



The
Seafarers
Happiness
Index

Seafarers Happiness Index

Quarter 2 2023



NorthStandard

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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Seafarers Happiness Index Quarter 2

The Seafarers Happiness Index (SHI) is a quarterly survey conducted by the Mission to Seafarers to gauge the sentiment of those working at sea. The survey asks seafarers around the world ten key questions about various aspects of their life and work. Their anonymous answers provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing seafarers.

The most recent SHI report covers data from Quarter 2 2023. We saw a significant drop in overall happiness to 6.77/10, down from 7.1/10 in Quarter 1. Happiness levels fell across all categories, and there were yet more growing problems, perhaps exacerbated by the fact that seafarers are struggling to see improvements post-pandemic.

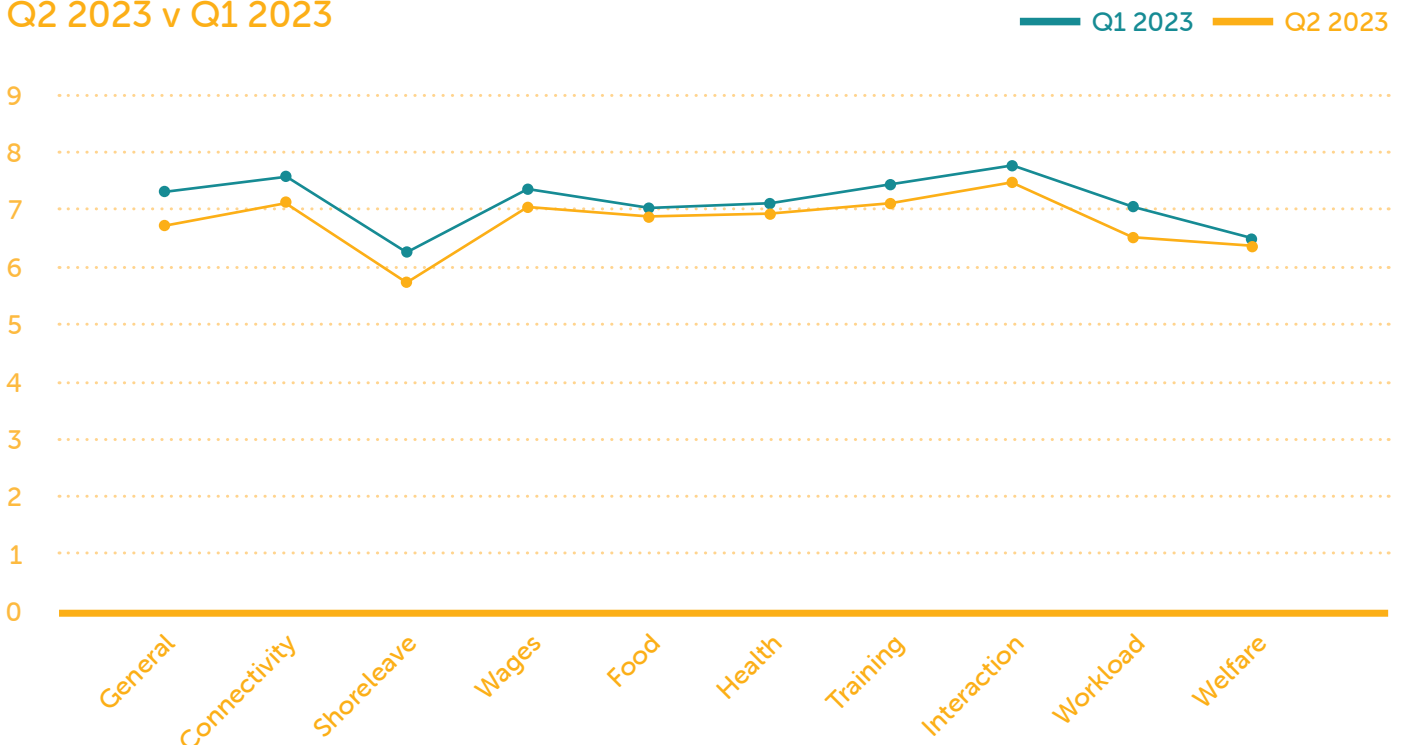
The COVID-19 pandemic exposed significant challenges for seafarers, including delays in crew changes, extended time on board, unfavourable contracts, and declining wages. These issues led to a noticeable deterioration in seafarers' working conditions.

Despite emerging from the pandemic, restoring conditions to pre-COVID levels has proven difficult. Extended crew changes have become the new norm, causing prolonged onboard stays.

Crews are facing additional difficulties, such as contract alterations, problematic remuneration, non-payment of wages, cuts, rising taxes, increased living costs, and inflation. It seems that while employers reacted swiftly to pandemic pressure, a return to pre-pandemic standards has been slow. Standards of welfare and employment appear more prone to downward changes than upward progress, and that is a cause for much frustration.

We also heard extremely concerning reports from multiple seafarers and vessels about conditions relating to nutrition and hydration on board. There were troubling messages concerning ships running out of stores, and also staggering reports about having little or no access to potable water, or even being charged a monthly fee for drinking water.

