



SeafarerHelp 2025

Annual Review



SeafarerHelp is operated by the
International Seafarers' Welfare and
Assistance Network (ISWAN)



This report is sponsored by: **NorthStandard**



The **International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN)** is an international not-for-profit maritime organisation which works to ensure that seafarers and their families have the support and resources they need to respond to the challenges of life at sea, and to drive seafarer-centred change within the maritime sector.

ISWAN is there for all seafarers and their families around the world, whatever they are facing, providing free helpline services, educational resources, relief funds and humanitarian support. We also work to drive seafarer-centred change within the maritime sector for better health, safety and wellbeing amongst seafarers and their families, using data insights from our helplines to inform the development of new projects and services.

ABOUT

ISWAN



SeafarerHelp is a free, confidential, multilingual helpline operated by ISWAN for seafarers and their families. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. SeafarerHelp provides emotional, wellbeing and practical support to seafarers and their families of any nationality.

FOREWORD

Seafarers who contacted SeafarerHelp in 2025 consistently described the intense pressures of living and working at sea during a period of rapid change and growing instability in the maritime sector. Long-standing challenges such as heavy workloads, prolonged time away from family and restricted shore leave remained central concerns. These were often compounded by wider developments, including the impact of geopolitical conflict on their health, wellbeing and sense of safety, and the strain of adapting to rapid technological change, from decarbonisation to increasing automation. Together, these factors created an environment many experienced as increasingly complex and demanding.

Throughout the year, ISWAN's helpline officers supported seafarers and their family members across a wide range of issues, providing a safe and non-judgemental space to talk about the challenges they faced. This report brings together key themes and trends from those conversations during 2025 and reflects ISWAN's ongoing commitment to using helpline insights to identify emerging challenges and develop effective solutions in partnership with seafarers and the wider maritime sector.

