



## Good Practice Guide for Shipping Companies and Manning Agents



Humanitarian support of seafarers  
and their families in cases of armed  
robbery and piracy attack

## Sponsors of the MPHRP/ISWAN Good Practice Guide



**Seafarers' Trust**  
We Put Seafarers First



## Disclaimer

This Good Practice Guide ('guide') is to be used at the user's own risk. No warranties or representations are given, nor is any duty of care or responsibility accepted by the authors or any other entity connected with producing the guide for the accuracy of information or advice, omission or any consequence whatsoever resulting directly or indirectly from compliance with, adoption of or reliance on the guide. The guide should complement and not replace international shipping requirements, including the Ship's Security Plan.



# Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>About MPHRP</b>	4
<b>Support of seafarers</b>	
▶ Introduction	5
▶ Good practice before an incident	5
▶ During an incident	6
▶ When captured and held hostage	7
▶ After the incident	9
<b>Support of seafarers' families</b>	
▶ Introduction	12
▶ Good practice before an incident	12
▶ Developing an action plan for the pre-deployment stage	12
▶ Development of an action plan during an incident	13
▶ Role of the family liaison representative at the time of release	15
<b>Appendices</b>	
▶ Appendix 1: Key concepts used as framework documents	16
▶ Appendix 2: Family leaflet	21
▶ Appendix 3: Seafarers' nomination form for family contact person	23
▶ Appendix 4: Local resource contact	24
▶ Appendix 5: Family liaison representative scripts	25
▶ Appendix 6: Letter templates	27
▶ Appendix 7: Log of call made to family contact	32
▶ Appendix 8: Reporting incidents of piracy	33
▶ Appendix 9: Further resources	34
<b>Acknowledgments</b> – MPHRP funders, partners and observers	35

# Introduction

---

Piracy and armed robbery continue to threaten the international shipping community. Despite diplomatic, military and other initiatives by governments and their agencies, and protective measures and other actions adopted by shipping companies, ships are still attacked and seafarers put at risk as they go about their legitimate business.

While acknowledging the actions of governments, the United Nations, the International Maritime Organization, and the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, it is recognised that more needs to be done to support seafarers and their families. Over 5,700 seafarers have been taken hostage in various incidents

globally since 2007. In some cases the seafarers have been subject to prolonged captivity. Every day more than 100,000 seafarers experience anxiety while sailing in, or towards, dangerous waters. Their families share these worries too, often with a feeling of helplessness.

Appropriate preparation provides benefits, increasing the resilience of seafarers exposed to incidents of piracy and armed robbery, and informing a correct awareness of the situation for seafarers and their families. Although piracy is defined in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as distinct from armed robbery, for the purposes of this guide the term 'piracy' is used throughout.

# About MPHRP

---

The Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme (MPHRP) was established in 2011 as a not-for-profit, alliance of maritime industry partners, maritime unions and welfare associations ([www.mphrp.org](http://www.mphrp.org)). The aim of MPHRP is to provide assistance to seafarers and their families affected by maritime piracy. In addition to assisting seafarers and their families with their recovery and rehabilitation, MPHRP has developed Good Practice Guides, provided training programmes for shipping companies and seafarers, and established a network of trained welfare responders to assist families and seafarers. The MPHRP is managed by the International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), a UK registered charity ([www.seafarerswelfare.org](http://www.seafarerswelfare.org)). A 24-hour helpline is available for survivors of piracy and their families, or any seafarers who need assistance or information.

All seafarers and their families who are the victims of piracy and kidnapping face the same threats, but the outcome is very different for men and women who do not have adequate support before, during and after an incident. Where good practice is applied, seafarers and their families have much less stress and difficulty; where they are abandoned to the kidnappers without assistance of government, the results have aggravated the destitution of families and long-term ill-effects for seafarers.

Our shared concern for the well-being and welfare of seafarers and their families before, during and after a piracy or armed robbery attack underpins the work of the programme and the commitment of the partners, and the MPHRP guides are commended for use on the basis that their practical application will assist seafarers and their families.

# Support of seafarers

---

## Introduction

Seafarers play an important role in responding to the threat of piracy or armed robbery. They can also be affected by it. This publication provides guidance on ways to minimise negative effects and how companies can support their seafarers. Peer support within a group of seafarers can be a key factor, exercised through a shared perspective and constant sensitivity to each other's individual current moods, cultures and beliefs.

Interviews with seafarers released after an attack and hostage situation suggest that those briefed in advance on what to expect during an attack or when taken captive are able to cope better than those who are not. Information on how to behave appears to have played a large part in initial responses and aided their ability to understand and manage the situation.

This revised version of the Good Practice Guide may assist some companies more than others. Some companies already have plans in place, and may therefore choose to use this updated guide solely as a checklist or to modify their current plans in light of recent events. Companies that do not have a plan are encouraged to use this guide to establish an appropriate course of action.

Piracy has different characteristics in different parts of the world. In Somalia, seafarers have been held hostage for months or years. In West Africa, high levels of violence have been used, and hostages taken for ransom for up to 40 days or so. In South East Asia, cargo, engine room spares and seafarers' personal possessions have been the target. Violence, or the threat of violence, for monetary gain is the common theme, and these guides have been drawn up to deal with any of these types of piracy.

Good initial preparation is essential for companies and manning agents to help their seafarers deal with an incident. This guidance is designed to aid companies to put in place procedures to assist seafarers in such situations.

## Good practice before an incident

Every seafarer will react differently to an incident as each situation is unique to the individual involved.

Preparation to deal with an incident is paramount, and training should include psychological and practical aspects. When planning training, the company should take into account the following:

- ▶ the visibility of attacks has increased awareness of the risk of such incidents amongst seafarers
- ▶ seafarers sailing in areas affected by piracy and armed robbery are apprehensive due to fear of what might happen
- ▶ seafarers have concerns for their families should anything happen to themselves
- ▶ changing global situations require continued monitoring and appropriate preparations
- ▶ awareness of possible dangers may make seafarers more vigilant but they may also be reluctant to sail in affected waters
- ▶ fear of captivity or physical abuse may provoke anxiety amongst seafarers
- ▶ seafarers deeply resent the theft of their personal items – such acts heighten personal vulnerability and instil a feeling of lack of control
- ▶ the need, following an attack, to preserve forensic evidence for any investigation that might be undertaken, including not clearing up mess or cleaning the ship and cabins until the investigation has been completed
- ▶ the company contingency plan for piracy/armed robbery should be circulated, and shore-based staff should also be briefed on its content and use in case of emergency.

Seafarers could be reassured if the following knowledge is included in the training:

- ▶ the company's compliance with the latest international legislation and industry best management guidelines

- ▶ pre-planned use of convoys, if available and needed, along with additional security resources and protective measures adopted by the ship, including 'secure' areas such as a citadel – this decreases the feeling of physical vulnerability and helplessness
- ▶ pre-planned methods of communication with the company during an incident and reporting to a single, global/regional reporting point is considered by seafarers to be of the utmost importance
- ▶ a company plan to communicate with and provide support for the seafarer's family
- ▶ a commitment that wages/remittances will continue to be paid in accordance with the seafarer's contract and the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006
- ▶ where applicable, payments for entering a high risk area which have been agreed between unions and management should also be included
- ▶ a statement on company policy on continuing to offer employment to seafarers following an attack, so that seafarers will not be concerned about re-employment
- ▶ techniques to assist seafarers to remain self-controlled and optimistic
- ▶ leadership skills are important, as leadership and team cohesiveness before, during and after an incident remain key – the master may not be able to take the lead during an incident, and it may therefore be important for a member of the crew to assume a leadership role

- ▶ the advantages and disadvantages of the use of citadels and, if appropriate, training and drills
- ▶ company policies on the use of guards, secure anchorages and ship-to-ship transfer areas
- ▶ personal responsibility for seafarers to inform themselves about threats in areas of trade
- ▶ familiarity with the preparation and use of an emergency communication plan, including all essential emergency numbers and prepared messages
- ▶ that the personal safety of the seafarer should be of primary concern.