Q2 2023 v Q1 2023



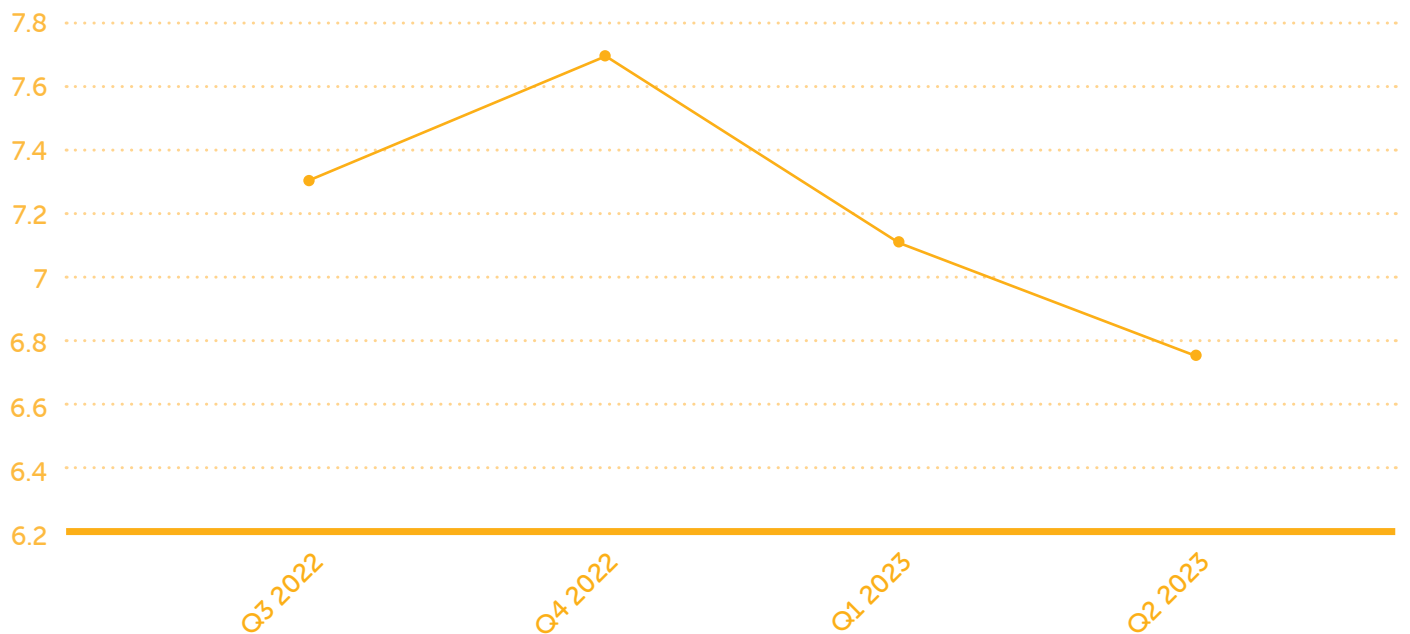
The latest results unfortunately reveal a sustained drop in positivity. Since the high-water mark of satisfaction at 7.69/10 in Quarter 4 2022, the data shows a continued fall with the latest average seafarer happiness level of 6.77/10.

In previous reports, we have noted a tendency for the year to start with a lower data point and then steadily rise. Alas, this trend has not continued. The messages received from seafarers have painted a worrying snapshot of the current conditions they are experiencing.

The data from Quarter 2 2023 shows a fall in happiness against all question areas. The most significant drops seen were in the general happiness of crews, shore leave and the issue of workload, showing a decrease of around 8%.

The Mission to Seafarers is committed to working with the shipping industry to address the challenges facing seafarers and to improve their welfare. We hope the SHI is an important tool in this work, and the Mission to Seafarers is grateful to all who have participated in the survey. Please keep sharing what is on your mind.

12-month happiness data



Standards and demands keep increasing, and workloads rise year by year.

How happy generally when at sea?

6.71 ↓ from 7.26

This first question on seafarers' 'general happiness' is used as a baseline check to ensure we do not stray too far from the general views of crews. It helps spot anomalies and provides a catch-all chance for seafarers to voice any issues which are not captured adequately across other questions.

After analysing the Quarter 2 2023 survey responses collectively, it is evident that there is a prevailing sentiment of declining morale among seafarers. While many individuals expressed enjoyment in their job, a variety of issues and concerns appear to be causing frustration at sea.

Concerns were raised by seafarers regarding their workload and the lack of personal time. According to respondents, the high workload often leaves little spare private time, which impacts their work-life balance negatively. It also makes it very hard to have any kind of social life on board.

While some seafarers did acknowledge the financial benefits of their job, others reported missing their families while away at sea.

In keeping with this sentiment, seafarers noted that the profession can be incredibly lonely. The absence of a strong social support system and limited interactions with others were highlighted as drawbacks of the profession.

Furthermore, seafarers raised concerns about the lack of investment by companies in on board recreation facilities, which are seen as vital in alleviating daily stresses. Additionally, there was criticism regarding excessive and unnecessary paperwork, with a perceived gap between the human approach outlined in company policies and the actual practice on board.

Seafarers also expressed frustration over certain onboard amenities, such as cramped accommodation areas. Limited access to the internet, which sometimes required additional payment, was among the issues mentioned. The shortage of rooms on board was also a concern.

It was troubling to receive responses about limitations on drinking water availability. This was mentioned across categories, and so requires immediate industry attention as it was far from an isolated report. The fact that such a staple of life is explicitly covered by the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) and yet is found wanting is a source of concern and frustration.



Our maritime profession, while rewarding, can be a profoundly isolating journey.

How happy about contact with family when at sea?

7.11 ↓ from 7.56

As one respondent stated, "Sharing my problems becomes possible through effective communication." There were notable observations in the written feedback for this quarter regarding connectivity and its significance for seafarers. The lack of sufficient internet data packages at reasonable prices was raised as a key concern.

Some individuals expressed satisfaction with good onboard internet access that is provided free of charge. They reported having no trouble contacting their loved ones when they had the opportunity to do so. The seafarers in this group were far happier across other aspects of their life and experience on board.

However, the overall quality of internet connection was described as poor and often expensive. Seafarers highlighted the high costs associated with internet usage, such as \$35 for 100 MB or \$60 per month for internet access. Some mentioned the need to pay \$180 per contract.

Respondents acknowledged that communication has improved gradually over the years, something which has accelerated during COVID, but emphasised that there is still a long way to go in terms of lowering the cost of internet access and improving its speed.

Seafarers also mentioned that work conflicts, such as time zone differences and work commitments, contribute to challenges in communication. The limited availability of free time and the demanding nature of the job were cited as significant factors preventing seafarers from maintaining relationships with those ashore. They highlighted the impact on their relationships with their spouses and children while being away at sea.

The Quarter 2 survey responses underscore the ongoing issues related to connectivity and communication for seafarers. While some positive strides have been made, there is a need for improved affordability, speed, and accessibility of internet services to enhance the overall communication experience at sea.



Communication is improving gradually, but the high price and slow speed of internet access remain significant hurdles.

How happy about access to shore leave?