2025 at a GLANCE

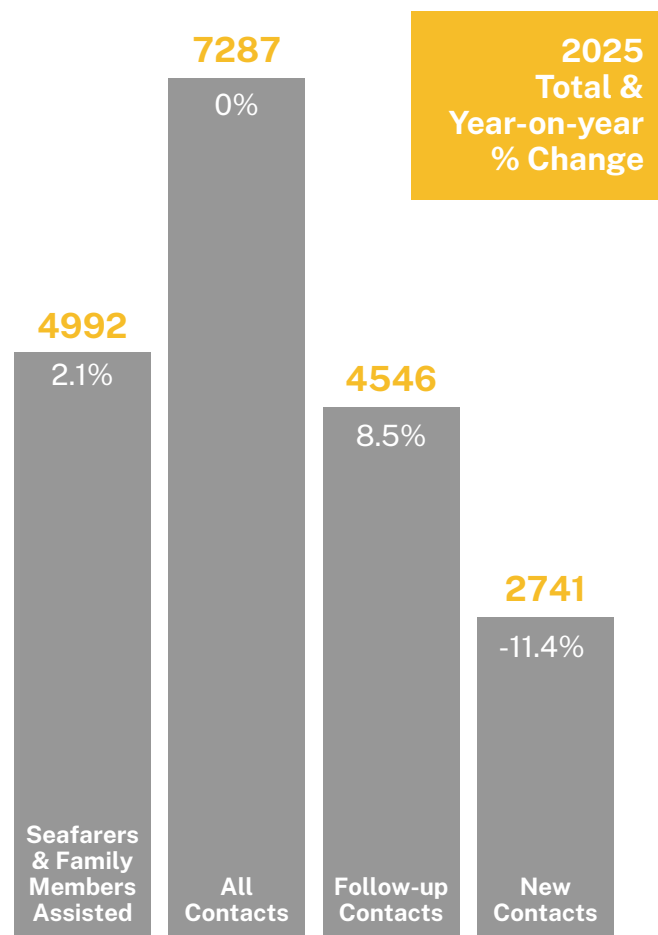
NUMBER OF NATIONALITIES

86

Up from 80 in 2024

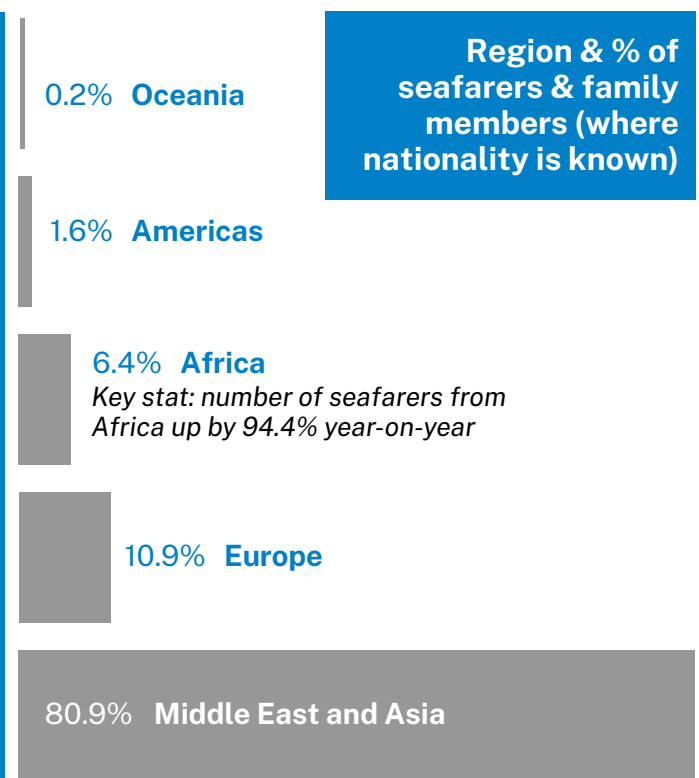


FOLLOW UP CONTACTS
up by
8.5 %



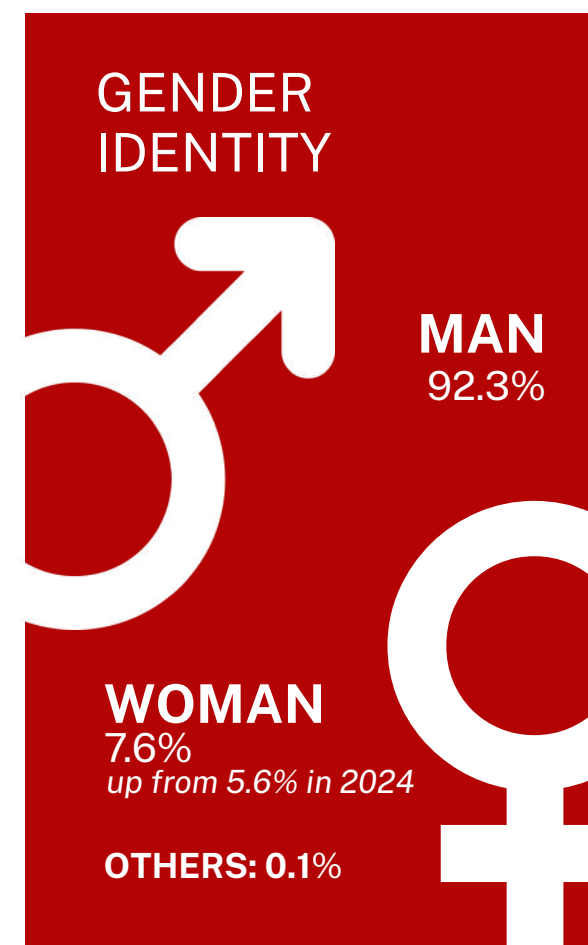
COUNTRIES REACHED PER REGION

Asia and Middle East	25
Africa	23
Europe	22
The Americas	13
Oceania	03



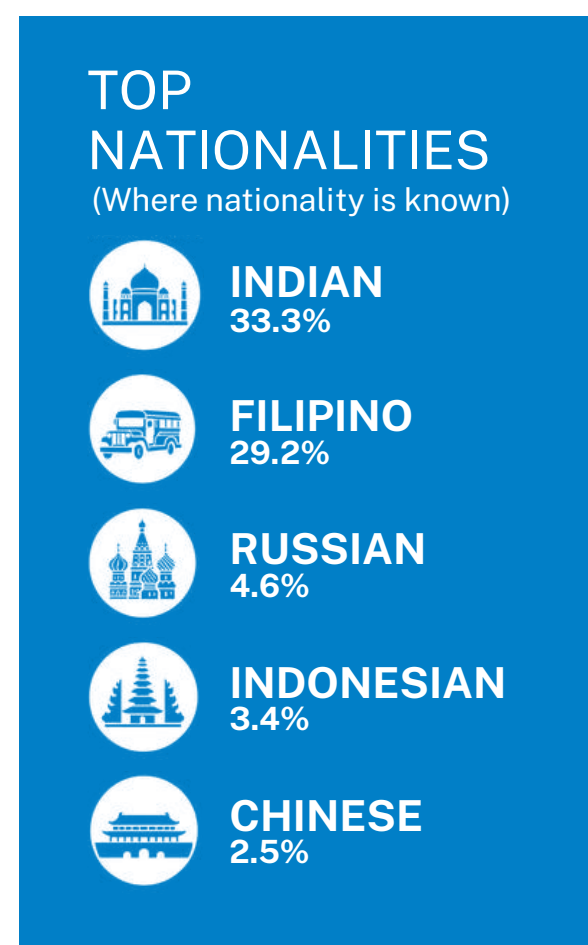
- Total individuals = 4,992 (including where nationality was unknown or withheld)
- Nationality was unknown or withheld for 34.9% (1,742) of seafarers & family members

2025 at a GLANCE

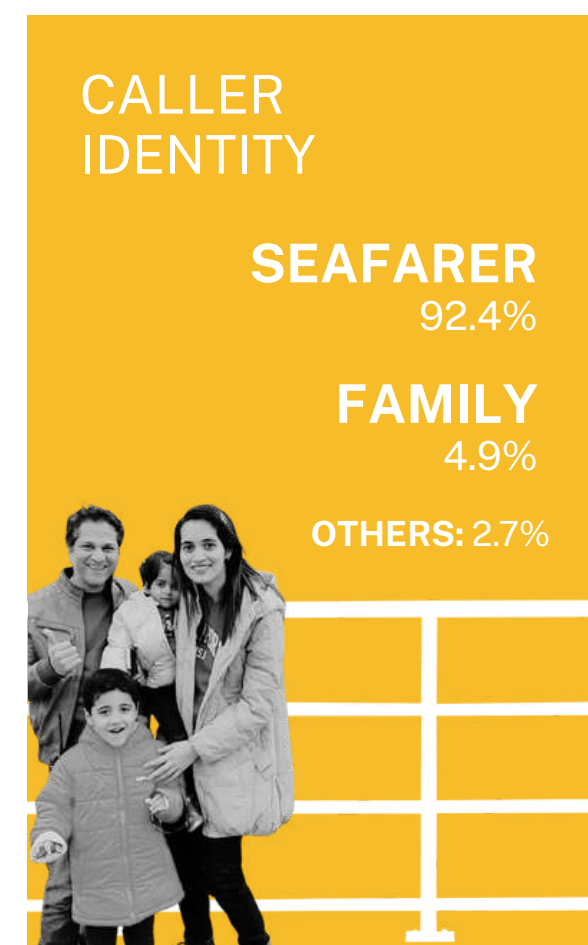
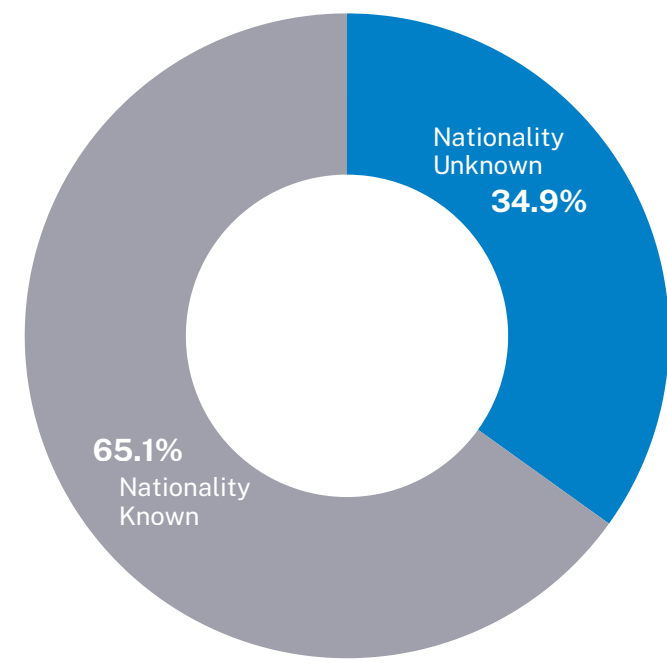


The number of helpline users who identified as women increased by 35.0% y-o-y in 2025 (the number of men fell by 3.1% y-o-y)

- Total cases = 2,741 (including where gender identity was unknown or withheld)
- Gender identity was unknown or withheld in 35.2% (965) of cases



- Total individuals = 4,992 (including where nationality was unknown or withheld)
- Nationality was unknown or withheld for 34.9% (1,742) of seafarers & family members







- Total cases = 2,741 (including where identity of caller was unknown or withheld)
- Identity of caller was unknown or withheld in 4.0% (109) of cases

2025

at a **GLANCE**

TOP ISSUES RAISED

-  Employment Terms & Contractual Issues **25.4%**
-  General Enquiries & Other **16.9%**
-  Mental Health & Wellbeing **16.8%**
-  Living Conditions & Onboard Culture **16.7%**
-  Recruitment, Training & Certification **15.8%**

