ships at sea and in ports.
- ☎ It seems that seafarers are tending to use methods of contact that are cheaper or free, such as email, Live Chat and Facebook. As a result, telephone and SMS text contacts have fallen.

Feedback from seafarers about SeafarerHelp

In order to gain more information and insight into seafarers' experience of the SeafarerHelp service we have recently started to ask those we have assisted to complete a short survey on Survey Monkey. We want to find out what seafarers think of our service and we want to use the information to help us continually improve our services so that they meet their changing needs.

Seafarers are requested to complete the survey after their case is closed. It is sent to all of those where the team has had a significant involvement, not to those who made simple requests such as seeking information or employment.

Of those surveyed 83% said that the SeafarerHelp service was either excellent or good. 89% said that they would recommend the service to other seafarers.

These are some of the quotes from seafarers:

"they respond quickly and it feels good because there is someone always ready to help... we felt comforted."

"...your service is excellent... my problem is solved – they gave me my sickness benefit."

"It was nice knowing that you were here for us when we needed help. Contacting you during that time and having you respond immediately was amazing for us."

"I would like to say that the reply to my queries before were prompt and helpful. Again thank you for all your help. Your service truly deserves a pat on the back. Keep it up."

"I am very thankful that you took action accordingly when I called you in the time of my troubles. I feel now I am a very lucky seafarer in the world because at that time I was hopeless to resolve my problem but you came into the situation to rescue me. Now my problem subsided and my confidence is restored to perform my job well... I want to say 1 million thank yous for helping."

Conclusion

"The work that we have done has put us in a good position to further develop and improve our services, increase our capacity, and serve more seafarers and their families"

The increase in the number of contacts with SeafarerHelp has again been significant which has been the result of our social media campaign and also due to seafarers knowing more about their rights. With the MLC coming into force it does appear that seafarers feel empowered to challenge employers and contact organisations such as SeafarerHelp when they have a problem. Seafarers knowing their rights can only be a good thing but the number of seafarers contacting us continues to rise which indicates that there is still much more work to do. From the feedback from seafarers it is clear that they want the SeafarerHelp team to carry on giving them support. We will continue to do this and are initiating new training programmes for the team to develop their knowledge and skills.

Our marketing campaigns have been successful as we are now being contacted by more seafarers from around the world. As seafarers gain better access to the internet more contacts are coming via email and Live Chat than by telephone. In the past it had always been that the telephone was the most common method of initial contact however within the space of a year it has been overtaken by email and Live Chat. Seafarers have turned to the internet and social media as ways to not only keep in contact with their families but also to contact us. It confirms our decision to invest in upgrading our IT and internet connectivity so that it is easier for

seafarers to contact us. This also increases our capacity to take advantage of other opportunities. We will continue to look at the methods that seafarers use to communicate and we will implement new systems if there is a need. We will continue to meet the changing needs of seafarers.

We are diversifying our funding through our subsidiary SWAN Ltd. We entered into a second contract in 2014 and we are actively seeking new business to either operate helpline services or to provide an office location and IT facilities for other organisations. Any income that is generated through our subsidiary is donated to ISWAN. The more we can do to diversify our funding the more services we can provide to seafarers.

Over the year ISWAN and SeafarerHelp have started to work in partnership with more organisations that are involved in seafarers' welfare and this is an area that we intend to develop.

2014 has been a very busy but rewarding year for ISWAN and the SeafarerHelp team. The work that we have done has put us in a good position to further develop and improve our services, increase our capacity, and serve more seafarers and their families. We believe that the future for ISWAN and SeafarerHelp is positive and we are looking forward to 2015 and the challenges that it brings.



SeafarerHelp

The lifeline for seafarers

Contact us

If you would like more information about ISWAN, the SeafarerHelp service or the Seafarers Emergency Fund (SEF) please contact us directly or check our websites. Details are given below.

Similarly, if you would like to know more about the range of services we provide, please feel free to talk to us using the contact details below.

SeafarerHelp telephone: **+44 (0) 207 323 2737**

SeafarerHelp email: **help@seafarerhelp.org**

ISWAN office telephone: **+44 (0) 300 012 4279**

ISWAN email: **iswan@iswan.org.uk**

ISWAN and SEF: **www.seafarerswelfare.org**

SeafarerHelp: **www.seafarerhelp.org**



International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) is a Registered Charity, number 1102946 and a Registered Company Limited by Guarantee, number 3171109