5.74 ↓ from 6.23

The responses for this question highlight the significant challenges and diverse experiences faced when it comes to shore leave. Factors such as limited time, tiredness, company policies, ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, and concerning practices related to crew changes have a profound impact on their ability to go ashore and their overall wellbeing.

Seafarers expressed that the absence of regular shore leave or limited opportunities to go ashore negatively affects their mental health, job satisfaction, and overall welfare. These limitations contribute to a sense of boredom, frustration and significantly lower morale.

Furthermore, there were concerning reports of some operators not returning to pre-COVID practices when it comes to managing crew changes. Instances of contracts and trips being extended without the agreement or desire of seafarers were highlighted.

Cadets felt that opportunities for shore leave were available, but there was a sense that it becomes much harder as one progresses to an officer position. It was most troubling to note that some respondents stated that in their entire seagoing careers, they had never experienced shore leave.

The reality for too many seafarers is the continued difficulty in accessing time away from ship. This is a problem which has been the norm for some years and it appears that COVID-19 restrictions are still playing a significant role. Seafarers claimed that many ports say they are closed and there is no access to shore.

Numerous factors, such as inspections, tight schedules, and managerial restrictions, make shore leave impossible for seafarers in many instances, and the demanding nature of work often leaves seafarers too busy and exhausted to engage in time ashore.

However, there were instances where seafarers mentioned positive experiences, particularly in New Zealand, where crews reported being welcomed ashore and that importance was given to seafarers' wellbeing.

There were once again calls for industry efforts to standardise protocols and to provide more opportunities for shore leave. As we have heard before, seafarers would like port State control inspectors to be more inquisitive about whether seafarers are being allowed to leave their vessels.



As a Chief Officer on board Oil Chemical tankers, access to shore leave was already hard, but after the pandemic, I have had zero access to shore.

How happy about wages/salary?

7.02 ↓ from 7.32

Seafarers expressed their views on wages and salaries, highlighting various concerns and experiences within the industry.

A cadet shared their experience of being paid only once for their time on board, with subsequent periods being considered as "gaining experience" rather than receiving payment, which is sadly a situation akin to modern slavery.

One seafarer noted that in their company, wages have remained the same for the past 15 years. This disparity between wages and workload is seen as a significant issue. Many voiced the opinion that the current wages do not reflect the level of work they undertake. They believe that their compensation should align more accurately with the responsibilities and challenges they face in their roles.

Seafarers expressed the need for increased salary across all ratings, emphasising the hard work they put in. They highlighted long working hours and non-compliance with the safety standards set by higher-ranking officers as being added frustrations when inadequately remunerated.

Despite the impact of inflation, seafarers reported that there have been no salary raises comparable to those on shore. This lack of increase fails to account for rising costs and inflationary pressures. As the cost of living continues to rise in many nations, seafarers expressed the urgent need for generous raises to maintain a fair standard of living.

The shared views of seafarers on wages and salaries highlight the disparity between compensation and the workload, inadequate raises and the need for a fair and timely adjustment to ensure that seafarers are appropriately rewarded for their contributions to the industry. As one respondent put it, "The wages we receive do not reflect the level of work that we are doing."



Life has become more expensive, but the salary has remained the same. There must be a generous raise very soon.

How happy about the food on board?

6.87 ↓ from 7.02

The feedback regarding food provided on board reveals mixed experiences and concerns. While some seafarers express dissatisfaction with the quality and preparation of certain meals, others find the food to be enjoyable and well-cooked. Those with positive experiences noted that the ingredients used are of good quality, contributing to the overall taste of the meals.

Concerningly, there were comments that the availability of snacks, chocolates, and the option to purchase additional items through bonds are a way of adding to the variety of food choices. It was also a concern that crew, particularly younger seafarers, were often drinking (what was deemed to be) large quantities of energy drinks. This was a worry to some on board, especially as to the health and mental impact of such drinks.

An interesting practical issue raised by some individuals was about the level of spiciness in the food being served. They claimed it was too hot for their preference, which is an interesting point on the need for culturally appropriate meals for a multicultural workforce.

There were also concerns raised about the cost and availability of food. The rising prices of food globally are impacting seafarers, while the daily budget allocated by companies for meals remains relatively low and there were reports of expense cuts implemented by operators.

One respondent noted that at times only basic items like meat and rice are available, and there is sometimes a lack of fruits and vegetables for extended periods of 2-3 weeks. This has led to situations where seafarers may experience hunger due to insufficient food supplies, which is extremely concerning.

Allied to this issue of food, we heard in other sections of the report that some seafarers have issues regarding water availability. They were even left hoping that “budget restrictions” did not extend to limiting the allocation of water.

That ships are running low on food as they wilfully seek cheaper ports is troubling, as are the reported problems for some seafarers in accessing drinking water. It seems incredible that hunger and dehydration can be a real concern for seafarers in the 21st Century.



Food prices have risen all around the world. But the daily budget of the companies has been around \$10. There are days on board that you feel hungry because there is no food.

How happy about your ability to keep fit and healthy on board?

6.9 ↓ from 7.1

It was evident from the written responses that many seafarers believe that companies do not budget sufficient funds to establish a proper gym or sports equipment. While some seafarers find the facilities provided to be generally good, they note that these spaces can become small and cramped when accommodating three or more people.

Seafarers highlighted the challenges they face in maintaining fitness and a healthy lifestyle. Where there are gyms and good access to sports and leisure, seafarers indicate satisfaction with their body condition, saying they do not experience weight gain, while conversely, those who do not have such access report a range of health concerns.

There were also calls for a more balanced approach when it comes to budgeting. One seafarer commented that too much of the welfare budget was being directed towards entertainment such as karaoke and PlayStation consoles rather than the provision of adequate gym facilities. It seems a more holistic approach and dialogue with crew is necessary to better understand their needs and wants.

Insufficient or improper nutrition and limited time for exercising are reported as major obstacles. As one respondent put it, "The gym is here, but there is no time for that". There were also complaints that senior officers had made negative comments about those who were deemed to use the facilities "too often", whatever that may be.

The feedback from seafarers emphasises the need for companies to allocate adequate funds for establishing proper gym facilities on board. While recreational activities, such as gaming, are important for the wellbeing of seafarers, it is crucial to strike a balance and prioritise the provision of suitable exercise equipment and space. By doing so, seafarers would have the means to maintain their physical fitness and promote their overall health and wellbeing during their time at sea.