---

## During an incident

The company should emphasise that the personal safety of the seafarer is paramount. The company response will vary depending on the type of incident. In more serious incidents the company should put in place a crisis management team to ensure all the necessary actions are taken. The company should also bear in mind:

- ▶ 'The need to survive' is the initial basic instinct of a seafarer.
- ▶ All seafarers will cope differently in a given situation. Some may be able to initially handle situations well, while others may have reactions including shock, fear, anger, a sense of unreality, a sense of immediate physical vulnerability and a loss of trust in members of management on board and ashore.

These are well-recognised 'normal' reactions to such incidents (see Appendix 1A).

### Reporting

It is fundamental to stress the importance of reporting any piracy incidents to the relevant authorities, such as IMB, MSCHOA, UKMTO, MDAT-GoG or others as appropriate. This reporting assists in the communication of information about piracy activity to other ships, to ensure that other seafarers are appropriately prepared, and assists in the prosecution of pirates. Details are given at the end of this guide (see Appendix 8).

Companies, and the vessel involved, may be requested to assist with an investigation following an incident.



### ***When an incident is prevented***

Companies have a responsibility to ensure that their crews are fully supported – even when an incident has been prevented – as there may still be negative repercussions.

- ▶ The master should consider raising morale by organising an appropriate event or activity for the crew once outside the danger zone.
- ▶ The master should conduct a review of events, with a view to learning and sharing the lessons learnt.
- ▶ It may be helpful for seafarers to share their experiences after an unsuccessful attack.
- ▶ Depending on the severity of the attack, an expert in crisis intervention should be sent to the ship at the next port of call to debrief the seafarers.
- ▶ Vessels may still be required to assist with an investigation following an unsuccessful attack.
- ▶ A family liaison representative from the company may be a support for seafarers and their families.

---

## **When captured and held hostage**

Experiences to date have varied greatly depending on the type of incident and its consequences, and therefore not all situations can be addressed in this guide. However, there appear to be some similarities, especially in incidents resulting in greater aggression, violence or prolonged captivity.

### ***Pirates (and certain situations of armed robbery)***

Leadership patterns and styles of the aggressors may strategically differ depending on the nature of the incident. This may affect the aggression/behaviour and treatment of the seafarers. One example is 'good cop/bad cop' tactics.

While departing/escaping from a vessel after an attack, a pirate or armed robber may kidnap a few seafarers and take them ashore. The seafarers may be held as a security measure in case of pursuit by law enforcement, or to demand a ransom after the incident.

The pirate or armed robber may damage communication and navigation equipment to prevent the crew from

easily communicating or navigating, and to buy time to escape.

Lessons learnt indicate that:

- ▶ The level to which basic needs are withheld or manipulated, to ensure seafarers' compliance, dominates the early stages. This has a major impact on the seafarers' ability to adjust and cope with early captivity.
- ▶ The aggressors may lead the seafarers to believe that the company considers their survival or release as unimportant.
- ▶ Pirates may demote a master and appoint another leader in order to break the unity of the crew. This loss of control and crew manipulation may affect the hierarchy of command.
- ▶ There may be mock executions or fabricated reports of the death of a leader or colleague to affect the morale of the seafarers and to ensure their compliance, and as part of ransom negotiations. This may add to distress.
- ▶ Communication between hostages and family members may be used to manipulate a negotiation. Calls may be cut short or phones taken away mid-conversation; gunshots in the background may cause distress and concern for family members.
- ▶ Behaviour and attitudes of the aggressors towards hostages may fluctuate due to the use of drugs and alcohol. This may increase the level of stress experienced by the seafarers. Seafarers may also be encouraged to participate in using drugs.
- ▶ Aggressors use violence and may use a variety of tools, including sticks, machetes and gun butts to name but a few.
- ▶ In isolated cases, torture has been used.
- ▶ Negotiations may be used to manipulate the psychological well-being of seafarers and to falsely report progress, which may initially inspire hope only for it to be dashed and increase despair.
- ▶ Seafarers may consider they are 'worthless' as individuals and 'pawns' in ransom negotiations, provoking feelings of helplessness.
- ▶ The pirates may fight amongst themselves or with rival gangs.
- ▶ Companies may need to ensure that their captured seafarers can receive necessary prescribed

medication for established medical conditions, or immunisation or prophylactic medication.

- ▶ Armed robbery can be fast and violent, and may cause loss of life. Sometimes this may include accidental shooting related to drug use or unreliable weapons. Pirates may want to take all they can quickly and leave a vessel to avoid detection.
- ▶ In the case of armed robbery, every effort should be made to preserve evidence in order that assistance can be given to investigating authorities.
- ▶ In hostage situations, the phase when the ransom is being paid is very dangerous.

## Seafarers

Lessons learnt indicate that:

- ▶ In some instances, seafarers may be allowed to move around the ship while being held captive, and permitted to fish for food to supplement their diet. However, they have to remain vigilant and be aware that such privileges can disappear quickly if such behaviour is perceived to threaten negotiations.
- ▶ Seafarers may be held hostage on their own vessels, other vessels previously captured or, on some occasions, ashore. When ashore they may be moved between locations to avoid detection by other gangs and/or to prevent escape or rescue.
- ▶ Crews are sometimes kept together in small areas of a ship for long periods under constant armed guard. They may also be physically separated to

avoid communication and supportive bonding (which could result in a planned escape or group action against the pirates).

- ▶ Seafarers will experience a general lack of usual hygiene practices. For example, soap, toothpaste and other toiletries may have either been stolen or used up, and toilet and domestic water supply is likely to be unavailable.
- ▶ Seafarers may suffer illness due to a lack of, or deprivation of, prescribed medication for established medical conditions, or immunisation or prophylactic medication.
- ▶ Seafarers may experience the fear or reality of mental and physical torture, multiple forms of degrading treatment, food deprivation and dehydration.
- ▶ Seafarers' anxiety may be raised by fear of potential further attacks.
- ▶ Seafarers will be concerned about how their families are coping, and will worry about financial and other implications.
- ▶ Seafarers may try to befriend pirates to gain personal privileges.
- ▶ Hostages are constantly vigilant and on their guard, and this can be a source of stress.
- ▶ Armed robbers tend to take any easily portable or valuable items, and to damage equipment, particularly communication equipment. The advice remains – do not show robbers any resistance once they are on board.
- ▶ There have also been incidences where seafarers have been abducted and taken away from the





## A programme of ISWAN

vessel, causing considerable concern to fellow crew members, colleagues and their families. Where such a situation occurs, the advice given with regard to handling longer term piracy attacks should be followed.

### **The company**

The company should have an increased awareness that:

- ▶ communications may be intermittent, and will not necessarily be reliable or accurate
- ▶ the physical needs of seafarers, if held for a lengthy period, require monitoring, where possible
- ▶ following the incident, the vessel may need to be diverted to a port of refuge for emergency supplies, bunkers, crew repatriation, etc.

Lessons learnt indicate that:

- ▶ delay in negotiations can have a detrimental impact on the seafarers and their families
- ▶ the company may need to provide prescribed medication for established medical conditions
- ▶ communications may be overheard by the seafarers
- ▶ selection of a port of refuge in advance can be helpful for planning logistics, security and medical facilities.

---

## After the incident

Many issues already mentioned in this guide still apply after an incident. There should be a well pre-prepared plan in place.

Company representatives ashore should be aware that:

- ▶ seafarers may have to endure increased risks when a ransom is delivered either at sea or on land
- ▶ aggressors may disagree among themselves, resulting in a more dangerous situation

During the process of the incident the company should be thinking of the needs and requirements of the seafarers and the vessel upon release. Items considered should include but not be limited to:

- ▶ vessel/seafarer location
- ▶ relocation of the vessel

- ▶ personal and organisational preparedness
- ▶ length of captivity/incident
- ▶ nature and severity of physical and psychological treatment
- ▶ intensity of maltreatment
- ▶ level of isolation/bonding/divisions within the crew
- ▶ availability of family communications
- ▶ level and style of leadership exercised.

Seafarers should receive additional support and monitoring if colleagues are killed or are missing.