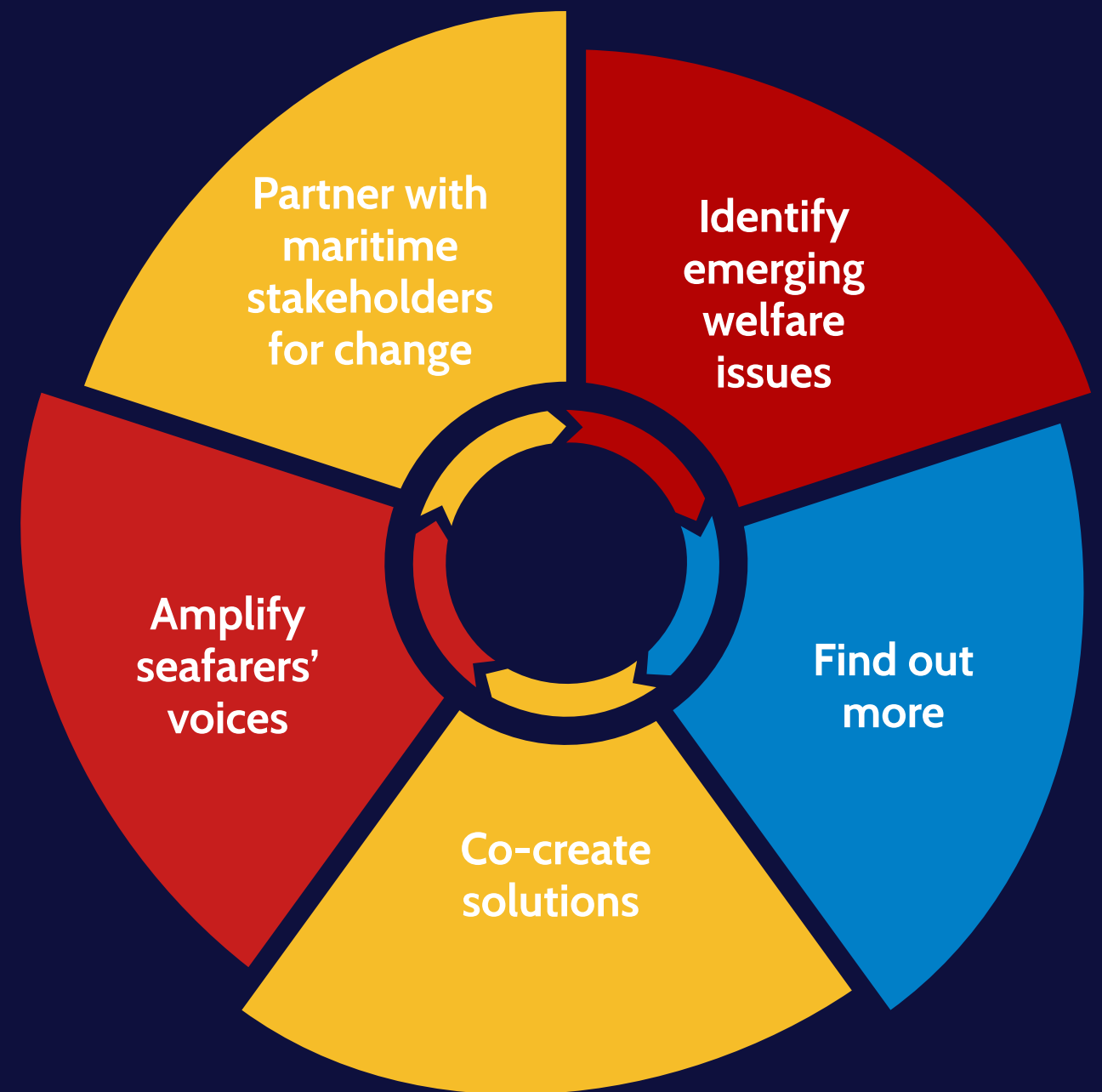
Other Issues and % of contacts raising this issue (where issue is not unclear or unrelated to seafarers)

Financial Issues & Compensation	12.5%
Physical Health & Wellbeing	8.8%
Abuse, Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment & Violence	7.3%
Personal Relationships & Home Life	3.5%
Legal & Criminal Issues	3.1%
Safety	2.7%
Unforeseen Events	1.2%
Missing or Deceased Seafarer	1.1%



- Total cases = 2,741 (including where issue was unclear or contact was not seafarer-related)
- Issue was unclear in 13.5% (369) of total cases, and contacts unrelated to seafarers accounted for 4.4% (121) of total cases
- % column does not add up to 100% as some cases involve more than one issue

How we use helpline data to inform our work:



INSIGHT 1:

Connectivity is reshaping how seafarers seek support

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS:

Number of follow-up contacts

7496
(2022)

5103
(2023)

4189
(2024)

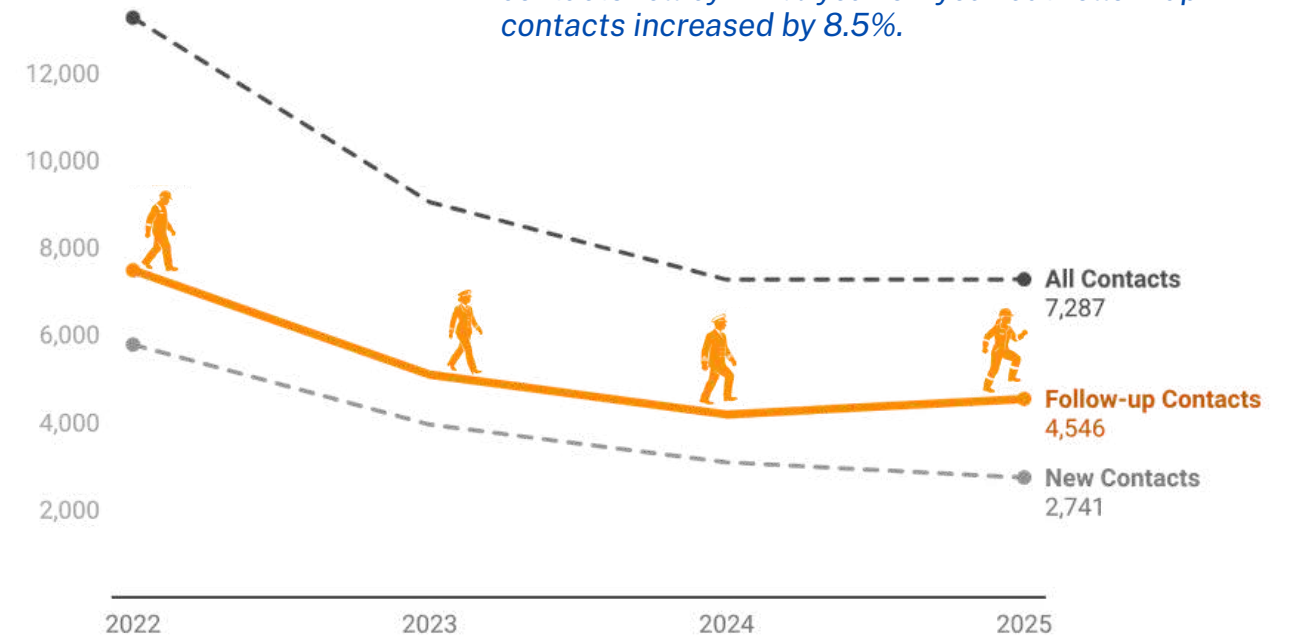
4544
(2025)

As connectivity improves at sea, seafarers increasingly resolve straightforward enquiries themselves but turn to us when situations feel complex, emotionally charged or difficult to navigate alone.



HELPLINE USAGE

Seafarers reached out less often, but when they did, their situations were more complex. New contacts fell by 11.4% year-on-year but follow-up contacts increased by 8.5%.

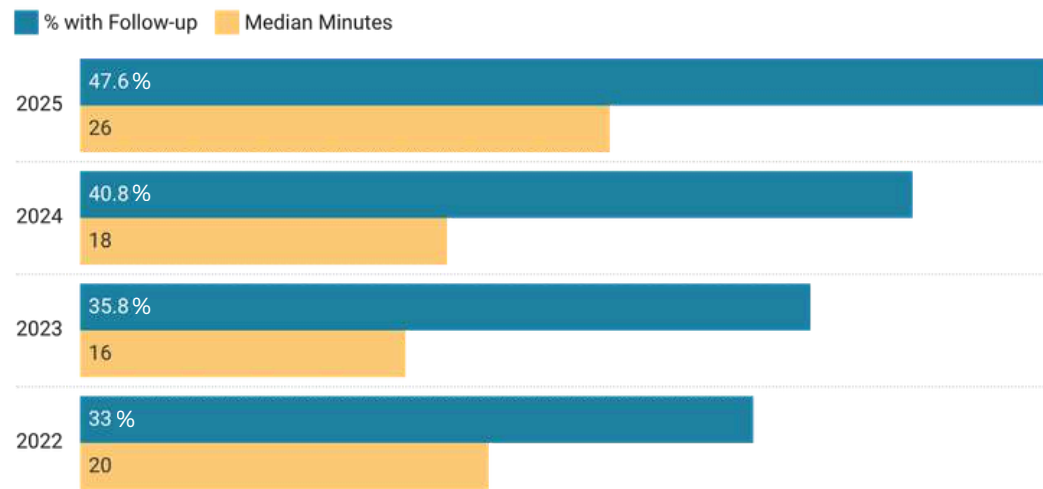


As connectivity improved on board, seafarers increasingly used the internet to access practical information. This meant SeafarerHelp received fewer straightforward enquiries but far more complex situations needing time, care and follow-up.