Companies neglect proper gym facilities, allocating insufficient funds while prioritising entertainment options like karaoke and gaming, using up to 90% of the welfare budget. A balance is needed between the two.

How happy about the training you receive?

7.09 ↓ from 7.41

The feedback from seafarers emphasised concern about a lack of practical implementation of training materials, scheduled drills, and safety campaigns. Despite having these procedures documented, as required within their Safety Management System (SMS), we received reports of a significant gap between what is outlined on paper and what is carried out in practice.

Seafarers expressed their frustration, stating that the training and drills mentioned in company documents are merely paid lip service and rarely put into practice. This lack of practical training is seen as a major concern, as it undermines the crew's preparedness and ability to respond effectively in emergencies. It also highlights a lack of compliance and calls into question the checks performed across port state control and even internal audits.

"There are no normal training efforts, drills, or familiarisation on board. The situation is very poor," ran one comment. The absence of normal training programmes and drills on board is a recurring issue raised by seafarers, highlighting a poor situation in terms of ensuring crew competence and readiness. Workload on board is often cited as a contributing factor to the lack of training opportunities.

When it came to the assistance and support of others, some seafarers acknowledged individuals within their company who provided helpful and valuable training, which was good to see. However, there is a prevailing sentiment that many see crew members as additional work rather than prioritising their training needs.

Seafarers do acknowledge that shore training is generally adequate. The lack of equivalent training opportunities on board, however, raises concerns.

These views underscore the need for companies to bridge the gap between written procedures and their practical implementation. Companies must prioritise the effective execution of training programs, drills, and familiarisation activities to ensure the safety, preparedness, and competence of the crew.



The shore training, including seminars, is adequate. However, onboard training is almost non-existent due to the workload.

How happy about interaction with crew on board?

7.47 ↓ from 7.78

Relationships between crew remain a vital pillar of quality of life on board. Most interactions were felt to be positive and enjoyable. The downsides were seen as not having enough time to relax and enjoy each other's company. As one crew member expressed, "Almost always great crew and people!" The overall sentiment is that the interactions are good, and people are appreciated for their professionalism and teamwork.

The nature of work and issues with social dynamics often limit the opportunities for extensive interaction. As one crew member wrote, "The crew is okay, but there is limited time for real interaction, and conversations mainly revolve around job-related topics." Nevertheless, there are instances where conversations extend beyond work-related matters, allowing for a degree of social interaction among the crew.

There were, however, specific concerns raised about senior officers and their lack of managerial skills. Of course, where individuals are targeted for criticism, it may be the result of some bad feelings between crew. However, there were some specific instances quoted in performance, and behaviour was called into question.

Despite such individual concerns, the majority of interactions were described as good, with crew mates deemed "easy to work with". Where there were positive responses, we heard about people being kind and supportive, creating a positive working environment.

Overall, there were encouraging responses and crew were praised for their competence and camaraderie. Where this was the case, the positive atmosphere and good rapport among crew members contributed greatly to a generally favourable working environment. It seems what is needed are more opportunities to interact and bond further.



Interacting with other crew on board is limited due to the nature of work.

How happy with your workload?

6.5 ↓ from 7.03

When discussing workload, seafarers highlighted concerns about the volume of administration, paperwork and bureaucracy that they face. The issue of manning levels was also raised with a sense that performance and realistic demands are not always being taken into account.

One common issue highlighted was excessive working hours, with seafarers reporting working for “20+ hours per day.” This practice goes against the provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), which is meant to protect seafarers’ rights and ensure reasonable working hours.

Seafarers expressed frustration that senior officers do not seem to care about these overloaded work issues, and there is a perception that work and rest hours are merely on paper, not reflecting the reality on board. Such seeming disregard for regulations raises concerns about the wellbeing and safety of seafarers.

The implementation of a 6-on-6-off watch system is also criticised, as it hinders proper rest and sleep. Seafarers said sufficient rest to maintain their physical and mental health is vital, but where they were overworking or were on difficult watch patterns, then the system failed to provide them with adequate rest.

Seafarers also mention the increasing workload year-on-year and the challenges of meeting rising standards. The amount of paperwork and redundant reporting is stated as being “overwhelming”, with seafarers spending significant time duplicating reports instead of focusing on what they see as essential tasks.

These comments highlight the urgent need for improved management practices and adherence to regulations concerning work and rest hours. Seafarers’ wellbeing and safety should be a top priority, and efforts should be made to address the excessive workload, streamline administrative processes, and ensure real-world compliance with regulations and international standards.



Work and rest hours are just on paper. The master and company are aware and accepting of it.

How happy with welfare facilities when you are ashore?

6.33 ↓ from 6.49

Based on the responses from seafarers, it is unfortunately evident that accessing welfare facilities ashore still poses significant challenges. As stated in the section on shore leave, it is still incredibly difficult to get ashore.

This throws up a major concern about work-life balance, as crew members are often faced with the difficult choice between prioritising sleep and rest or going ashore during their limited time off.

This dilemma emphasises the ongoing struggle that seafarers experience in maintaining a healthy regime. The lack of adequate time for relaxation and personal activities was raised, and it was seen that this could have a negative impact on their overall wellbeing and quality of life.

The feedback received from seafarers regarding welfare facilities reveals a mixed picture. While some aspects are considered good, there are notable areas of improvement that need attention. As one respondent commented: "We work between a couple of ports without any appropriate welfare facilities, such as a chapel or seaman club, and this is a shame."

Where and when seafarers get to actually use facilities ashore, they hugely appreciate them. However, the lack of shore leave is such a hindrance and makes it almost impossible for some seafarers to access the support they crave and access to centres which provide important spaces for relaxation and socialising.

