

WORLD MARITIME SEAFARER PROFILES



NAME: **MATT FORSTER**

JOB TITLE: **CHIEF ENGINEER**

What aspect of your job do you most enjoy?

When I first started, it was the idea of adventure and going somewhere new. It has changed a lot over time, we don't get as much time in ports as what we used to, so my pleasure from working at sea comes from the people I work with. I get to meet a vast array of people from different religions, countries and cultures. On our ship, we can have 11 different nationalities at a time!

What should people know about the work of seafarers?

We're the pillars of the supply chains around the world. Trade is coming by sea. But because people are not aware of us, we don't get the support we need. We want people to know that it is the men and women within our industry that provide them with everything they need for their day-to-day lives. It's not for praise, it's to assist us in being recognised, to help us to get home, to see our families, to be with our loved ones, and to continue this supply chain going.

How do you feel about the crew change crisis?

It's catastrophic now. We are almost a year into this, and to see it still happening is beyond words at times. As seafarers, we look around and we ask ourselves: "who is helping us? Who is genuinely helping to make positive change?" And unfortunately, we all feel let down. And that's 1,6 million of us who feel let down by all our governments in the whole world.

How do you see the future for seafarers and for shipping in general?

The future of shipping is going to be interesting. It's going to be greener. We have always been an industry that is scrutinised for pollution and energy efficiency, and I think new technology is going to be a booster. The massive leaps in technology are fantastic and should be seen as something that can aid seafarers, not as something to eradicate seafarers. Because at the end of the day, if something goes wrong, you need qualified people on that ship.

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