Rather than a one-off conversation, our helplines offer seafarers and their family members the possibility to remain in contact until they feel better able to cope with the challenges they face. This ongoing support is critical for the safety and wellbeing of those who are so isolated and vulnerable when working at sea.

CALL COMPLEXITY

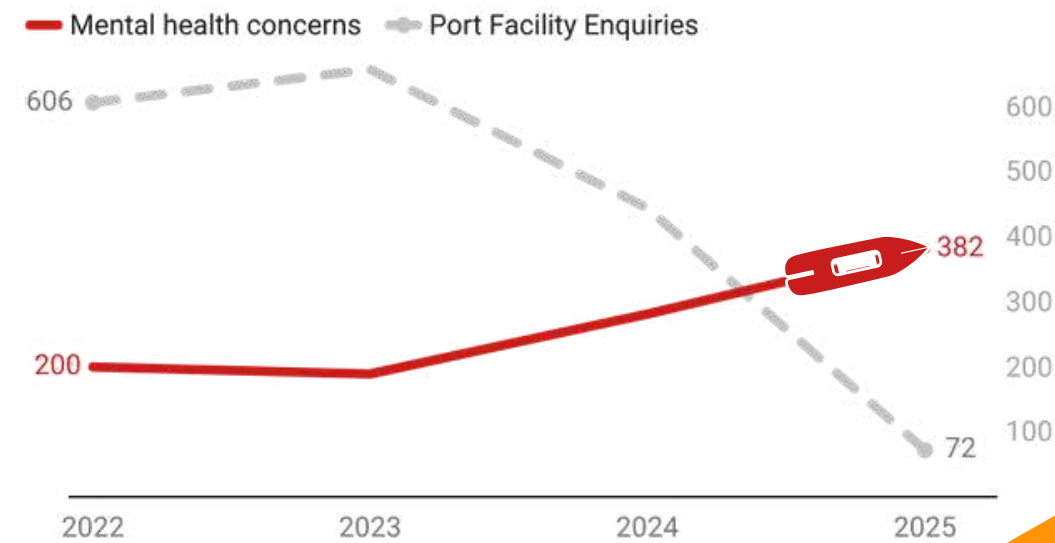
Conversations became longer and more in-depth



The increase in more complex helpline contacts in 2025 meant that almost half of these contacts required at least one follow-up, which was higher than the previous year. The increase in the average length of time our helpline team spent on each contact in 2025 may reflect the increasing complexity of life at sea and its impact on wellbeing, leading to the need for more sustained support.

THE EVOLVING USE OF SEAFARERHELP

More seafarers sought support for mental health challenges while fewer had practical enquiries about port-based welfare facilities



COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

WhatsApp and live chat remain the most used communication channels, reflecting the importance of onboard connectivity for many seafarers

Year	Email	Live Chat	WhatsApp	Telephone	Other (inc. Facebook, Viber, VK, in person)
2025	18.9%	35.9%	33.7%	6.4%	5.1%
2024	18.2%	45.2%	26.0%	5.5%	5.1%
2023	21.0%	46.3%	20.7%	4.5%	7.5%
2022	41.3%	29.2%	17.1%	3.6%	8.8%



Seafarers increasingly contacted us through fast, mobile-friendly channels. While live chat remained the most common way to reach us, WhatsApp continued to grow more popular as more seafarers chose quick, discreet messaging when seeking support. Email, phone and Facebook were still used, but far less frequently. These patterns reflect widespread connectivity on board and highlight the importance of offering support in formats that feel accessible, safe and familiar for seafarers wherever they are.

WHAT SEAFARERS ARE TELLING US

CONNECTIVITY IS CHANGING WHY THEY REACH OUT

Better connectivity helps seafarers find practical information themselves, so they now contact us mainly when situations need conversation, specialist signposting or emotional support.

THEY WANT REASSURANCE THAT THEY ARE SPEAKING TO A REAL PERSON

Growing exposure to automated tools means many seafarers now ask (and some 'test') for human confirmation, especially when conversations involve emotional nuance, cultural context or complex personal matters.

HUMAN-CENTRED SUPPORT MATTERS

Seafarers value speaking with someone who understands maritime life and speaks their language – this human connection remains essential in moments when automation simply cannot provide the care they need.

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

SEAFARERHELP HAS EVOLVED TO MEET MORE COMPLEX NEEDS

Some people contacting SeafarerHelp only need a single supportive conversation, but we realised that others could benefit from more focused, ongoing help. In 2025, we introduced our Specialised Support Team – helpline team members with advanced training and experience in providing mental health support who could offer ongoing sessions and a relationship of care to those who need it.

We have had some fantastic success with this programme, with seafarers receiving support on matters relating to anxiety, grief, marital relationship concerns and child-parent connection, and we look forward to supporting more seafarers and their families through this service in 2026.

FOSTERING HEALTHY COMMUNICATION IN A DIGITAL AGE

The internet has transformed life at sea, helping seafarers stay closely connected with their families, but it can also create pressures around communication and expectations. An increasing number of seafarers and family members asked us for support in maintaining respectful, healthy relationships during long periods apart. In response, we developed the Family Outreach Programme (FOP) to help families understand life at sea and use onboard connectivity in ways that strengthen positive, supportive communication.



'I NOTICED HOW MUCH AI IS MORE PRESENT IN OUR LIVES LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

Seafarers often ask us whether our helpline responses are generated by AI. At first I took such questions personally (all our helpline services are provided by humans), but I soon realised it's just the speed technology is becoming a part of our everyday life.'



– Ekaterina, Helpline Officer

INSIGHT 2:

Growing number of seafarers are reaching out for mental health support

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS:

Seafaring is a tough and increasingly complex profession. More seafarers are speaking up about the pressures they face.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING



More seafarers sought support to cope with the challenges of life at sea.

In 2025, SeafarerHelp supported more seafarers to cope with mental health challenges than ever before. Contacts relating to mental health concerns increased by 35.9% since the previous year, exceeding the number of helpline contacts that ISWAN received at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The number of seafarers supported with mental health challenges through SeafarerHelp in 2025 was the highest on record, exceeding COVID-19 pandemic levels



Seafarers sought support for a wide range of mental health challenges – a growing number were in acute distress

Workplace stress and worry or concern were the most frequently reported issues, with each raised in three in 10 (30.6%) of all cases relating to mental health concerns.

PANDEMIC:

282
cases | 2020

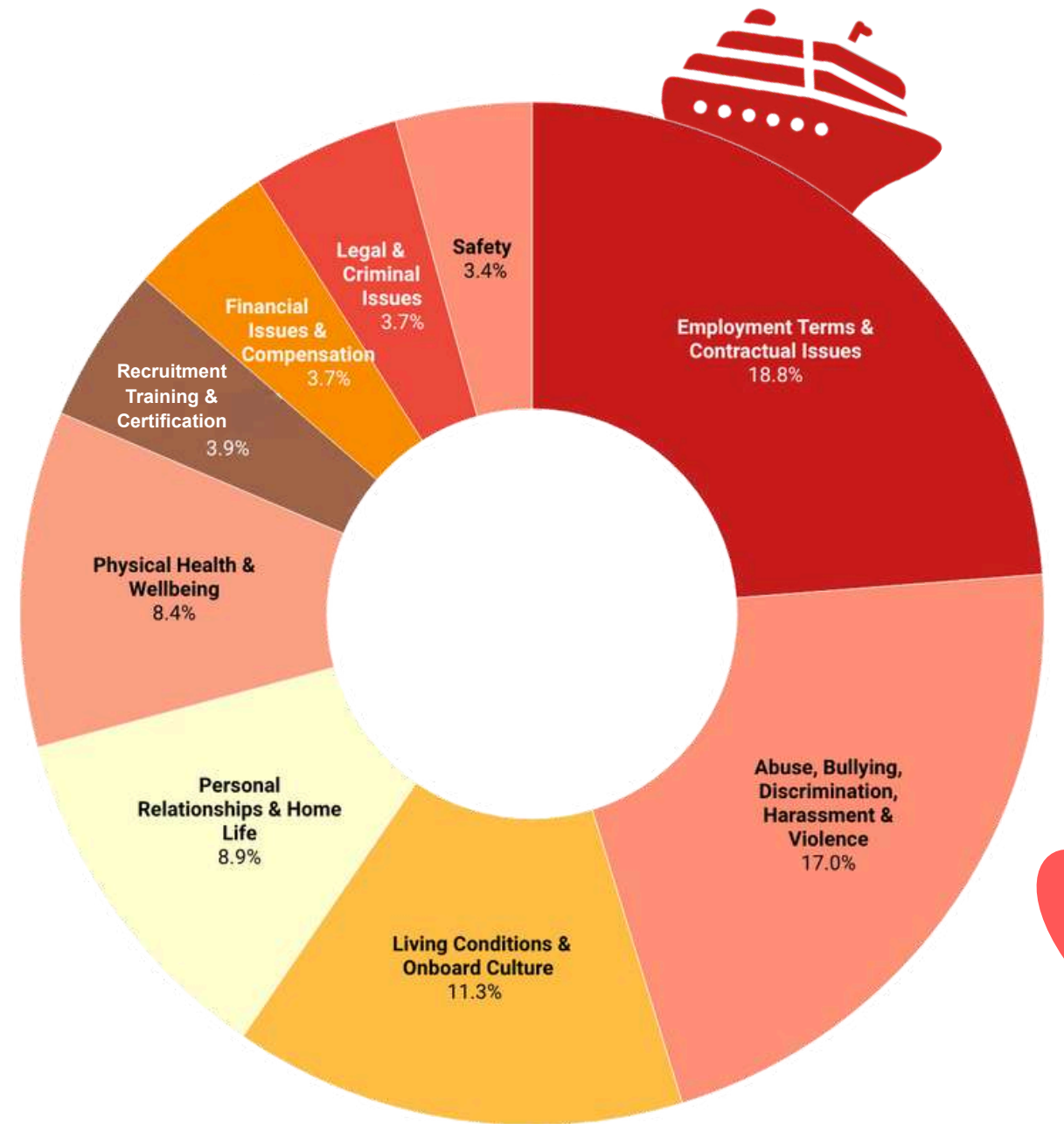
POST PANDEMIC:

382
cases | 2025

Alongside this, our helpline team heard from a growing number of seafarers experiencing severe distress, including reports of heightened worry or very low mood and, in some cases, concerning states of heightened energy and agitation that impacted life on board. This included an increased number of seafarers who reported suicidal thoughts or planning.

Mental health challenges reflect the multilayered pressures of life at sea

Seafarers rarely raise mental health challenges in isolation – they are usually part of a wider picture of stress or difficulty. In 2025, seafarers most commonly reported mental health issues alongside challenges with employment conditions, experiences of abuse at sea or issues relating to the onboard culture or living conditions.



Issue co-occurring with 'Mental Health & Wellbeing' and % of mental health contacts in which this issue was also raised



WHAT SEAFARERS ARE TELLING US

LIVING AND WORKING AT SEA CAN TAKE A SUSTAINED EMOTIONAL TOLL

Seafarers described how long periods away from home, limited opportunities to rest or reset emotionally, a constant sense of responsibility, and the cumulative strain of balancing demanding workloads with worries about family life ashore can gradually wear down wellbeing, even for those who would not describe themselves as experiencing mental health issues.

MORE SEAFARERS REACHED OUT IN MOMENTS OF ACUTE DISTRESS

We supported a growing number of seafarers experiencing severe distress – including very low mood, intense worry that felt difficult to control and, in some cases, suicidal thoughts where onboard pressures had escalated due to repatriation issues or bullying or harassment. Colleagues and captains deeply concerned about a crew member's wellbeing also sought guidance from us, often on how to respond safely and effectively.



GROWING AWARENESS MAY BE ENCOURAGING MORE SEAFARERS TO SEEK HELP

Rising mental health-related contacts may reflect increased awareness and trust, combined with the evolution of SeafarerHelp from an information service to one that identifies distress early and offers preventative, emotionally informed support.

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

ISWAN'S BAYANIHAN INITIATIVE: A CULTURALLY GROUNDED APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

Insights from ISWAN's helplines and discussions have highlighted that much maritime mental health support remains rooted in Western, individual-focused models, which do not always resonate with the lived realities of Filipino seafarers. In November 2025, ISWAN — Philippines hosted 'BAYANIHAN: Reframing Mental Health – A Filipino Perspective', exploring how cultural values such as *pakikisama* (harmonious relationships), *kabutihang-loob* (compassion) and *pananagutan* (shared responsibility) shape understandings of wellbeing among Filipino seafarers.

This work underscored the value of culturally grounded approaches that reflect seafarers' world views and experiences, and has informed a stronger organisational focus on cultural relevance across our work to ensure our support is truly seafarer-centred. This remains an ongoing process, and we look forward to sharing further learning as this approach continues to develop.

SUPPORTING BETTER MENTAL HEALTH AT SEA – ISWAN'S SEAS AND SHORE STAFF WORKSHOPS

Insights from SeafarerHelp pointed clearly to two gaps in mental health support at sea. Many cadets are not adequately prepared for the emotional and psychological demands of transitioning to life at sea, while shore-based staff often lack a full understanding of the day-to-day pressures seafarers face on board.

In response, ISWAN is delivering a dual training pathway. Seafarers' Education and Awareness Sessions (SEAS) equip cadets with tools to recognise stress, manage isolation and seek help early, while shore staff workshops support companies to communicate empathetically with seafarers and their families, provide a listening ear, respond earlier and create clearer routes for escalating concerns. Together, these initiatives aim to build shared language, embed trust amongst each other, and foster smoother, more compassionate responses across the maritime ecosystem.