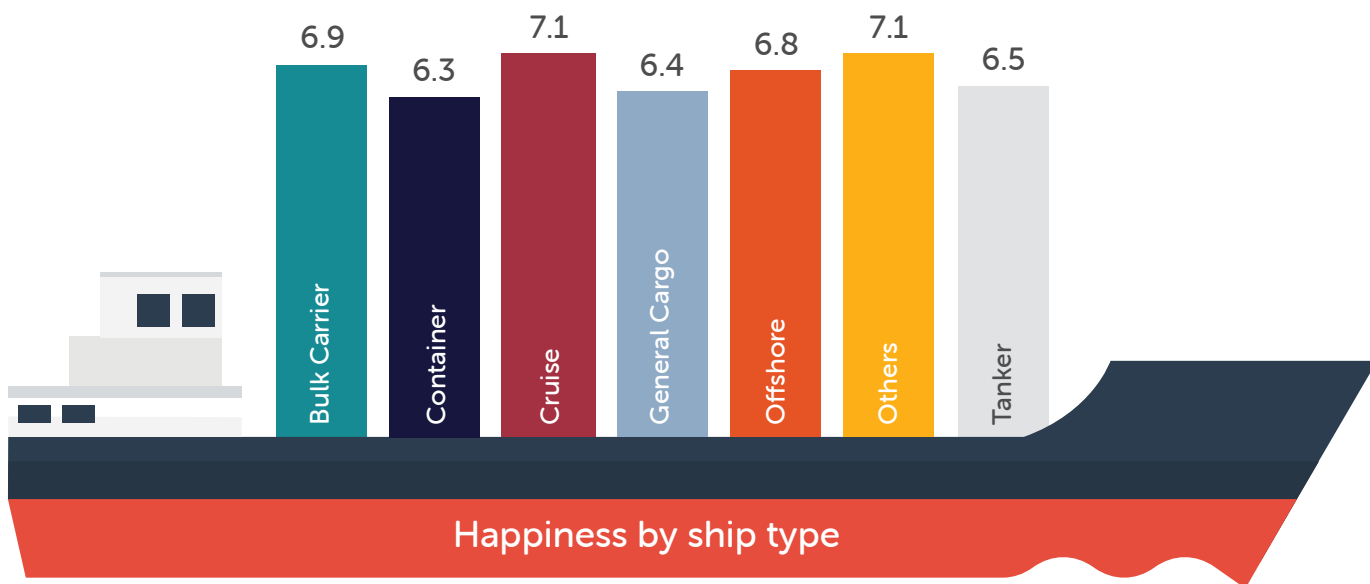
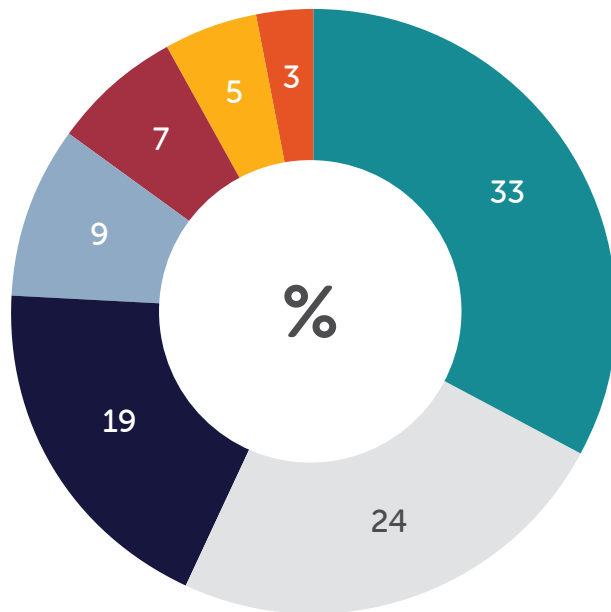
Time and time again, as we saw earlier in the report, the critical factor affecting access to welfare facilities is the limited availability of shore leave. Seafarers emphasise that without the opportunity to go ashore, they are unable to access the desired facilities and amenities. The direct correlation between shore leave and access to welfare facilities is a key concern. However, there was praise and gratitude for those who visited vessels and provided the likes of SIM cards and other items.



No shore leave means no access to essential welfare facilities, and this is a significant concern.

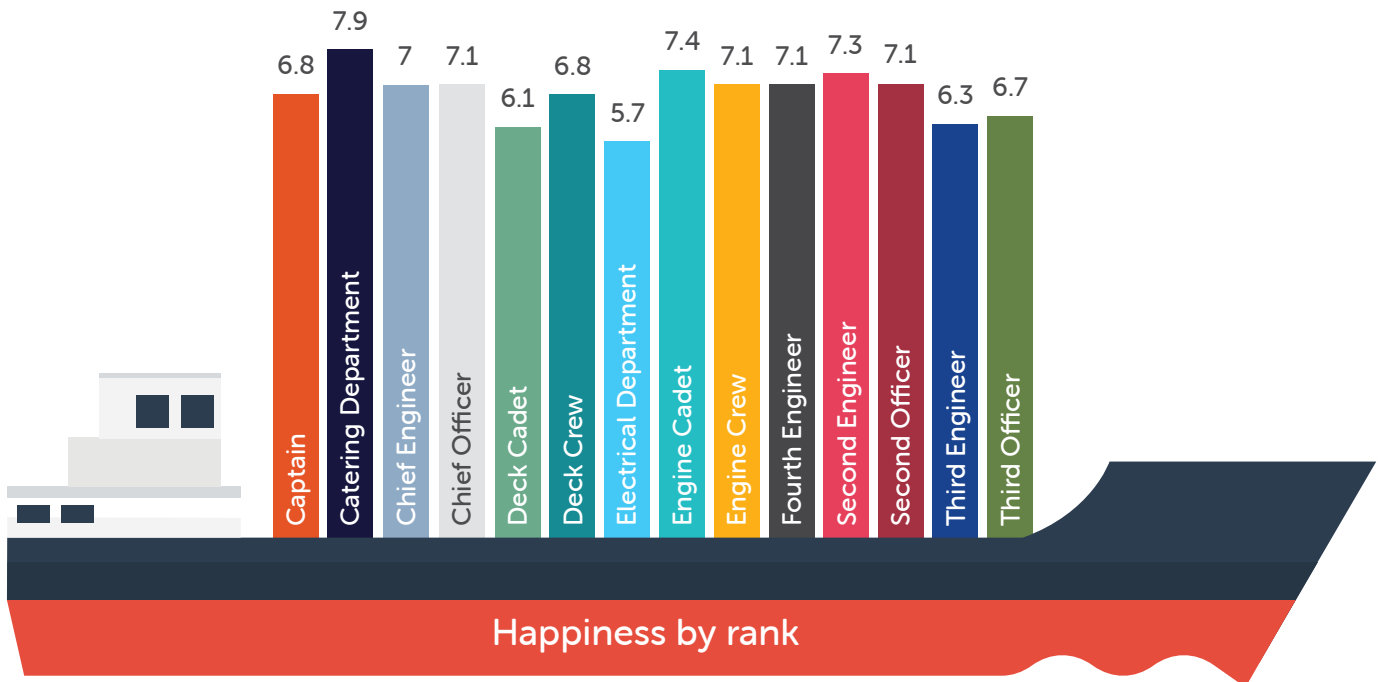
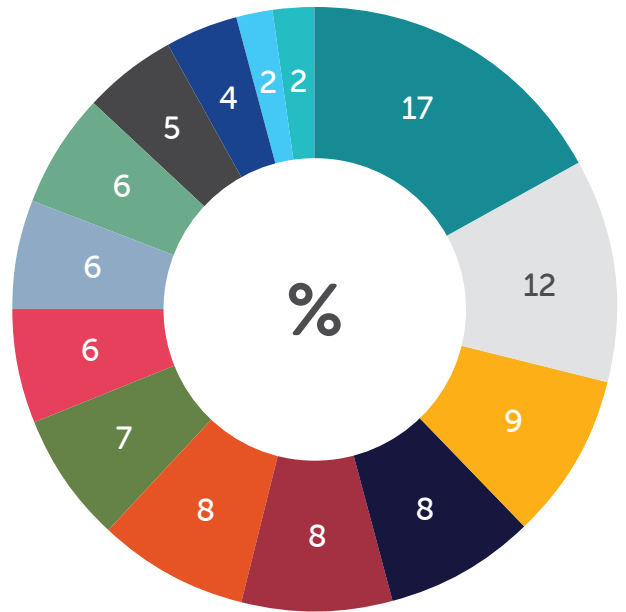
Ship Type