The full psychological impact of such actions may only be fully realised after a seafarer has reached home, or even at a later stage

Several released seafarers have reported loss of self-esteem and self-worth, and an inability to discuss the incident with anyone other than their fellow hostages who shared the experience (see survivor syndrome, Appendix 1D)

### **Practical needs of a seafarer upon release**

Upon release of the ship the company should open communications with the master/crew to understand the needs of the crew and vessel, and to provide information and instructions on the provision of emergency supplies, bunkers and sailing the vessel to a safe port, and to discourage seafarers from immediately clearing up in order to preserve evidence (MSC.1/circ.1404).

When seafarers are released from captivity the company should encourage them to communicate with their families. Suggest that conversations are kept light and positive, and focused on the next steps. Seafarers should only be encouraged to discuss the details of the incident with their families once they have returned home.

As soon as possible after their release, a doctor should examine the crew members and prescribe any appropriate treatments. Following a traumatic incident, a seafarer may also need emotional and psychological support. Listening and observation skills and the ability to provide basic humanitarian support is most appropriate immediately after release (see Appendix 1F). Medics sent aboard should be made aware of the circumstances faced by the seafarer, and preferably should be able to communicate in a language

the seafarer can easily understand. Psychological first-aid techniques from suitably trained responders may be beneficial. Counselling or other forms of psychological intervention techniques are not considered appropriate immediately after release of the seafarers.

### ***Practical needs of seafarers upon arrival at a safe port***

- ▶ Medical advice should be sought about suitable food to be provided, taking into account the seafarers' poor diet during captivity. A slow return to normal food provides a very positive effect to morale. Alcohol should be avoided during the period of adapting to a normal diet.
- ▶ Hospital, medical and dental treatment should be available as appropriate. In the unfortunate circumstance of a death, mortuary staff should also be sent.
- ▶ Seafarers should be advised that operational debriefs of a forensic nature may be required for

criminal investigations, and that such procedures may reawaken bad memories.

- ▶ The company should explain repatriation and payment arrangements.
- ▶ Seafarers may have been deprived of control over their own destiny and lack trust in anyone. Their ability to make appropriate choices can be impaired.
- ▶ A visit to a hairdresser and/or barber, or the provision of (strong) safety razors may be beneficial.
- ▶ Hotel accommodation off the ship should be utilised as soon as possible.
- ▶ Where applicable, passports and other travel arrangements should be arranged.
- ▶ Further communication with families should be made available if seafarers' families are not present at the first port of call after release.
- ▶ Clothing for travelling home should be provided, taking into account the weather upon arrival in the seafarers' home countries.



## A programme of ISWAN

- ▶ Seafarers should be briefed on the company's actions and the support provided before and after release.
- ▶ Magazines should be provided to help encourage seafarers to update themselves on world news and events.
- ▶ Instructions should be given about not bringing ashore unsuitable 'souvenirs' such as weapon cartridges, ammunition or other items banned for international travel.

### ***Practical needs of seafarers arriving in their own country***

Where seafarers are held captive for a prolonged period of time as a group of hostages, they should stay in groups as much as possible in the initial post-release days. Peer support, which may have been of paramount importance during captivity, will still be required to cope with the changes faced in their newly acquired freedom.

Maintaining the group for two to three days allows initial medical checks to be conducted. Use of recognised early interventions such as psychological first aid and psychological debriefing/defusing techniques may be indicated, but are not always required in the early post-release days (see crisis management techniques, Appendix 1F).

A safe and secure initial post-release environment should be provided. Some companies fly key family members to the site of repatriation (usually in their home country) and allow time for them to be together before the journey home.

In considering relevant actions in each situation, there are several practical actions that it is strongly suggested are taken once the seafarers arrive back in their own country:

- ▶ Seafarers should be given assistance to move freely through immigration and customs, with ease and without delay.
- ▶ They should be given assistance in dealing with media attention, incorporating company policies if appropriate. Seafarers and their families should be advised of the pitfalls associated with providing information via social media. Social media may initially be used to draw attention to their plight,

but this may result in unintended consequences, which can put seafarers and their families at risk.

- ▶ Seafarers should be given a full medical examination.
- ▶ Seafarers should be introduced to support personnel.
- ▶ The company should provide an update on payments to seafarers.
- ▶ Seafarers should be allowed a dignified and private reunion with family members.

Where possible, seafarers should be given an opportunity to talk freely or use available support resources, such as welfare workers, representatives of faith-based organisations or trade union representatives, who can assist in completing important legal papers related to compensation, and other benefits.

For multinational crews returning home to different countries, thought should be given about how best to maintain the peer support network. There should be parity of ongoing practical and psychological support of a consistent quality, irrespective of seafarer nationality. Where possible, facilitation of a virtual network is encouraged.

### ***Ongoing care of seafarers after release***

Psychological reactions to traumatic experiences can occur within days, weeks or months of an incident. Reactions may be re-stimulated when sensory reminders such as similar smells and sounds occur. Some psychological reaction is normal. Problems during recovery will resolve over time given appropriate support from family, colleagues, the company and other support organisations.

Seafarers may develop post-traumatic psychological reactions, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety disorders or substance misuse problems, requiring professional assessment and treatment by a mental health professional (see Appendix 1F).

Companies are encouraged to actively support the return to work of affected seafarers. However, it should be recognised that such seafarers and their families may experience increased stress upon return to work and when travelling into pirate-risk areas. Companies should create a culture that encourages their seafarers to seek help if required.

# Support of seafarers' families

---

## Introduction

Seafarers families play an important role, both in their response to the threat of piracy and when the seafarer becomes a victim of piracy or armed robbery.

This revised version of the Good Practice Guide provides guidance on ways that family members can be supported, including provision of appropriate procedures. Some companies already have plans in place, and may therefore choose to use this updated guide solely as a checklist or to modify their current plans in light of recent events. Companies that do not have a plan are encouraged to use this guide to establish an appropriate course of action.

---

## Good practice before an incident

Good practices and procedures will help a company, and ultimately seafarers and their families, in situations of piracy attack.

### *Appointment of a family liaison representative(s)*

Companies are encouraged to:

- ▶ establish a family liaison team with, ideally, at least two family liaison representatives
- ▶ consider the provision of consultants to assist with family liaison
- ▶ consider having team members appropriate to the crew nationality
- ▶ recognise that staff carrying out a family liaison role could become emotionally involved with family members, and may benefit from professional support and training.

### *Choice of the family liaison representative*

The appointed family liaison representative may:

- ▶ be part of the crisis management team

- ▶ have direct access to decision-makers
- ▶ be based at the company offices, or elsewhere with good access to communications tools
- ▶ be well established within the company system
- ▶ be respected for their integrity and sensitivity in their dealings with all parties, and their ability to gain the trust of all sides
- ▶ be knowledgeable of the local culture and language of the families involved
- ▶ be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to family members and the crisis team during the period of identified need, which may last for many months
- ▶ be able to access legal advice and discuss this on behalf of the company
- ▶ appreciate the need for confidentiality while respecting the legal, financial and ethical boundaries to be maintained between the company and family members
- ▶ assist in dealing with media attention, incorporating company policies if appropriate, and advise families of the pitfalls associated with providing information via social media
- ▶ be able to seek out and maintain links with other local, regional and international resources, including professional support
- ▶ show willingness to enhance their skills and seek further training associated with being a family liaison representative; training should include understanding normal reactions to crisis situations, communicating with those who are traumatised and delivering bad news

---

## Developing an action plan for the pre-deployment stage

The company should:

- ▶ Communicate that a plan exists for support of seafarers and family members at the time of an

A programme of ISWAN

attack. This can be at the pre-deployment briefing or by issuing information to anybody potentially affected by way of an appropriate leaflet (see Appendix 2).

