Reaffirming the Past, Resourcing the Future
Strategy 2015–2020
“The Mission to Seafarers strives to meet the needs of all seafarers and their families, irrespective of faith or cultural background.”
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Our Mission

The Mission to Seafarers (MtS) strives to meet the needs of all seafarers and their families, irrespective of faith or cultural background. Its simple mission is to care for the shipping industry’s most important asset: its people.

Throughout a long and distinguished history, MtS has grown to become one of the largest port-based welfare operators in the world, providing a service in 260 ports, 365 days a year, across 71 countries. 118 of these ports have a Flying Angel Centre. International Headquarters (IHQ) in London directly supports over 70 front-line staff and around 100 honorary chaplains in addition to an army of volunteers, who visit ships, offer hospitality, drive minibuses and engage in a range of other welfare activity.

Volatile world markets cannot mask the seismic shifts which are taking place within shipping: more and more of the industry is moving eastwards, forcing traditional centres of maritime excellence to re-evaluate their position within the world. The implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention (2006) will, over time, extend the higher standard of living and better working conditions already enjoyed by many seafarers. Extraordinary and often dramatic developments in technology will bring increased access to on-board communications. However, the crews that continue to deliver over 90 per cent of the world’s goods still face many challenges. The impact of long contracts, quick turnaround times, reduction in crewing numbers, and the inherent dangers which remain part of a life at sea, continue to impose many pressures. In addition some face real hardship, exploitation, abandonment, detention and piracy.

It is against this backdrop that this document sets out the strategy for the next five years. The challenge facing MtS today is exactly the same as that faced by its forebears: to re-evaluate the work, foresee changes in the industry and be ahead of them, so that the Mission is waiting on the quay with effective and high quality support wherever the ships come in.

Our vision is to operate a network where seafarers are valued and cared for in the ports where the need is greatest. We are determined to be in the right ports with the right resources offering support which is relevant, compassionate and life-enhancing. To achieve this, tough decisions will need to be taken, and work has already begun on restructuring the organisation to reflect our global reach. In 2014, eight regions were created to give a more tailored response to seafarers using our services. This work, coupled with our organisational global review, and the continual desire to improve the training, quality and effectiveness of our workforce will provide a more coherent and complete service.
Our Strategy 2015–2020

Our strategy fits broadly into the following key areas:
- Our values
- Our service users
- Our priorities
- Our people
- Our future

To fulfil our aims and aspirations, MtS must significantly increase its income in order to deliver vital services and reach a balanced budget.

This will be achieved by the close collaboration of our Ministry, Development and Communication teams, who must think creatively and devise new strategies for successful fundraising. Moreover, it will require each region to move towards financial sustainability with support and assistance from our International Headquarters team.

This historic seafaring ministry is at a fundamental crossroads. We hope this document will introduce you to our vision as we move forwards in an ever-changing environment where our work is still both essential and valued.
Our Values

Our historic charitable aims commit us to the **promotion of the spiritual, moral and physical wellbeing of seafarers and their families worldwide.**

These aims, though over a century old, still hold true today as we seek to support the multi-cultural seafaring population. They also reaffirm our Christian purpose. As a faith-based charity, rooted in the Anglican Communion, we express our faith mainly in practical ways; by visiting seafarers on board their ships and connecting them with their families and the local community. Our approach to welfare is holistic and comprehensive, and is carried out with our core values in mind. Namely, that The Mission to Seafarers will:

- Behave with compassion.
- Act with integrity.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Believe in justice for all.
- Value the resources we have been given.
A Brief History

In 1836 the Revd John Ashley established the Bristol Channel Mission as a result of being struck by the loneliness and needs of the merchant seafarers at anchor.

Using his example, a number of Anglican ministries followed suit and in 1856 it was decided to establish a single organisation. The Missions to Seamen – as it was known – was made a missionary society of the Anglican Communion and its work grew in line with the rapidly expanding British maritime empire.

In 2000, the name was changed to The Mission to Seafarers to reflect its role as a society which cares for all seafarers, regardless of gender. In 2007, it became a company limited by guarantee and by 2010 all the assets and liabilities of the unincorporated charity were transferred into the newly-named The Mission to Seafarers (MtS). MtS is a Registered Charity in England and Wales (1123613) and in Scotland (SCO41938).
Our Service Users

Seafarers are at the heart of everything we do. Approximately 1.5 million men and women work at sea in the merchant marine and cruise sectors.

From transporting various types of cargo, to ensuring holidaymakers have a good time on a cruise, a seafarer’s contract will typically last at least 273 days.