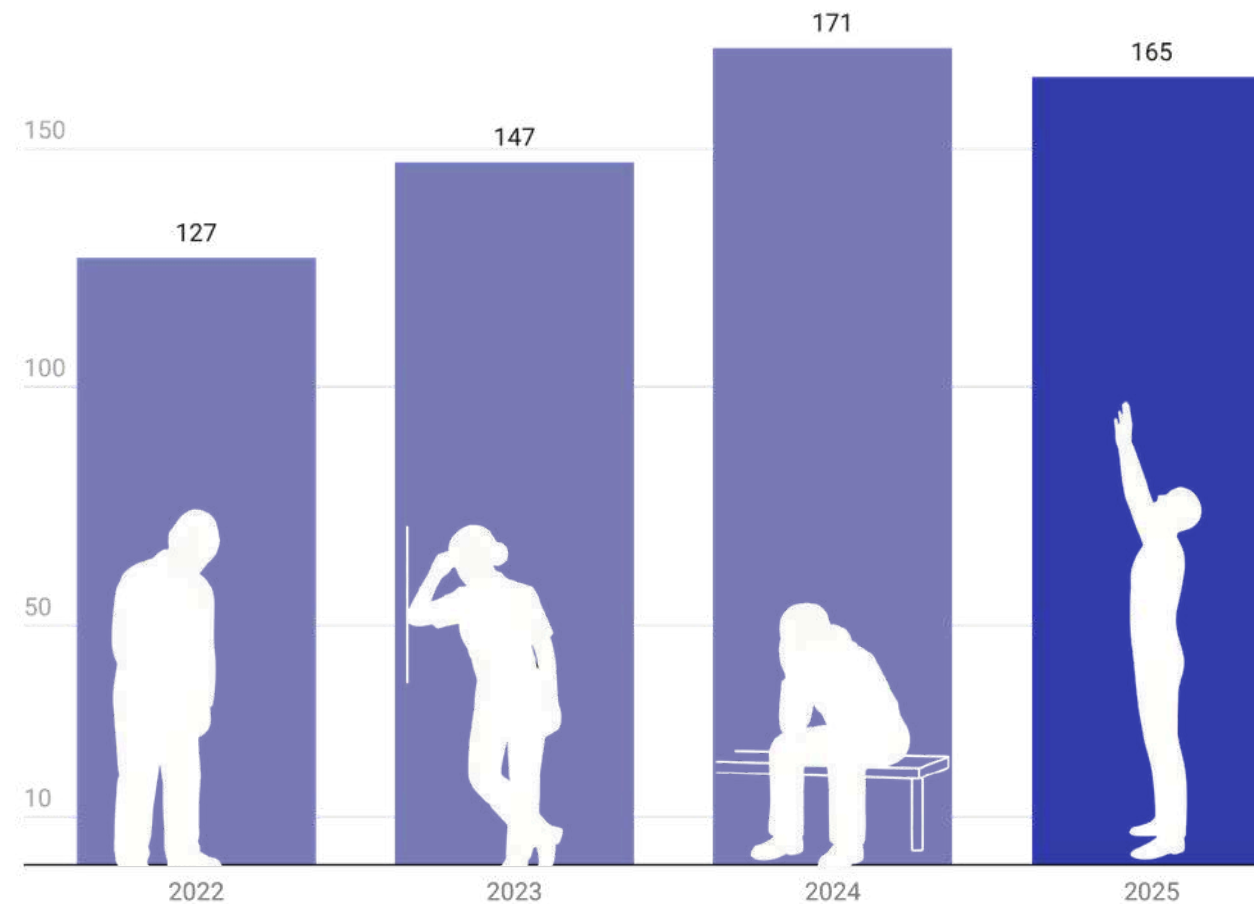
INSIGHT 3:

The need to build safer cultures at sea

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS:

Abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence (ABHDV) continue to have a profound impact on seafarer wellbeing and require sustained commitment from across the maritime sector.

ABUSE, BULLYING, HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE (ABHDV) CASES



Seafarers face a range of harmful behaviours at sea

The number of seafarers contacting SeafarerHelp in relation to an experience of abuse, bullying, harassment or discrimination remained at a high level in 2025, following two years of marked increases.

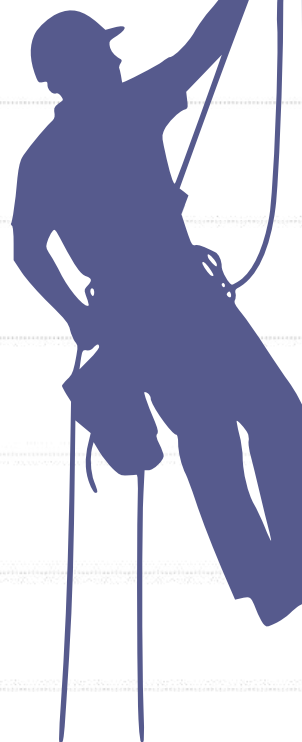
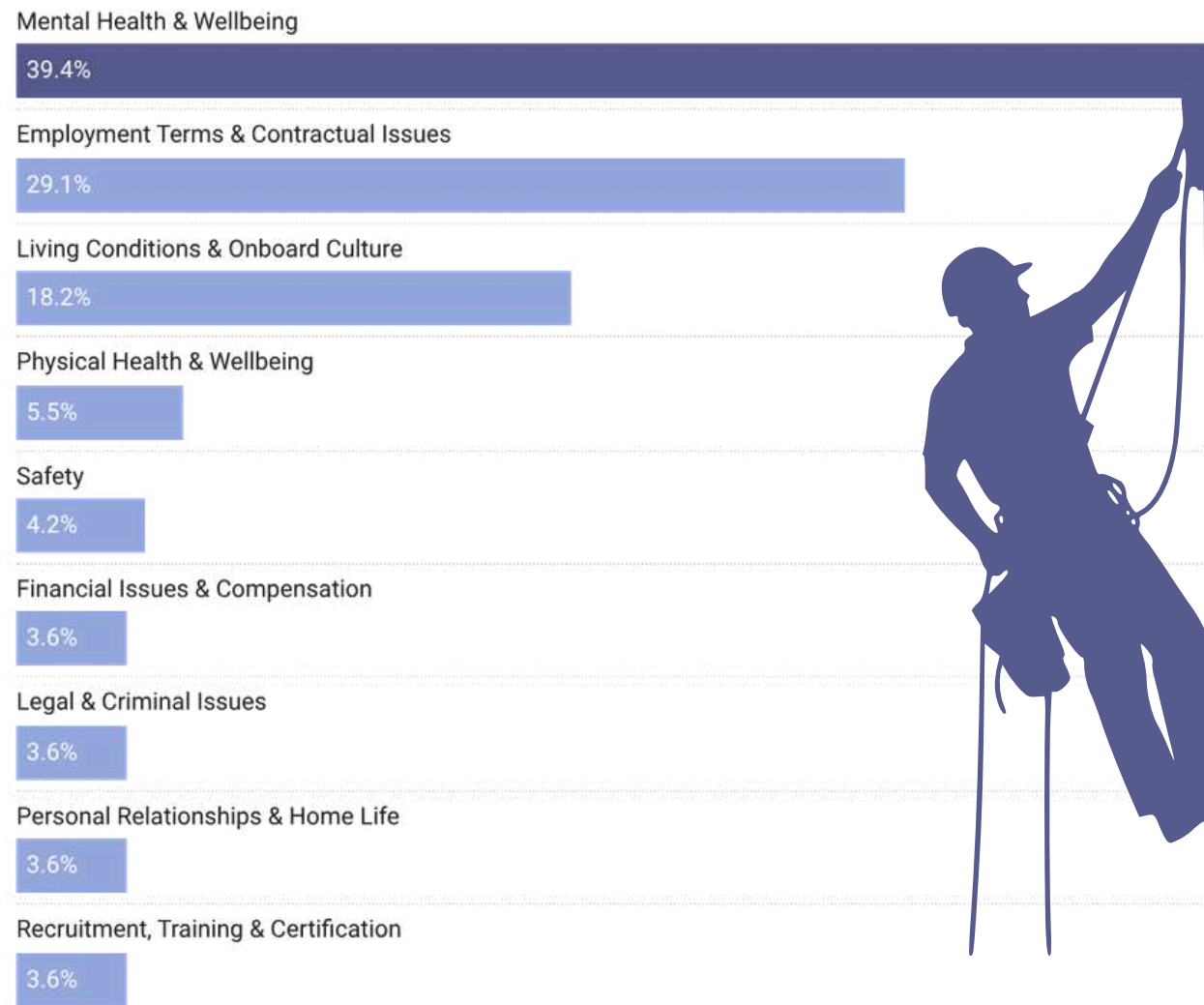
165
cases | 2025

The most commonly reported experiences were bullying – raised in over half (53.3%) of contacts relating to ABHDV – and harassment, which was reported in 43% of contacts. Smaller numbers of seafarers reported discrimination, physical abuse, or sexual violence; however, these experiences often had very profound impacts on their health and wellbeing.



ISSUES CO-OCCURRING WITH ABHDV

and % ABHDV contacts in which this issue was also raised



Experiences of abuse occur within wider workplace pressures

When seafarers spoke to us about ABHDV, they were often also dealing with wider workplace pressures, notably mental health and wellbeing issues, employment concerns or challenging onboard environments.