- ▶ If allowed by flag state and country of nationality legislation, each seafarer should identify a person they wish the company to use as their family contact. The seafarer may choose not to use their legal next of kin due to unique family circumstances. A pre-departure form for the seafarer to complete is provided in Appendix 3. Forms can be amended at any time. In exceptional circumstances a seafarer may not wish for any family member to be notified.
- ▶ Communicate the family liaison team plans within the company.
- ▶ establish a procedure for the Family Liaison Team to develop links with the family when an incident occurs.
- ▶ Notify the family liaison representative of the corporate personnel and structures involved in responding to an incident and ensure that an up-to-date contact list is readily accessible.
- ▶ Establish links with local sources of support, and identify the family liaison representative and available contact points. Ask the support contact to complete a form to be held by the company for future use (see Appendix 4).
- ▶ Check the contact lists regularly (typically every 6 months) to ensure they are up to date.
- ▶ Prepare a procedure for how to initially handle a situation, and an outline script for the first and subsequent phone calls and/or visits to the family contact (see Appendix 5). This should outline:
  - the most appropriate means for informing the nominated family contact quickly, recognising the need to be understood, given language considerations
  - the role of the family liaison representative and their contact information
  - the available resources for ongoing support and assistance
  - the available and verified information
  - activities started between the company and the relevant authorities
  - follow-up calls
  - how to deal with any media matters, including social media

- the boundaries of confidentiality
- how to handle calls from pirates (see Appendix 6)
- encourage the family contact to liaise with the family liaison representative for information if they hear rumours or are contacted by the media.

The company should prepare a complete file of all the above data, either in hardcopy form or stored electronically, that can be easily accessed at a time of crisis. The file should contain copies of any agreed procedures, and a simple record sheet for contacts and phone calls made by the family liaison representative (see Appendix 7). It should be ensured that the data is always secure.

---

## Development of an action plan during an incident

In the event of an attack, the situation will be made much easier if the preparations described in the previous section have been completed. The next steps to be taken once an attack is in progress or has happened are:

- ▶ To develop a timeline – what is urgent, what needs to be done in the first few days and what is can be dealt with in the longer term.
- ▶ To activate the family liaison team as soon as possible.
- ▶ To ensure that the company is the first to inform the family of the attack, before they hear it from another source.
- ▶ To make contact by telephone and/or in person where appropriate. Where the family does not have access to a telephone, contact should be made with a local support agency, such as an appropriately trained representative of a welfare association, a faith-based organisation or a union official, who may transport the family contact to a telephone or convey an initial message until the company can make contact directly.
- ▶ To outline clearly what the family liaison representative or delegated representative can say
  - use the prepared script for the initial contact to ensure essential facts are given as appropriate (see Appendix 5).

The family liaison team should:

- ▶ Ensure that the family liaison representatives clearly identify themselves.
- ▶ Ask questions to establish that the right person is being addressed. This is essential in cultures where first names are often passed down through different generations of a family.
- ▶ If it is necessary to leave a message for the family contact, say only that the team is trying to contact them; do not disclose the reason for the call and/or visit. Make further contact at the time suggested.
- ▶ Ensure that the first contact is factual and concise. Promise to speak to the family contact again within a short time to allow them to absorb the news, and support them in their initial reaction.
- ▶ Recognise that the family contact may be shocked and unable to absorb the news. Provide adequate time and suggest that they might like to write down questions to prepare for the next contact.
- ▶ Make the promised follow-up contact at the time agreed to demonstrate that promises will be honoured and to establish trust.
- ▶ Encourage questions and try to answer them as openly and honestly as the incident permits. Any questions that cannot be answered should be identified and an appropriate course of action to obtain a response agreed.
- ▶ Write down any queries or anxieties expressed by the family contact.
- ▶ Listen with empathy.
- ▶ Note thoroughly what was discussed during the call/visit.
- ▶ Recognise that affected families may communicate with each other.
- ▶ Be able to support the family with anxieties at home about illness or when other distressing incidents occur.
- ▶ Brief the family on how to react if contacted directly by the hostage family member during captivity, and how to avoid giving the seafarer bad news from home that might add to their distress.

In addition:

- ▶ It is advisable to have more than one designated family liaison representative involved in each case. This means that if one representative is unavailable when the family contact calls, the

second representative can take the call, advise the family and handle any problems. The second family liaison representative should be identified to the family contact from the start and be fully appraised of the case. This will promote continuity of care and contribute to the family feeling that they are respected at a time of great anxiety, thereby helping them to cope. A family contact may get very angry if they speak with a different person every time they contact the company, so it is important to ensure continuity of appointed contacts. Both family liaison representatives should keep accurate records of all calls and update each other to ensure they are both fully aware of the latest discussions with the family. A small company with only one family liaison representative may consider taking on a consultant to work alongside the established representative to ensure consistency of cover over periods when the representative is not on duty.

- ▶ Affected families may find it important to meet senior company representatives. This can also benefit the company by helping the establishment of trust between the parties.
- ▶ Regular liaison with the family contact should be established and maintained. At the beginning of the incident daily contact may be essential. During a prolonged period of captivity appropriately agreed and timed contact periods should be established. Research suggests continuity of contact is the best way to control rumours and relieve additional stress. Family members involved in incidents in the past have advised that notification of no progress is easier to accept when explanations are given.
- ▶ Regular contact is valued, irrespective of the message. Many companies fail to contact family members because they feel a sense of failure if they have no good news to report. However, families state that lack of contact produces a fear of having been forgotten, and an increased perception of isolation can increase family stress.
- ▶ The company may become the focus of increased anger from both the family and the seafarer, if the seafarer is unable to make contact with home. The pirates may be giving the seafarers, and possibly their families, the impression that the company does not care about them, and anger initially directed towards the pirates can easily be transferred to the company or their representative. The family liaison representative needs to understand this, and realise that any anger

expressed may not be personal. Maintaining the planned link and procedure with contacts can help address this. Both the company and the family should report positive progress as soon as possible.

- ▶ Family contacts should be reminded to sensitively share with children, if age appropriate, information given about the situation that is occurring.
- ▶ The family liaison representative should only give information that does not give false hope, and only report information authorised for circulation by the company.
- ▶ The family may hear rumours about the incident and ask the family liaison representative for verification of authenticity. The company must be made aware of such rumours. Consistent information should be given by the company and family liaison representative at all times.
- ▶ The media may try to use the family to test out any rumours circulating. This could negatively affect negotiations if mixed messages come from the company and the family in the press. The family liaison representative should try to mitigate any problems in this regard.

## Role of the family liaison representative at the time of release

The family liaison representative should:

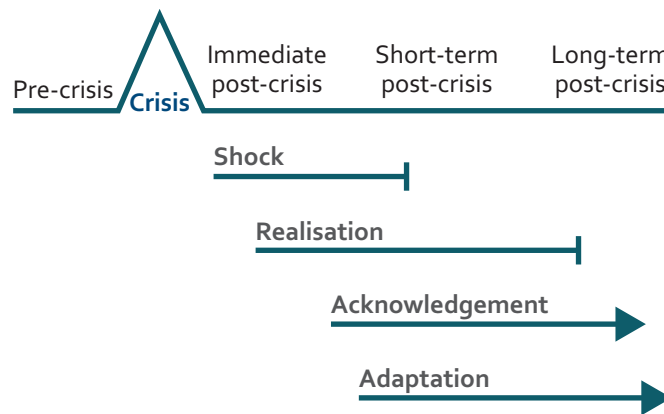
- ▶ When an incident is resolved, ensure that the family contact is notified before the media. Even if news is limited, it should be given with the promise that further contact will be made when more is known about release and repatriation.
  - ▶ Make every effort to allow released seafarers to phone their families as soon as possible. Families should be advised that further contact will be made by the seafarer, or the company, when more arrangements have been established as to where, when and how repatriation will occur.
  - ▶ Be fully involved as the link with the family throughout this period. Trust gained in the 'difficult times' will be important when the release takes place.
  - ▶ Endeavour to discuss with the family contact how to handle the actual homecoming and the possible psychological reactions of the released seafarer.
- ▶ Remind family members to include children, if age appropriate, in preparations for the homecoming and at the actual time of reunion.
  - ▶ Be available for continued contact but respect the family's need for space to reconnect with each other.
  - ▶ Provide a valuable link to the family to arrange a medical examination and other support.
  - ▶ If agreed with the company's senior management, contact the family shortly after the seafarer returns home and offer to meet with those involved to assess current and anticipated future needs.
  - ▶ Discuss with the company's senior management any potential ongoing support required in the way of financial, medical and legal advice.
  - ▶ Advise the family regarding how long support will remain in place.
  - ▶ Make a full report on the incident and note what the company has learnt from the experience. This information should be shared within the company and used to adjust future incident plans. It is worthwhile to encourage family members to provide feedback as well.
  - ▶ Inform families that should there be a need for advice at a later stage, confidential support can be obtained through Seafarerhelp (contact numbers are available at [www.mphrp.org](http://www.mphrp.org) and [www.seafarerhelp.org](http://www.seafarerhelp.org)).