The key challenges faced by crews include:

- The challenges and dangers of working at sea in what is often a demanding environment and with poor conditions on board some ships.
- Long contracts and lengthy periods away from home, with consequent pressures on seafarers and their families.
- Fear created by the real and potential threat of piracy.
- Issues of physical and mental health, including post-traumatic stress, especially those of a confidential and delicate nature.
- Limited time spent in ports which are often inhospitable and unwelcoming, with difficulties exacerbated by cultural and language differences - and by legal restrictions.
- There are further difficulties accessing facilities and amenities in port locations, with sometimes limited facilities to contact family and friends.
- Lack of opportunity to meet and talk to people beyond the ship’s crew.
- Potential exploitation and abuse particularly in countries where union representation is unavailable.
- Occasional abandonment or detention of seafarers in foreign ports.
- Lack of access to places of worship, reflection, spiritual sustenance and counsel.
To support seafarers in their work, and to alleviate crew concerns, MtS offers a comprehensive suite of services. In all of our locations, our work will include some or all of the following elements:

**Emergency response:** we respond swiftly to tragedy, maritime disaster or personal welfare/pastoral crisis with welfare teams trained in post-trauma care and critical incident stress counselling.

**Seafarers’ Centre hospitality:** where demand exists, we offer seafarers’ centres which provide a safe and warm environment for crews to relax away from the ship, or to seek confidential counselling and advice.

**Communication facilities:** we provide free Wi-Fi hotspots either on board ships whilst they are in port or through Flying Angel centres, allowing crews to reconnect with loved ones at home.

**Transport:** our minibuses and cars transport hundreds of thousands of seafarers from the bleakness of ports to our centres and to relevant places of interest, such as shopping centres, banks and, when time allows, tourist attractions.

**Ship-visiting:** welfare teams welcome crews to port by visiting them on arrival, and providing mobile communications to those who are unable to get ashore due to working patterns. If necessary, they can also provide practical and spiritual support and counselling to seafarers who request it.

**Hospital and prison-visiting:** when a seafarer is injured, or is detained by the authorities, welfare teams can visit regularly and help in sourcing medical or legal support.

**Spiritual support:** In line with our Christian purpose, we are able to offer spiritual guidance to seafarers, as well as provide information on places of worship for all major faith groups. Christian services are carried out either on board ship or in a centre when requested.
The Global Mission Family

Key
- Branches
- Grant funded/MoU
- Independent
- Region

UK Services
- Scottish Ports, Grangemou
- South Shields
- Seaham
- North Tees
- South Tees
- Milford Haven
- Port Talbot
- Falmouth
- Foivey
- Southampton
- Humber Ports
- Great Yarmouth
- Felixstowe
- Tilbury
- Cardiff
- Newport
- Portbury
- Liverpool
- Port Talbot
- North West Ports
Our Priorities

Over the next five years, The Mission to Seafarers will meet five objectives.

Objective 1: Continue to support seafarers by promoting their spiritual, moral and physical wellbeing in the ports where the need is greatest.

To achieve this, MtS will:

- **Expand our Global Review programme:** To ensure that MtS meets the needs of this fast-changing industry, a systematic review of all services will be carried out, through remote evaluation and in-port research. This will focus attention on ensuring MtS provides the relevant levels of resource in the ports where the need is greatest.

- **Embrace new models of operation:** The Global Review will also focus on developing new port ministry models in line with need, and explore family-orientated projects. New technologies – such as mobile apps – will be explored to enable MtS to offer a more direct service.

- **Strengthen the regional structure to allow areas to determine the mix of services required:** MtS will boost the capacity of each region to provide a coordinated response. Each regional director/coordinator will be responsible for drawing up an area-wide plan detailing new projects for the next five years, which can be explored with support from IHQ.

- **Transform IHQ into a resource centre:** The 2014 restructuring of IHQ saw the staff in London reduced to 21 people, across the key areas of service delivery, finance, development, marketing and administration. Moving forwards, MtS will provide regions with consultancy services in advocacy, human resources, project management, charity marketing and communications, as well as create a significant amount of material which directly benefits seafarers, such as the provision of the international newspaper, ‘the Sea’.
Objective 2: Champion seafarers who have suffered due to injustice and mistreatment.

To achieve this, MtS will:

- **Listen to its Service Users:** MtS will continue the process of surveying seafarers to ensure crew needs are understood and to inform organisation-wide campaigns for change.

- **Act as an advocate for seafarers at the International Maritime and Labour Organisations (IMO and ILO) and other fora as appropriate:** MtS provides a leading voice at the UN’s two relevant organisations related to maritime affairs and working practices. We will continue to use these arenas to speak out for the voiceless.

- **Expand our attendees to the ILO’s Maritime Labour Academy:** MtS is the only maritime charity to have had three chaplains complete the two week ‘Train the Trainers of Maritime Labour Inspectors Course’ which accredits them to become trainers in the detailed application of the Maritime Labour Convention (2006). We intend to send all regional directors to the Academy so that they in turn can train shipping industry professionals to be fully aware of their responsibilities for seafarer welfare.

- **Implement a universal standard of first responder training, including crisis preparedness and critical incident stress counselling:** MtS is known for its training of welfare teams. Training opportunities will be expanded significantly so that all teams are fully equipped to assist seafarers in the best possible way. As always, programmes will be developed based on the needs seafarers present to us, however the focus for 2015-2020 will be on crisis intervention and mental health.