- Bulk Carrier
- Container
- Cruise
- General Cargo
- Offshore
- Others
- Tanker



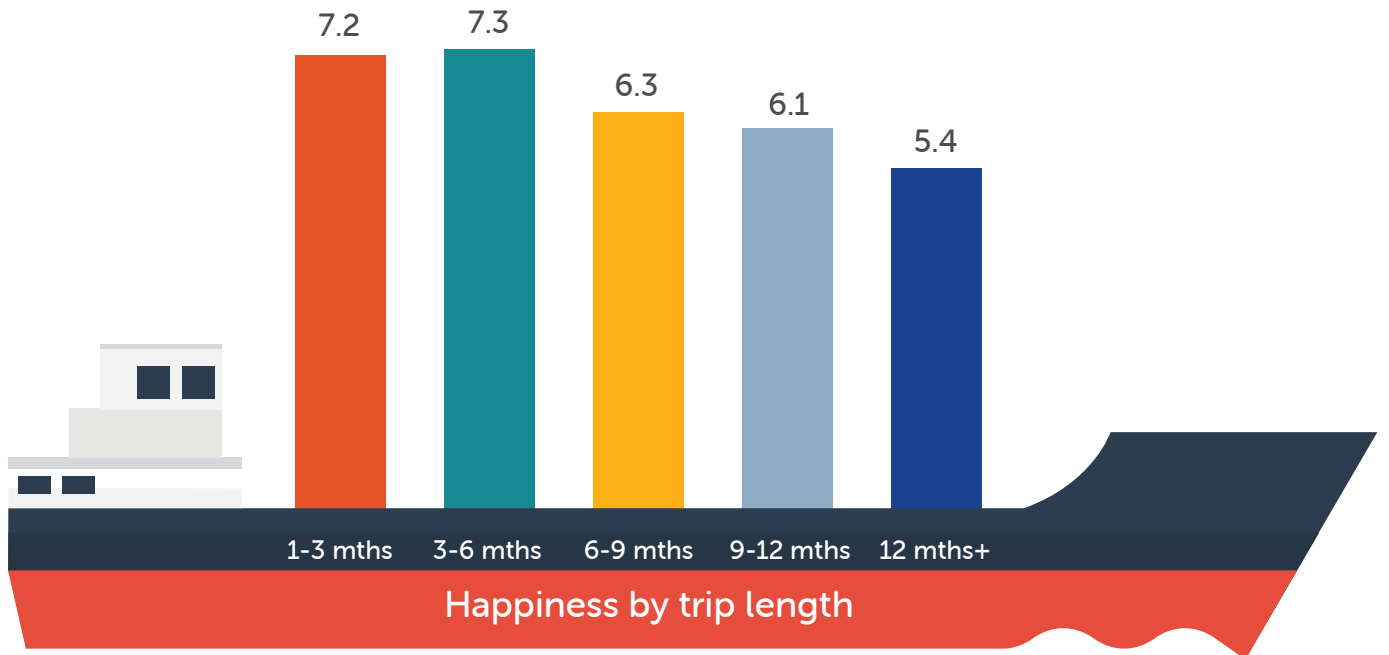
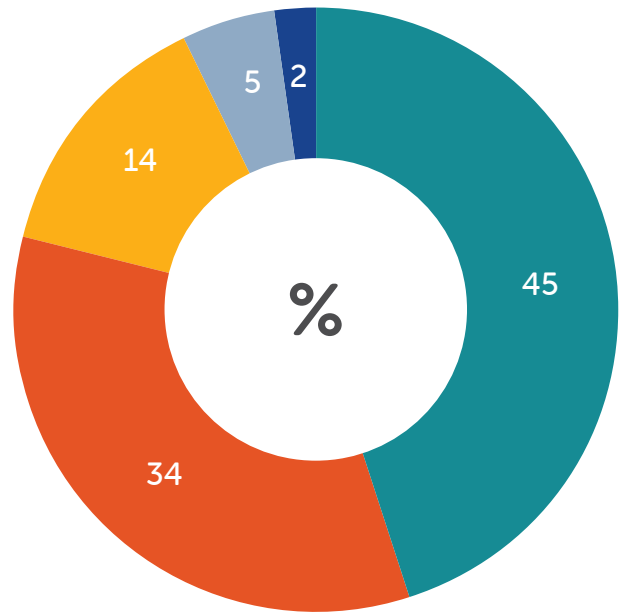
Ranks