# Appendix 1

## Key concepts used as framework documents

### (A) The continuum of reactions which may be experienced by people involved in traumatic incidents



Source: M. Gibson, *Order from Chaos – Responding to Traumatic Events*, Policy Press, 2006

This diagram defines how people may react during the traumatic incident associated with piracy incidents. It applies to both seafarers and their families.

Events during the pre-crisis period before an incident can directly influence reactions experienced by those involved during the incident and in the immediate aftermath. In piracy associated incidents there may be anticipatory fear of sailing in areas associated with such attacks. Shock reactions can bring feelings of unreality and disbelief that an incident has occurred. A person may experience confusion, inability to concentrate and powerlessness whilst confronting an abnormal situation.

Realisation follows a sense of shock as the reality of the incident becomes clearer. Fear of the unknown, of injury or survival may produce feelings of helplessness to change the situation. Anger that the incident has actually happened can occur. Where an attack is repelled

these feelings merge in to relief and acknowledgement that it is over and some of the stress will diminish although memories have to be dealt with. Adaptation will include an increased awareness of what 'could have happened' which in turn may produce fear of such an occurrence happening again.

After prolonged captivity there will be periods of anger, hope, despair, feelings of helplessness, and potentially renewed shock reactions at differences in physical deprivation or inhumane treatment experienced. Although a family may not be aware of the conditions experienced by the hostages their reactions can mirror that of the hostages as they handle uncertainty and lack of information.

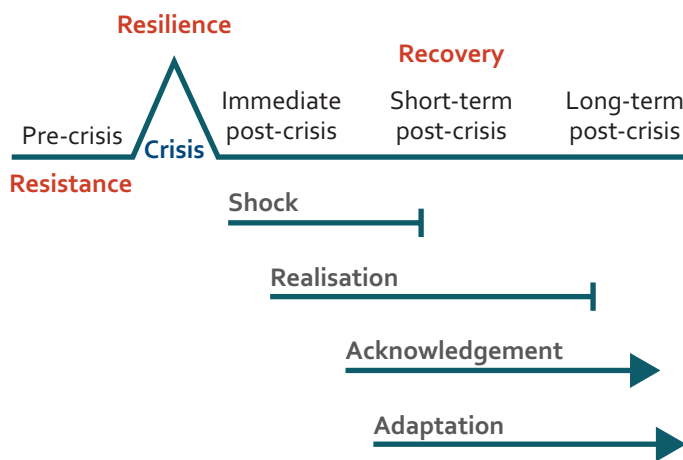
More information, or even lack of information, can lead family members to fully acknowledge the situation as they handle anxieties during the negotiation period.



Released seafarers and their families experience a period of adaptation to normality of family life after such experiences. Practical issues need to be discussed to enable both parties to return to normal patterns of life. Memories should be managed; and a seafarer

may not wish to discuss these with their own family. Peers or trained responders may be able to assist in such matters. Such memories need to be cognitively processed to enable integration into experience so that they can be lived with and do not prevent the ability to work or function normally in their daily lives.

## (B) The three Rs



**Resistance** – the form of psychological/behavioural immunity to the impact of distress

**Resilience** – the ability of an individual, a group, an organisation or a population to cope with and to rapidly and effectively rebound from a traumatic incident

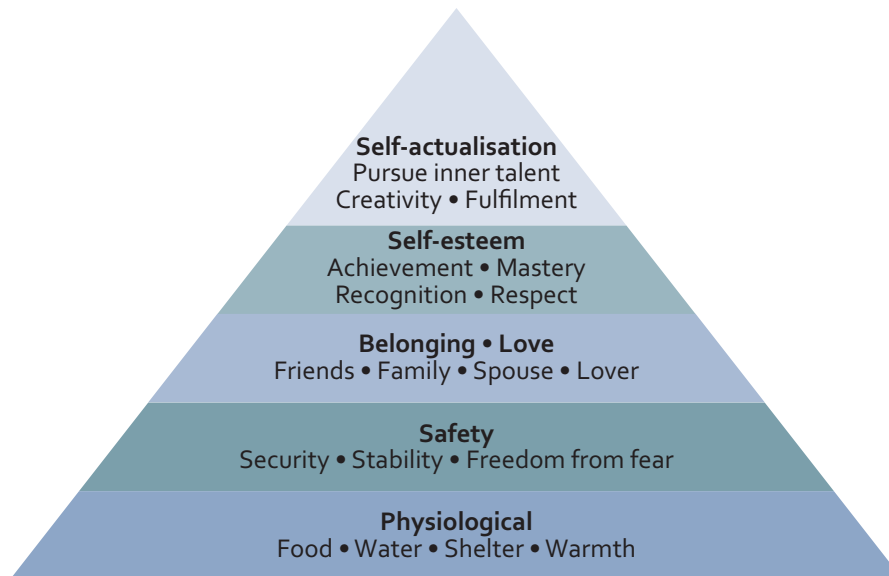
**Recovery** – the ability to recover and adaptively function in a post-traumatic situation

Source: M. Gibson, *Order from Chaos – Responding to Traumatic Events*, Policy Press, 2006

Use of the three Rs of Resistance, Resilience and Recovery can help in thinking through the issues. It also identifies that in the pre-deployment stage some preparation, and the supply of relevant information, can help build resilience to traumatic stress, if required, during an incident. The ability to be more resilient to

stresses during an incident can enhance ability to recover from an incident in the aftermath. The three Rs are applicable to both seafarers and their family members. Identifying the three Rs whilst defining the continuum of reactions helps integrate the two concepts.

## (C) Maslow hierarchy of needs (adapted)



Source: Abraham Maslow (1943 paper), 'A Theory of Human Motivation'

This diagram identifies the factors which motivate human beings and contribute to their sense of mental well-being. Maslow suggests that the most important issues form the base of this diagram. These are the basic human needs necessary for survival and are of paramount importance throughout an attack, whilst in captivity and upon release. Practical needs predominate and must be met whenever possible.

The next level is that of safety with the features of security, stability and freedom from fear. These features may be lacking for hostages and are areas which captors may use for torture when added to deprivation of the physiological features.

The further levels of the diagram indicate higher levels of motivation which could be described as quality

motivators. These are desirable but not essential for basic survival. These features may form part of the deprivation experienced by hostages.

The pyramid can also apply to the needs of a seafarers' family but it is to be hoped that the lower levels will remain intact. However lack of validated communication and contact with loved ones will be a key feature which will impact on feelings of safety, insecurity, fear and a missing sense of belonging resulting from the prolonged absence of a loved one.

Methods of support provided to both seafarers and their family members should aim to re-establish all the motivators identified in the Maslow Triangle.

## (D) The survivor syndrome

When the initial threat of death passes, there can be a sense of euphoria at survival and cheating death. Not all survivors feel this euphoria as they may carry a sense of guilt of survival when others may have died. This reaction may be hard to understand for those people, such as family members, not directly involved in the situation where deaths may have occurred.

If fatalities result from a piracy incident, survivors may experience death guilt. This can manifest itself in such questions as 'Why did I survive when x died?' Seafarers may have difficulty dealing with the relatives of their deceased colleagues with whom they come into contact. Survivors conduct in-depth questioning of their own actions at the time. Could they have done

## A programme of ISWAN

more to save others? Survivors talk of their actions to try to rationalise any actions taken or not taken. Did the survivor's own rescue mean others were sacrificed? If required companies should, via their liaison representatives, make the families of the seafarers aware of this state of mind, especially if there has been a fatality during the incident.