ABHDV CASES RAISED BY WOMEN

Women are disproportionately impacted

Year	Number of contacts	Year-on-year % Change
2025	32	68.4
2024	19	35.7
2023	14	27.3
2022	11	37.5

4.4
times more



Women were 4.4 times more likely to raise ABHDV to SeafarerHelp in 2025 than men (23.7% of women compared to 5.4% of men)



The data reveals a stark gender disparity in experiences of abuse at sea. Women not only contacted SeafarerHelp in increasing numbers about ABHDV in 2025, but were also far more likely than men to report such concerns, often involving sexual harassment or sexual violence. These patterns underline the persistent structural and cultural challenges women face in maritime workplaces.

WHAT SEAFARERS ARE TELLING US

THE EMOTIONAL TOLL OF EXPERIENCES OF ABUSE AT SEA

Seafarers have described experiences ranging from persistent intimidation by senior crew to discrimination and, in some cases, physical abuse or unwanted sexual contact. Many shared how these situations undermined their sense of safety, confidence and wellbeing, particularly when occurring far from family and support networks. Seafarers also sought support for the long-term impacts of past experiences of abuse, with current voyages complicated by fear of recurrence, worry and low mood.

ABUSE AT SEA RARELY OCCURS IN ISOLATION

Harmful behaviours were often described alongside wider workplace pressures such as long hours, limited rest and unsupportive onboard cultures, which can amplify emotional harm and contribute to a gradual decline in seafarers' wellbeing in the confined environment of life at sea.

WOMEN CONTINUE TO FACE INCREASED RISKS AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

Women seafarers described facing disproportionately high levels of ABHDV, often shaped by wider structural barriers within the maritime sector. Being one of the only women on board frequently heightened feelings of isolation and vulnerability, and several women shared experiences of sexual harassment or sexual violence. Many also spoke about the stress of working in environments not designed with their safety or wellbeing in mind and the pressure to continually prove their competence. Fear of reporting was a recurring theme, with concerns about negative personal or professional consequences and reporting processes that were ineffective or even harmful.

MEN MAY FACE GREATER STIGMA IN SPEAKING OUT

Although proportionally fewer men disclosed experiences of ABHDV, helpline conversations suggest stigma, rigid hierarchies and job insecurity can make it difficult to speak out. These barriers may lead to underreporting and highlight the need for clearer, safer avenues for men to share concerns without fear of repercussion.



SAFER SEAS FOR ALL

The experiences shared by crew with SeafarerHelp point to the need for sustained action to address the structural and cultural conditions that enable harm at sea. Strengthening inclusive systems, leadership practices and reporting pathways can create safer, fairer environments and support a diverse, resilient maritime workforce.

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

SOCIAL INTERACTION MATTERS: STRENGTHENING SUPPORTIVE CONNECTIONS ONBOARD

Feelings of loneliness and isolation frequently arise in helpline conversations, and these experiences can make it harder for seafarers to speak up about difficult or unsafe situations. In 2025, we published the latest phase of our Social Interaction Matters (SIM) Project, using an innovative combination of physical, psychological and social data collection tools to build one of the most detailed pictures to date of how social interaction and rest shape life at sea. Building on insights from all three phases of the project, we are now developing inclusive, practical guidance to support seafarers to act as ‘Social Ambassadors’ on board, using accessible language, realistic examples and engaging activities to help create cultures that support connection, rest and wellbeing.



SUPPORTING EACH OTHER AT SEA: ‘SAFE AT SEA... IT TAKES ALL OF US!’

Launched in 2023, ISWAN’s *Safe at sea...it takes all of us!* campaign encourages crews to support one another through everyday allyship – the small, intentional actions that help challenge harmful behaviour and foster inclusive, safe onboard environments. Insights from the campaign’s first phase, alongside helpline contacts relating to ABHDV, highlighted the need for more practical, culturally sensitive guidance. In response, we will launch a new phase of the campaign in 2026, featuring co-designed, culturally informed resources grounded in lived experience to help crews recognise concerns early, listen with care and take supportive action when something doesn’t feel right.

“ Working on a helpline means being a supportive presence for seafarers who may be going through difficult times or need assistance with something. It’s about offering a listening ear, providing guidance, and helping to connect individuals with the resources or solutions they need. Whether it’s dealing with emotional distress, offering advice, or just being there to listen,

**IT’S ABOUT MAKING SURE SEAFARERS
FEEL HEARD, UNDERSTOOD, AND CARED FOR.’**

– Helpline Officer

”

INSIGHT 4:

Financial strain is taking a toll on seafarers and their families

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS:

Financial pressures emerged as a significant concern for seafarers in 2025, reflecting the complex and often precarious nature of seafaring income, employment patterns and family responsibilities. Our helpline insights show how financial instability is so often intertwined with wider wellbeing and welfare issues.

CASES OF FINANCIAL ISSUES

Issue raised	Number of contacts
Grants or financial support	139
Other financial issue	69
Application for ISWAN grant	54
Debt or money management	15
Compensation for work-related injury or illness	9
Compensation for death at sea	7
General information or guidance on financial issues	5
Compensation for ship's loss or abandonment	2
Social security	1

Financial uncertainty is affecting many seafarers and their families


285
contacts

11.8%
Year-on-year change



“SEAFARERS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY, often spending long periods away from their loved ones while working in challenging conditions. It's not just about ensuring their safety and wellbeing while at sea, but also supporting their families back home who deal with the hardships of long separations.”

– Helpline Officer



SEAFARING IS FINANCIALLY COMPLEX AND OFTEN PRECARIOUS

Seafarers and their families frequently navigate financial systems across borders, currencies and time zones. Income often fluctuates between contracts, making it difficult for seafarers and their families to budget, manage gaps and cope with unexpected expenses, which can lead to mounting debt, missed payments and tensions within families.



FINANCIAL WORRIES AFFECT WELLBEING AT SEA AND AT HOME

Many helpline users described money worries – including unpaid wages, training costs and insecurity – which were closely linked to physical health, mental wellbeing and strain on family relationships.

MANY SEAFARERS HAVE SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Beyond immediate households, many seafarers support extended families, intensifying financial and emotional pressure when income is uncertain or interrupted.

WHAT SEAFARERS ARE TELLING US

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH THE FAMILY OUTREACH PROGRAMME

As part of our Family Outreach Programme, we help seafarers' loved ones recognise the value of sound financial planning during long separations and changing income. This includes support with budgeting, insurance, and emergency savings, alongside guidance to have open, healthy conversations about money, expectations, and pressures to reduce conflict and build shared understanding.

STRENGTHENING FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

ISWAN is working to launch a financial wellbeing campaign designed to help seafarers and their families to feel more confident and secure in managing money across the challenges of contract-based work. The campaign will focus on building practical financial knowledge and awareness and reducing vulnerability to high-cost debt or scams, aiming to support seafarers' overall wellbeing, reduce stress and strengthen resilience both at sea and at home.



I CONSIDER IT A PRIVILEGE TO SUPPORT SEAFARERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

when they are facing challenging moments. Collaborating with them as they navigate difficult issues is a rewarding experience.