- Captain
- Catering Department
- Chief Engineer
- Chief Officer
- Deck Cadet
- Deck Crew
- Electrical Department
- Engine Cadet
- Engine Crew
- Fourth Engineer
- Second Engineer
- Second Officer
- Third Engineer
- Third Officer



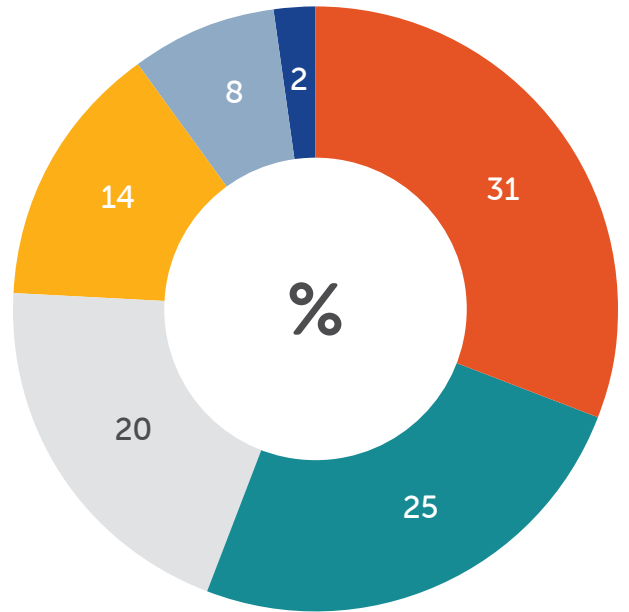
Trip Length

- 1-3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6-9 months
- 9-12 months
- Over 12 months



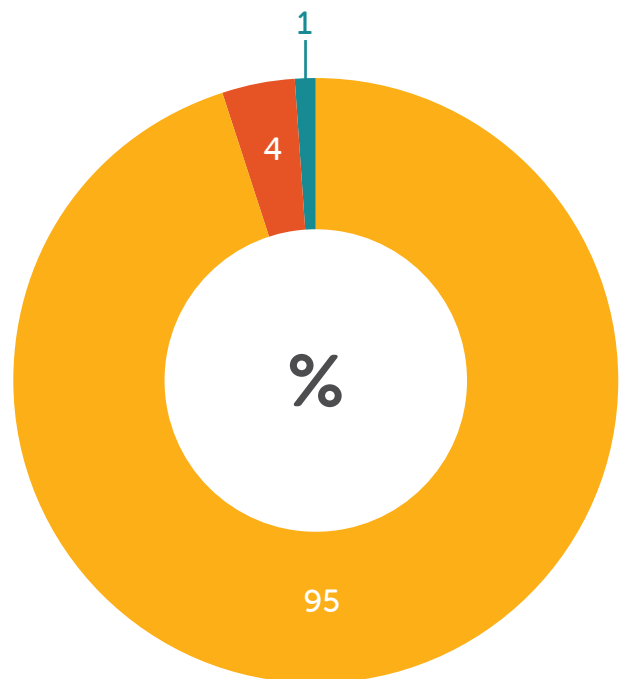
Age Range

- 16-25
- 25-35
- 35-45
- 45-55
- 55-65
- 65+



Gender

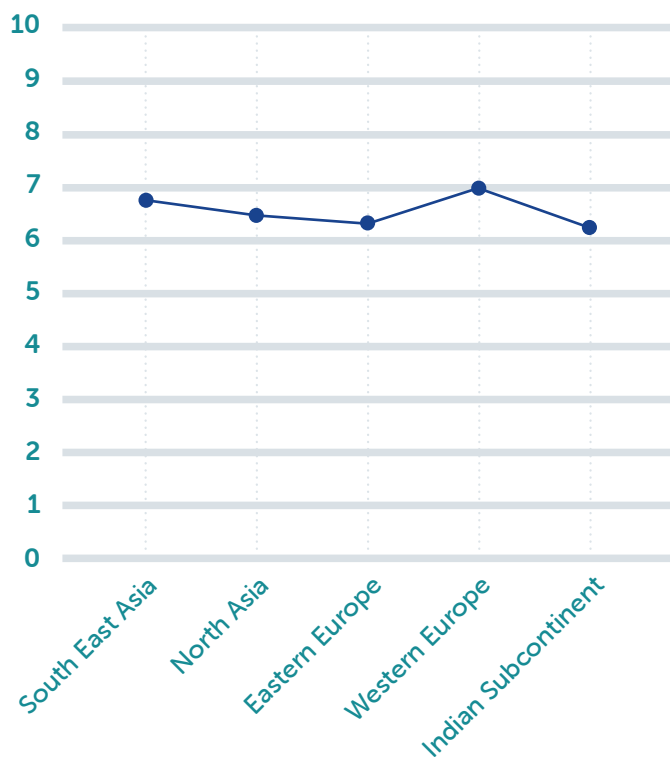
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say



Where



Regions and happiness





Key Issues from Quarter 2

- A decline in seafarer satisfaction with life at sea. Decrease in happiness levels across all areas in this reporting period.
- Issues such as trip length and contract conditions still ongoing and far from pre-pandemic norms. Crew frustrated about the lack of urgency to make things better.
- Work and rest hour violations and increasing workload.
- Minimum manning not seen as providing sufficient resources.
- Vessels running low on stores as they await cheaper port calls.
- Concerns about access to drinking water.
- High workload leading to lack of free time.
- Limited access to gym facilities and inadequate focus on physical wellbeing.
- Difficulty maintaining relationships at home due to limited and expensive internet access.
- Limited and infrequent opportunities for shore leave. Restrictions still being blamed on COVID-19 in some ports.
- Inadequate wages in view of workload and rising inflation in many nations.
- Lack of training and drills on board, with emphasis on paperwork rather than practical implementation.
- Limited interaction and conversation among crew members due to work demands.
- Gratitude to ship visitors, but limited access to appropriate welfare facilities ashore due to lack of shore leave.



“

The limited availability of drinking water on our ship raises concerns about the welfare of the crew and the reasons behind this restriction.