Even where survivors recognised a need for help, they rejected the offer in case it would be viewed as a sign of weakness, confirming in their own minds that others felt they were not worthy of survival. These thoughts may result in the survivors seeking help and reassurance from others involved. Self-help through contact with other seafarers involved in the same incident has the

advantage that survivors do not have to explain their emotions when recalling the event. Listeners were there and experienced similar feelings. This support is particularly important to released hostages where there have been fatalities. The possibility of this syndrome indicates the benefit of keeping the crew together for a short period of time following release to give an opportunity to discuss such matters and gain peer support through mutual understanding within the group. Continued contact is not always possible due to the multi-national nature of crews and dispersal to different countries to travel home. An understanding of the impact of Survivor Syndrome by those involved in support to released hostages and family members may assist in the overall recovery of the seafarer involved.

## (E) Stockholm syndrome

This syndrome was named following a bank raid in Stockholm which resulted in hostages being held captive. The syndrome defines situations where a hostage develops a positive attitude to the captor(s) to try to ensure their survival. Part of this process may mean that a hostage develops an understanding of and becomes a supporter of the cause prompting the incident resulting in their captivity.

Greater understanding between captors and hostages can impact both by realising the human effects. A hostage may try to gain more favourable treatment from a captor by speaking of his family who need him free and alive. Some reports have shown where a captor is influenced by the particular situation of his hostage especially if sharing similar sentiments as the hostage to his own family that the captor was more favourably disposed to his captive and the hostage received less inhuman treatment. A hostage may feel

they can influence their captors in a situation where they feel helpless to affect actual negotiations for their release.

Such behaviour can be seen as a survival technique. However, such processes may result in other crew members becoming the focus for more inhuman treatment. This may build up resentment amongst fellow crew members which may be exploited by the captors to break up any peer support developed within the crew group. Predisposition to this behaviour may result from previous experience.

Such situations may need to be discussed within the group following release and may influence the recovery process. Stockholm syndrome does not always arise in hostage situations but is more likely to occur the longer the captivity and where there is the opportunity for more interaction between hostages and captors.

## (F) Crisis management techniques

Many crisis intervention technique models exist and it is important that those using them are qualified, fully understand the method, the underlying theoretical basis for the technique and the possible impact of such models on seafarers and their family members made emotionally vulnerable by an incident of piracy or armed robbery.

Specific needs of the seafarer or family member will dictate the type of intervention technique required. Techniques can range from active listening, information sharing and various methods of psychological first aid through to skilled professional treatment. Debriefing is often utilised following such incidents but should not be seen as a panacea for all situations. There are many

types of debriefing including operational, forensic and psychological. Care must be taken to inform participants on the type of de-briefing being conducted. Practitioners using such techniques which address psychological reactions must be well trained in the appropriate model and adhere strictly to prescribed protocol.

Those assisting should be aware of the 'normal' reactions expected following such an incident. Such reactions may vary from understandable reactions to the experience to more complex symptoms which due to their complexity, duration and severity may require

skilled psychiatric assessment and treatment. Needs identified will vary.

All those who help seafarers and their family members in such circumstances must be aware of their own level of competence and limitations. Understanding of these issues should ensure a seafarer has access to an appropriate level of help.

The ISWAN MPHRP programme has a group of qualified first responders who will be able to assist in these situations.

# Appendix 2

## Family leaflet

Back page of A5 leaflet

Front page of A5 leaflet

### Other useful numbers:

Contact numbers for support or information in the event of major crisis.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 



Seafarerhelp is a 24-hour multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families to contact at no cost for advice and referral to other suitable agencies.



**SeafarerHelp**  
...the lifeline for seafarers

FREE HELP | CONFIDENTIAL  
MULTI-LINGUAL | 24x7

[www.seafarerhelp.org](http://www.seafarerhelp.org)

-  SMS +44 (0) 7624 818 40505
-  Email [help@seafarerhelp.org](mailto:help@seafarerhelp.org)
-  Skype [info-seafarerhelp.org](https://www.skype.com/info-seafarerhelp.org)
-  Free Phone +44 207 323 2737 (request call back)
-  Live Chat [www.seafarerhelp.org](http://www.seafarerhelp.org)

 Find us on Facebook

Your local contact person is:

## FAMILY SUPPORT

[Insert company logo]

Contact No. \_\_\_\_\_

*Left centre page of A5 leaflet*

## SOMEONE TO TALK TO ...

There are times when people experience a major crisis in their lives and as a consequence they may become unusually stressed or anxious. This leaflet is to help anyone who is affected in this way and explains about the support that is available.

If you have experienced a major crisis in your life, it is important to know that it is normal for people to have some reaction to severe stress.

The Family Liaison Representative is available to support you and your family members through this period if you wish to contact us.

Sometimes it helps to talk to someone outside the family who knows how to help in crisis situations. Your family doctor and representatives of faith-based organisations are also people who can help.

Please remember also that your children may benefit from some support.

Stress may result in a person being unable to wholly focus on other issues.

**Remember it is the situation which is abnormal not you.**

*Right centre page of A5 leaflet*

## YOU MAY EXPERIENCE:

Your emotions may be very mixed and very powerful at this time and you may experience:

- A sense of unreality that this situation is happening.
- Intense anxiety and prolonged stress as events unfold.
- Anger mixed with a feeling of helplessness at your inability to change the situation.
- A reawakening of other situations of stress which you have experienced in the past.
- A sense of being overwhelmed by your reactions, by the people around you or by the media.
- An inability to 'unwind' and relax. This may affect you during the day or night.
- A sense of being unique and isolated in your particular worry.
- Fear that if you seek help with these feelings now, or in the future, you will be labelled as not 'coping'. This is not true.

# Appendix 3

## Seafarers' nomination of family contact person

### NOMINATION OF A FAMILY CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Please insert the name and contact details for your nominated person, whom the company should contact in case of an emergency while you are at sea

Name (first and last name):	
Address:	
Home telephone number:	
Work telephone number:	
Mobile/Cell cell number:	
Email address:	
Relationship to you (e.g. wife, son, father, sister):	
Please advise us of any issues we should be aware of before contacting this person	
Please sign to confirm you would like the above named person to be your Family Contact	Signature:  Date:

# Appendix 4

## Local resource contact

### Local/regional/national resources – example document

Companies and manning agents can develop their own list of contacts within the countries where the seafarers live. These contacts can be activated when a crisis occurs. Seafarerhelp can assist in finding contact details of charities and agencies who can help with specific issues.

Organisation	Contact person (Tel.)	Support available	When, and possible duration
Seafarers Mission 23 Pier Road The Port	Father Joe: Centre 03212121 Mobile 09121212 Home 032212121 Sister Mary: Mobile 096565656	Counselling by Sister Mary, contact with international seafarers' agencies	24 hours a day Office 9–5 pm On holiday 10–20 August



# Appendix 5

## Family liaison representative scripts

---

### First call/visit

Is that \_\_\_\_\_ speaking? *(Check name)*

Are you \_\_\_\_\_? *(Check relative's basic details)*

I am \_\_\_\_\_. *(State your name and organisation clearly)*

I am making contact with you on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ *(company or named person)*

We have just been told that your \_\_\_\_\_ *(relationship, e.g. husband's)* ship has been involved in a piracy event \_\_\_\_\_ *(time, day, location)*.

We do not have many details as yet, but we do know: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

I can assure you that everything is being done to resolve these problems. *(If possible, give some details)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Do you understand what I am telling you?

*Add any advice or cautions necessary on confidentiality or dealing with the media, if appropriate.*

*Advise that a further call will be made and suggest that the contact person prepares a list of questions.*

*Phone back as arranged – keep trying if the phone is engaged, as the person notified may be notifying other family members.*

## Second and subsequent call/visit

Is that \_\_\_\_\_ speaking? (*Check name*)

This is \_\_\_\_\_ calling again. (*State your name and organisation clearly*)

How are you feeling now?

Is there anyone with you?

Have you any questions for me? I will try to answer but, as I said before, we do not have many details as yet. Would you like me to repeat what we do know?

(*Questions*) I have made a list of your questions and I will try to find out some more information.