– Helpline Officer



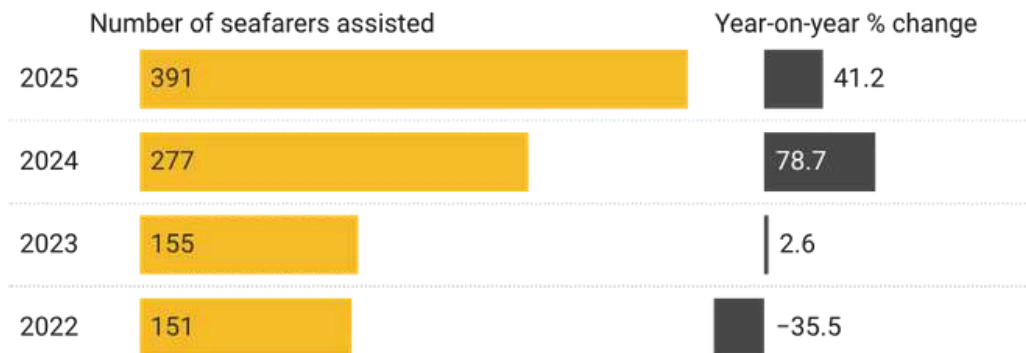
INSIGHT 5:

The growing crisis of seafarer abandonment

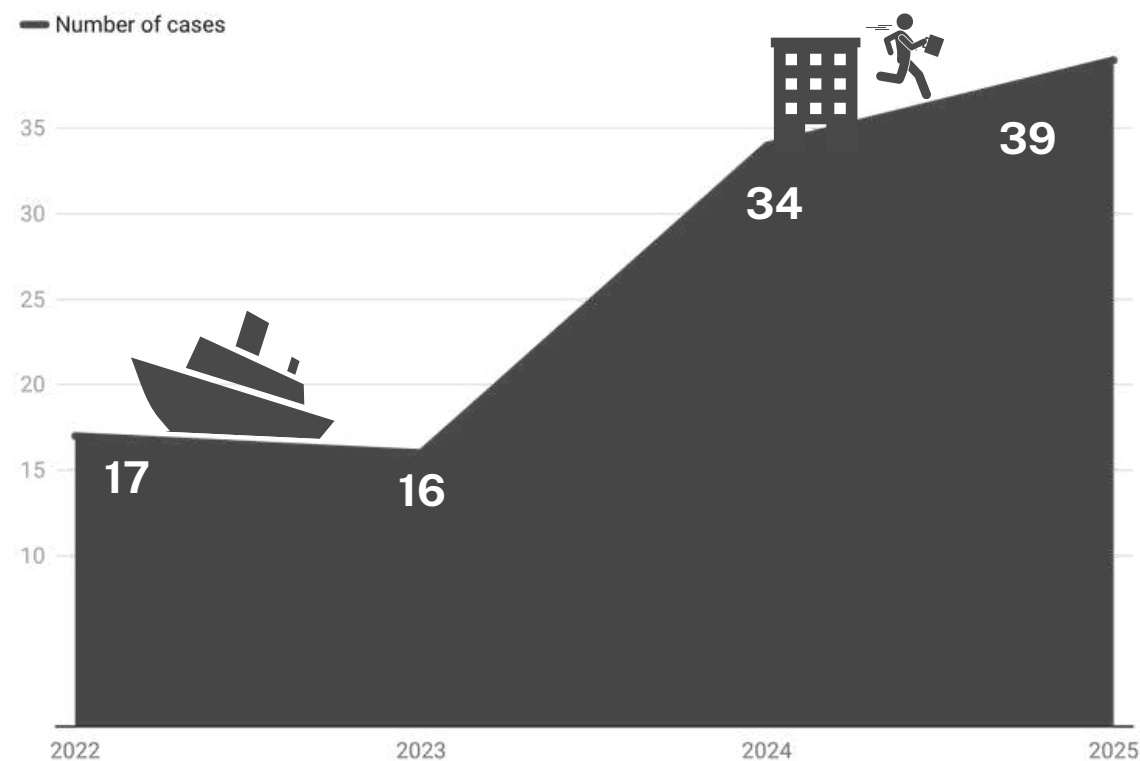
WHAT THE DATA SHOWS:

In 2025, seafarer abandonment became an increasingly serious concern, leaving many without pay, support or a clear route home and exposing them to significant risks to their safety, wellbeing and dignity.

ABANDONMENT CASES



More seafarers and their family members are turning to SeafarerHelp for support to cope with abandonment



SeafarerHelp officers have supported seafarers in a growing number of cases of abandonment over the last three years. The significant increase (41.2%) in the number of seafarers who reported abandonment to us in 2025 reflects the rising problem in global shipping: data compiled by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) shows that around the world, seafarer abandonment increased by 32% in 2025 compared with the previous year.

158.9%

The number of seafarers supported in abandonment cases in 2025 was 158.9% higher than in 2022



A GROWING NUMBER OF SEAFARERS ARE FACING EXTREME SITUATIONS

Seafarers described being abandoned without pay, contact with management or basic provisions, leaving them in highly vulnerable situations. Although ISWAN cannot provide legal advice, our helpline officers offer emotional support to seafarers and their families and work closely with the ITF to help connect seafarers to the assistance they need.

SEAFARERS OFTEN DO NOT KNOW THE FULL RISKS THEY FACE

Many seafarers shared concerns about unsafe vessels, unclear employment terms and poor living conditions that mirror the risks associated with the so-called 'shadow fleet' (which has been linked to the rising cases of abandonment across global shipping[1]), often without knowing whether their ship is affected.



UNREGULATED CREWING ROUTES LEAVE SEAFARERS UNPROTECTED

Seafarers recruited through unregulated or informal manning agents described being left without valid contracts or Maritime Labour Convention (MLC, 2006) protections, leaving them particularly exposed when abandonment or other serious problems occur.

WHAT SEAFARERS ARE TELLING US

[1] Two thirds of tanker abandonments involve shadow fleet vessels: Lloyd's List

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

ADVOCATING FOR SAFER EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS

Building on our joint research with Gujarat Maritime University (GMU) into the activities of fraudulent recruitment agencies in India, we continue to advocate for stronger protections and improved enforcement against recruitment practices that place seafarers at risk.

BUILDING AWARENESS OF THE RISKS OF FRAUDULENT RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

Our Seafarers' Education and Awareness Sessions (SEAS) now include a module on recognising unsafe recruitment practices and best practices to join a ship through a licensed crewing agency. This equips seafarers with practical knowledge to make informed decisions, identify potentially unsafe employment situations and reduce their vulnerability to exploitation.



OUR TEAM WORKS BEST WHEN WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER ON A CASE.

With more than 40 years of collective experience in talking to seafarers in the team, being able to turn to a colleague who has direct experience of dealing with a given flag state, charity organisation, shipping or manning agency, etc. is invaluable for us and for those who need our support.



– Stephanie Watters, Clinical Supervisor

LOOKING AHEAD

Supporting seafarers through times of unprecedented challenge

The start of 2026 has seen many seafarers are navigating some of the most challenging conditions seen in recent years. The escalating geopolitical conflict in the Strait of Hormuz has led to widespread attacks on commercial vessels and severe disruption to safe navigation. Seafarers caught in these events describe significant uncertainty, fear for personal safety and distress linked to extended periods at sea without clear timelines for relief or repatriation. Situations like these have far-reaching emotional effects, not only for crews but also for their families waiting at home.

ISWAN at the IMO: Strengthening advocacy for seafarer wellbeing

In 2026, ISWAN begins its work with new consultative status at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a significant step that will enable us to more directly advocate for the welfare, safety and dignity of seafarers worldwide. This role strengthens our ability to ensure that the experiences that seafarers share through our helplines can meaningfully inform global maritime policy.

SEAFARERHELP SECURES HELPLINE PARTNERSHIPS ACCREDITATION

In 2025, SeafarerHelp was once again accredited with the Helplines Standard by the Helplines Partnership in the UK. This standard acknowledges the quality service provision, consistency and reliability of support provided by SeafarerHelp for all service users on the helpline. This certification recognises excellence and best practice in the helpline sector, and reflects the work we have done to build SeafarerHelp into a go-to service for information and emotional support for seafarers and their families.

BECOME AN ISWAN MEMBER

ISWAN's work is made possible through partnership. By joining ISWAN's global network of members, maritime companies and organisations can access contribute a wide range of benefits as services, as well as contributing to ISWAN's work to improve safety, wellbeing and support for seafarers and their families. Learn more about ISWAN membership on our website at www.iswan.org.uk/membership.



4th Floor
Silverstream House
45 Fitzroy Street
Fitzrovia
London
W1T 6EB

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Tel: +44 (0)300 012 4279
Email: iswan@iswan.org.uk

www.iswan.org.uk