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Putting ideas into action: Next Steps for the Executive Roundtable on Crew Welfare

The Seafarers Happiness Index was never intended as solely a mechanism to identify issues. There has long been a focus on taking the voice of seafarers, tackling issues and developing solutions to their needs.

As part of this Seafarers Happiness Index project approach, an Executive Roundtable on Crew Welfare was held during Singapore Maritime Week 2023 to identify effective solutions to the challenges faced by seafarers and drive meaningful change in seafarer welfare.

Opportunities for Change

Building upon data from the Seafarers Happiness Index, with supporting insights from sponsors NorthStandard, Idwal, and Inmarsat, the results highlight the breadth of opportunities to improve seafarer welfare across five crucial areas:

- Access to shore leave and connection with loved ones
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Employment packages, security, diversity and career progression
- Living and working conditions
- Support and management on board and ashore

The session provided a platform for constructive discussions and knowledge sharing. Industry leaders, ship owners, managers, and charterers engaged in wide-ranging discussions over their shared experiences of seafarers' needs and the proposal of innovative solutions to improve seafarers' overall wellbeing, safety, and quality of life.

Over 100 solutions were identified during the event, organised into the five main areas explored. These solutions cover a wide range of issues, from standardising shore leave policies and advancing communication technologies, to providing mental health resources and fostering a supportive work environment. They also address issues of fair treatment, career progression, living conditions, and effective support and management on board and ashore.

Tangible Outcomes

The key has been to find innovative ideas and actionable steps that can be taken by industry in a collective effort to better support the dedicated men and women who work tirelessly at sea. The focus was also on establishing actionable work streams driven by Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) frameworks that deliver tangible outcomes to improve the lives of seafarers.

We were incredibly grateful to those who joined us in Singapore, and an action-focused progression of the solutions has been ongoing. This has included:

- Collation of issues and proposed solutions
- Development of a planning document to provide a SWOT-style analysis of each solution
- Alliance building, including meetings with a range of stakeholders
- A range of media releases, articles and webinars discussing the issues we identified and the potential actions moving forward

The next phase will take place during London International Shipping Week (LISW) in September 2023. To access a comprehensive document containing the proposed solutions, please [click here](#).



Conclusion

The Quarter 2 2023 Seafarers Happiness Index report highlights several key issues that seafarers are facing, and we have seen a decline in satisfaction levels across all aspects of their work and life at sea. These issues need to be addressed to improve the wellbeing and overall experience of seafarers.

A key frustration has been the delay in returning the industry to a pre-pandemic stance. The responses highlighted numerous challenges, including crew changes, time spent on board, contract conditions, and wages. These issues have led to a noticeable deterioration in seafarers' working conditions.

Although we have made progress in overcoming the worst effects of the pandemic, restoring conditions to their pre-COVID levels has proven to be a difficult task. Seafarers feel at a point where the capacity for improvement has reached its limits, leaving operational realities and employment standards at a lower level than before.

The saying "what goes down does not seemingly have to go up" resonates with many seafarers who feel stuck in a cycle of diminishing conditions. Extended crew changes have unfortunately become the new norm for far too many seafarers. Uncertainty persists, and they reluctantly accept that they are likely to remain on board for longer durations than initially anticipated, even as movement and travel restrictions ease.

The challenges faced by seafarers extend beyond the desire for relief and the opportunity to return home. Contracts are being altered or disregarded, and issues surrounding remuneration are becoming increasingly problematic. Seafarers face a range of difficulties, from non-payment of wages to gradual salary cuts, rising taxes, increased living costs, and the harsh realities of inflation. Companies must review and ensure fair compensation for the hard work and dedication of seafarers.

Amongst other concerns, a significant issue was the multiple reports of limited access to drinking water. This raises concerns about hydration and overall health. At the same time, there were also reports of vessels purposely running low on stores while they await cheaper port calls.

The very concept that seafarers could be going hungry and thirsty is highly troubling and something which the wider industry needs to rail against. Such concerns are more akin to coffin ships of the Victorian age, not the modern, professional industry we profess to be.

Seafarers raised concerns about their high workload and lack of spare private time, indicating the struggle to find a work-life balance. There were also reports of work and rest hour violations. Companies should prioritise compliance with regulations and take steps to address the rising workload, which can have negative impacts on physical and mental well-being.

The lack of access to adequate gym facilities and insufficient focus on physical wellbeing were also identified as issues. Companies should invest in proper gym equipment and promote physical fitness among seafarers to prioritise their overall health.

Another key issue is the limited opportunities for interaction and conversation among crew members. Fostering a sense of community and camaraderie on board are key to creating a supportive and harmonious work environment.

When it came to contact with family while at sea, the perennial issue of internet access and its associated high costs were once again covered. These challenges lead to limited communication and difficulties in maintaining relationships with loved ones.

There were reports of an inadequate focus on practical training and drills on board. This raises concerns about the preparedness of seafarers in emergencies. Prioritising practical training is vital to ensure the safety of crew and vessels.

Despite the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions, seafarers still face limited opportunities for shore leave due to ongoing restrictions and company policies. There were even those who have never experienced it throughout their careers. This is a sad indictment of where the profession sits and highlights the need to address this issue and provide opportunities for seafarers to rejuvenate and engage in recreational activities ashore.

Despite these challenges, seafarers expressed gratitude towards ship visitors, emphasising the importance of social interaction and support from external sources to support their wellbeing.

Addressing these key issues and implementing necessary improvements can contribute to enhancing seafarers' working conditions, overall wellbeing, and satisfaction within the maritime industry.

THANK YOU

We express our deep gratitude to the seafarers who have generously shared their experiences and thoughts with us. Their valuable insights enable us to continually improve our understanding and response to the challenges they face.

We also extend our appreciation to the shipping companies and shore managers who have encouraged their seafarers to participate and provide their feedback. If you are a shipowner or operator, we kindly request you encourage your crews to participate in the survey. The more data we gather, the better equipped we are to drive meaningful improvements.

Together, let us continue to support seafarers by actively listening to their voices, learning from their stories, and working towards creating a profession that reflects their importance and dedication. To complete the survey, please visit www.seafarershappinessindex.org

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