# Appendix 6

## Letter templates

This appendix gives two templates for letters which could be used in liaison work with a family involved in a piracy incident:

- Template 1 is to be used at the time of notification of a piracy attack and when there is the possible holding of hostages.
- Template 2 is to be used at the time of repatriation of a seafarer previously held hostage.

The contents of the letters may be adapted to match the particular situation. Companies are encouraged to try to personalise the letters by inserting the appropriate names of the seafarer, the family and the family liaison representative.

The letters should be prepared as separate documents to enable them to be used at the appropriate time.

### Template 1 – Communication to be used at time of notification of a piracy attack

Initial news of a piracy attack should be handled either by telephone call or by a personal visit. The following letter or email could then be sent.

Dear *personal names*,

*Insert a paragraph expressing the concerns of the CO of the company and how much the company regrets what has happened. Assure the family of the company's support. Personalise this paragraph by including the seafarer's name.*

#### Contact arrangements

Your Family Liaison Representative with the Company will be *insert name*. They can be contacted on insert phone number and at the following email address: .....@.....

If *insert name of Family Liaison Representative* is not available then please speak to *insert name of second Family Liaison Representative*, who can be contacted on *insert phone number* or at *insert email address*.

*Once you have identified the Family Liaison Representative refer to them by name in the rest of the letter and in any future correspondence (e.g. 'You should telephone Sheila').*

As has already been explained to you during the phone call/visit (*delete as appropriate*), we will try to keep you informed whenever there is any verified news. In the initial stages of an incident, contact from the pirates can be sporadic and limited. We are all at the beginning of what can be a prolonged process. It is not unusual in these situations for there to be periods of time when there is little news to be shared.

There will be times when the negotiations will appear to be progressing very slowly but this does not mean that negotiations are not continuing. We appreciate that this will be a very stressful time for you and your family so we will arrange a regular time to speak with you whether we have news or not.

It would help us if you nominate one family member, the Family Contact, who will be the point of contact for *the Family Liaison Representative*. The Family Contact can then pass the information on to other family members and friends, which will allow the information to pass quickly. Please advise *the Family Liaison Representative* as to who this shall be.

Please do not believe rumours that you may hear from colleagues, other families, the media or even the pirates themselves. However, please feel free to contact *the Family Liaison Representative* if anything you hear causes you additional distress. We will do our best to help you whenever we can.

If the pirates themselves contact you directly please take a note of the phone number they are calling from and note what they say to you. Pass this information to *the Family Liaison Representative*, as it will be very helpful to the company to know what is being said and may help in the negotiations.

You will undoubtedly think of many questions you need to ask us. Please write them down, and when you next speak to *the Family Liaison Representative* they will try to answer these questions.

**Based on the experiences of other families who have found themselves in a similar situation, please bear in mind the following:**

- After the initial news of an incident there can be a period when there is little news. This can be a time of great uncertainty and anxiety for both you and the company.
- It is likely that after a period of time, which may be days or weeks, contact will be established between the pirates and the company, and negotiations will begin.
- The negotiation process can take many weeks or months. The company appreciates that this is a stressful time for family members but will keep in touch on a prearranged regular basis.
- Negotiations usually result in a positive outcome, but this can take some time.
- We may not know much about the conditions the seafarers are being held in, but remember that it is important for the pirates to look after their hostages during the negotiation period – their welfare will form part of the negotiation process.
- Please be reassured that *insert name of seafarer* was given training on the way to act in the event of an attack happening. This would have been done as a routine part of their pre-deployment briefing. This training will help the crew members to cope and to support each other.
- *Insert name of seafarer* may be permitted to talk to you via telephone. This could help you to understand what is happening to *insert name of seafarer*, but remember *insert name of seafarer* may not always be able to be truthful if the pirates are listening to the call.
- If you do get the chance to talk to *insert name of seafarer*, try to keep *his/her* morale up as much as possible as *he/she* will be anxious about how you are coping. Try not to share problems you are experiencing at home – be positive about how you are coping, and stress that everything is being done to get *insert name of seafarer* released.
- You may be contacted by the media. It is advisable that you refer all such calls to *the Family Liaison Representative* who will deal with them on your behalf.
- Everyone is working to get *insert name of seafarer* released as soon as possible. Contact the Family Liaison Representative if you hear rumours that distress you or receive calls that are difficult for you to cope with.
- You may hear rumours that raise your hopes of a release. Wait until you hear verified news from us before you begin to celebrate. Dashed hope may be part of the 'game' the pirates will play to increase pressure on those negotiating.
- When *insert name of seafarer's* release has been secured we will inform you.

### What can you do to help?

- Trust your Family Liaison Representative, *insert their name*.
- Tell key people in your family what has happened.
- Appoint someone as the Family Contact, who will be the first point of contact for *the Family Liaison Representative*. If you don't wish to do this yourself, appoint a family member whom you trust. The company will then only give news to this family member, who will then pass messages onto you and other family members. This helps to stop too many people contacting you or outside agencies trying to get news on the situation.
- Maintain your daily routine as much as possible. Eat regular meals and maintain sleep patterns to preserve the health of both yourself and your family.
- Keep hope alive but maintain realistic expectations of when you will hear news.
- Try to involve any children or adolescents in any news received, as appropriate for their age. Even a very young child can sense your anxiety and will need your support to understand what is happening. They may even blame themselves for your anxiety. You may like the support of a teacher or other adult trusted by the child to assist in this regard.
- Encourage children or other family members to keep a scrapbook of family events or news. This can be shared with *insert name of seafarer* when *he/she* returns home so that *he/she* is brought up to date with family news. Young children may enjoy drawing a weekly picture of their activities to share.
- It might help to keep a diary of people you have spoken to and a list of contacts made. This also can be shared with *insert name of seafarer* on *his/her* return.
- In the past some family members have thought that if they raise funds on behalf of the seafarers it will help speed up their release. This is not the case, so please discuss such issues with *the Family Liaison Representative* if you need any support with these matters.
- If you have any practical problems as a result of the situation please feel free to discuss these with *the Family Liaison Representative*, who will try to assist you or guide you to another suitable source of help.
- Make contact with any trusted friends or other sources of support, such as your faith community or union representative, with whom you already have a good relationship.
- Further help and support is available from the Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme, a support programme established for this purpose, at the website [www.mphrp.org](http://www.mphrp.org), and from Seafarerhelp, [www.seafarerhelp.org](http://www.seafarerhelp.org)

## Template 2 – Letter to be used at time of repatriation of a seafarer

Dear *personal names*,

*Insert a paragraph confirming the release of the vessel, expressing the obvious relief it is to the company and expressing thanks to the family members for their support through this difficult time. Personalise this paragraph by including the seafarer's name.*

*In following paragraphs explain what will happen to the seafarers before they arrive home:*

- *that they are sailing to a safe port*
- *assure the families that you will arrange for a short telephone contact from the seafarers to their families as quickly as is possible*
- *explain that arrangements for the seafarers' repatriation will be shared with the family as soon as they are confirmed*
- *give assurance again that the Family Liaison Representative is available for advice.*

### What you can do to prepare for the homecoming

- Make sure that the release of the ship is verified by the company.
- Listen carefully to the arrangements that have been made for the repatriation of the seafarers. It may help to write them down.
- Efforts will be made to provide the seafarers with phones to try to contact their families as soon as possible. The initial calls may be limited in time so that all crew members have a chance to call their families.
- The seafarers may not arrive home immediately. It may take 3–4 days to sail to a safe port, and the seafarers will then need medical examinations. Time also has to be allowed for the authorities to take statements to gather evidence, which may lead to the arrest of the pirates. But every effort will be made to get them home as soon as is feasible.
- Take advice from *the Family Liaison Representative* concerning where you should meet the returned seafarers, and confirm if the news of their return is to be made public. Sometimes it is considered wise to wait until the seafarers have been reunited with their families before news is released to the media.
- We will advise you about handling any media involvement.
- While we are sure that *insert name of seafarer* will be relieved to be home with you again, it is not unusual for a person released from a frightening experience to need some time to relax and to realise that it is over and they are safe.
- Do not be surprised if *insert name of seafarer* seems a little withdrawn from all the celebrations and needs some quiet time alone or just with close family. This time is necessary in order to adjust to freedom and to think through experiences in captivity.
- The seafarers may choose to tell you all about their experiences but do not be surprised if they keep some things from you. This is not because they do not trust you but that they may have some memories which are painful for them and they do not want to add to your stress at this time.
- Please try to understand that *insert name of seafarer* does not love you less but may need time to get back to normal after *his/her* experiences. This can be especially difficult for children to understand, and they may need special consideration from you during this time.
- Returning to normal life may take some time. If you feel this is a problem that needs some further support, discuss it with *the Family Liaison Representative*, who may be able to get additional support for you.

A programme of ISWAN

- Do not feel that if anyone needs additional support at this difficult time it is evidence of mental illness. Given the extraordinary experience everyone has been through it is not unusual to have some extreme reactions. Getting appropriate help at the right time will make this transition period easier to cope with.
- Any medical problems should be dealt with, so keep in touch with *the Family Liaison Representative* if you need any ongoing advice.
- Every effort will be made to restore you and your family to your normal way of life and for *insert name of seafarer* to resume *his/her* work pattern following a period of rest and time to readjust.
- If you have any legal or financial problems, *the Family Liaison Representative* will be able to guide you towards sources of appropriate advice. You may also think of contacting your union official for their support with these issues.
- Additional confidential advice is available from Seafarerhelp.

# Appendix 7

## Log of call made to family contact

LOG OF CALL MADE	
Date:	
Call to:	
Time:	
Relationship to seafarer:	
Call made by:	
Content of call:	
Questions raised by relative:	
Date and time arranged for next call:	
Actions to be taken:	
General observations on level of distress, coping, etc.	
Comments re. family or support being utilised:	



# Appendix 8

## Reporting incidents of piracy

---

Industry best practice guidelines encourage the reporting of incidents of piracy and armed robbery in order to warn other seafarers and ships in the area of the attack, and to assist with the prosecution of pirates and armed robbers.

The contact details of some of the organisations that assist seafarers through their work against piracy and that request reports of any incidents are given below. There are other reporting centres covering both regions and countries, and finding their contact details should be part of the risk assessment of a voyage to a specific area.

### ***For incidents worldwide***

Ships are advised to maintain anti-piracy watches while transiting areas of high risk, and to report all piratical and armed robbery incidents, including suspicious movements of boats and skiffs, to the 24-hour manned **International Maritime Bureau (IMB) Piracy Reporting Centre** in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**ICC IMB (Asia Regional Office)**, PO Box 12559, Kuala Lumpur, 50782, Malaysia

Tel: + 60 3 2078 5763

Fax: + 60 3 2078 5769

Email: imbkl@icc-ccs.org; piracy@icc-ccs.org

24-hour Anti-Piracy Helpline, Tel: + 60 3 2031 0014

### ***For incidents in the Indian Ocean area***

Call the **Maritime Security Centre, Horn of Africa (MSCHOA)**.

Tel: +44 (0) 1923 958545, +44 (0) 1923 958700

Fax: +44 (0) 1923 958520

Email: postmaster@mschoa.org

### **United Kingdom Marine Trade Operations (UK MTO)**

Tel. (24 hours): + 971 50 552 3215

Email: UKMTO@eim.ae

### ***For incidents in the West African area***

Vessels in the Voluntary Reporting Area are encouraged to report to **Marine Domain Awareness for Trade, Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GoG)** via either email or phone. Both are monitored 24 hours. In the event of an attack or the sighting of suspicious activity, masters should call MDAT-GoG directly by phone.

Tel: +33 (0) 2 98 22 88 88

Email: watchkeepers@mdat-gog.org

*NB: as of June 2016 MTISC-GoG is no longer operating; MDAT-GoG replaces their function.*

# Appendix 9

## Further information

---

A list of websites and organisations which provide help in the fight against piracy, up-to-date guidance and other information useful to seafarers, companies and manning agencies.

**Interpol** – The international police organisation with a maritime piracy task force. Can be contacted via the website [www.interpol.int](http://www.interpol.int), by email at [os-ccc@interpol.int](mailto:os-ccc@interpol.int), or by phone (24 hours) on +33(0) 4 72 44 76 76

**BMP4** – Best Management Practices for protection against Somali-based piracy, booklet and online resource available at [www.bimco.org/Security/Piracy/BMP.aspx](http://www.bimco.org/Security/Piracy/BMP.aspx)

**CGPCS** – The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, provides guidelines and lessons learned from piracy in the region: [www.lessonsfrompiracy.net](http://www.lessonsfrompiracy.net)

**ReCAAP** – The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, has an information-sharing centre and a guide for tankers and oil theft, and a regional guide to counter piracy and armed robbery in Asia: [www.recaap.org](http://www.recaap.org)

**IMB** – International Maritime Bureau, provides statistics and reports on piracy, and offers advice to masters: <https://icc-ccs.org/piracy-reporting-centre/piracynewsfigures/>

**IMO** – The International Maritime Organisation, provides guidance and recommendations for the maritime community on piracy, including circulars on piracy: [www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Security/PiracyArmedRobbery/Pages/Default.aspx](http://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Security/PiracyArmedRobbery/Pages/Default.aspx)

**OBP** – Oceans Beyond Piracy, reports on piracy worldwide, including the human and financial cost of piracy, and has a good external resources page: <http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org>

**Piracy studies** – Research portal with articles of interest on maritime security and piracy: <http://piracy-studies.org/>

**ISWAN** – International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network, offers a 24-hour multilingual helpline and online information on seafarers' centres and welfare facilities around the world: [www.seafarerswelfare.org](http://www.seafarerswelfare.org)

**ICS** – International Chamber of Shipping, offers information about piracy and other resources: <http://www.ics-shipping.org/free-resources/piracy>

**ITF** – International Transport Workers Federation, offers guidance for seafarers: [piracy http://www.itfseafarers.org/ITI-piracy.cfm](http://www.itfseafarers.org/ITI-piracy.cfm)

**Maritime security companies** producing interesting figures and news on piracy, can be searched for and found online.

# Acknowledgements

## MPHRP funders partners and observers

---

ISWAN/MPHRP would like to thank the Programme Steering Group for their commitment to developing and disseminating the Good Practice Guides:

- ▶ ASF (Asian Shipowners' Forum)
- ▶ BIMCO (The Baltic and International Maritime Council)
- ▶ Global MET (Maritime Education and Training)
- ▶ Human Rights at Sea
- ▶ IACAS (International Association of Civil Aviation Chaplains)
- ▶ ICMA (International Christian Maritime Association)
- ▶ ICS (International Chamber of Shipping)
- ▶ IGP&I (International Group of P&I Clubs)
- ▶ IFSMA (International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations)
- ▶ IHS Maritime and Trade
- ▶ ILO (International Labour Organisation)
- ▶ IMB (International Maritime Bureau)
- ▶ IMEC (International Maritime Employers' Council)
- ▶ IMHA (International Maritime Health Association)
- ▶ IMO (International Maritime Organisation)
- ▶ Ince and Co
- ▶ Intercargo (International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners)
- ▶ Intermanager (International Ship Managers' Association)
- ▶ Intertanko (International Association of Independent Tanker Owners)
- ▶ IPTA (International Parcel Tankers Association)
- ▶ ISWAN (International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network)
- ▶ ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation)
- ▶ ITF Seafarers' Trust
- ▶ IUMI (International Union of Marine Insurance)
- ▶ MSCHOA (Maritime Security Centre, Horn of Africa)
- ▶ Master Mariners Association
- ▶ NATO Shipping Centre
- ▶ Nautical Institute
- ▶ Nautilus International
- ▶ OCIMF (Oil Companies International Marine Forum)
- ▶ Seafarers UK
- ▶ SIGTTO (Society of International Gas Tankers & Terminal Operators Ltd)
- ▶ TK Foundation
- ▶ Videotel
- ▶ WISTA UK (Women in Shipping and Trading Association)

With particular thanks to the contributors for this update on the original version of this guide: ICS, IMB, OCIMF, IMEC, Karsten von Hoesslin, Dr Harish Shetty, Kevin Menon.