- **Use technology to make training more effective:** The MtS network is large and spans all time zones. A suite of web-based training programmes will be explored and created, allowing people to be brought together in a more effective way.

- **Develop robust monitoring and evaluation systems:** Much of the organisation’s work is ‘soft’ in measuring terms due to the fact that staff may only see a seafarer once, and so measuring consequent impact is impossible. However, MtS is committed to developing a new measurement and evaluation framework which will provide a real-time picture of the effectiveness of our service provision on the ground.
Objective 3: We will be the world leader in maritime welfare

To achieve this, MtS will:

- **Reaffirm common standards of care:** MtS will establish a new matrix of quality standards for its work, and ensure that all regions buy in and adhere to them.
- **Collaborate with others in the provision of welfare and in training our staff:** MtS is committed to achieving a high standard of care through comprehensive professional training of our team. Also, to enhance our reach, we work in close partnership with others, including our sister maritime ministries, to ensure the very best integrated provision of welfare and support services for seafarers.
- **Promote best practice in maritime ministry:** MtS will foster a network which shares examples of good practice, and learns from each other. By developing strong links within and between regions services to seafarers will be enhanced.
- **Work with Anglican and other churches:** The seafaring population is a diverse group of nationalities, cultures and faiths. As a global leader, MtS will ensure its welfare services reflect the people we serve. New partnerships will be forged with faith groups and other Christian denominations in the service of seafarers.

Objective 4: We will value our colleagues and help them succeed

To achieve this, MtS will:

- **Promote and support a culture of support:** Our staff, chaplains and volunteers – both out in the field and in IHQ – require the right working environment to succeed. We will commission a feasibility study into whether we should remain in our current London building or whether we should seek premises in an alternative location.
- **Promote and support a culture of communication:** We will provide clear lines of communication on matters relating to the strategic decisions we take, as well as making sure our policies are flexible enough to allow staff to make their voices heard.
- **Promote and support a culture of training:** We will develop our staff, chaplains and volunteers, ensuring they reach their full potential in a healthy working environment.
- **Promote and support a culture of responsibility:** We need to be good stewards of the resources we have. All colleagues have a duty to ensure they are using them wisely and in a strategic way.
Objective 5: Work towards a balanced budget

- **Reduce levels of financial and operational dependence on IHQ**: Over the years, MtS has created successful self-sustainable models for operations across Canada, Southern Africa, Australia, and Oceania (New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands). Over the next five years, MtS is committed to helping remaining regions follow this practice. Such a structure encourages local support and funding to become embedded in the life and direction of maritime ministry.

- **Reduce our reserves**: The Mission’s current level of the unrestricted general reserves provides some protection to MtS and allows time to adjust to changing financial circumstances. In the past, the level of reserves has limited the risk to service provision from operating deficits, such as MtS has experienced in recent years. Over the next five years it is anticipated that, in investing for the future as described in this plan, the reserves may be reduced. This should not impair the future stability of MtS but underlines the need to move to a balanced budget, by securing new sources of voluntary income, sustaining those that already exist, concentrating expenditure on the areas of greatest seafarer need and tightly controlling costs.

- **Develop new fundraising initiatives at home and internationally**: The Mission has benefited from the generosity of many people in the past, particularly in the form of legacies. 2014 saw a marked reduction in legacy income but our Development Team have developed plans to enable breakeven to be achieved by 2020, with maintenance of existing revenue streams enhanced by new domestic and international initiatives.

- **Regularly review our plan**: MtS will review this document on a yearly basis to ensure that it is on course to meet the objectives outlined. Yearly costings will be created for each programme of work.

“We will develop our staff, chaplains and volunteers, ensuring they reach their full potential in a healthy working environment.”
Our People

MtS operates the largest network of maritime ministries in the world. Our new regionalised structure is intended to put the power back into the hands of local centres, enabling them to respond more quickly to the future needs of seafarers.

Port Chaplain, Jordan
The Revd Adam Boulter

I have been in The Mission to Seafarers in Jordan for nearly three years, and so many changes have taken place in that time. But we are growing a real local support network for seafarers in need, and building strong enduring relationships within our community, through our church mission and in the seafarers’ centre in the strategically important port of Aqaba.

Centre Manager, South Shields Seafarers’ Centre, UK
Dianne Erskine

Our Centre in South Shields is a busy and essential part of port life here. We have had many challenges to overcome, and our work ranges from providing simple rest and relaxation for seafarers, to supporting them through significant problems. The Mission is focused on providing a high quality service through hospitality, care and compassion for those who spend their lives at sea.

Accounts Team IHQ, London, UK
Dagnija Bierande

The Accounts team at IHQ keep the wheels in motion for financing the myriad maritime projects and welfare services that are provided for seafarers around the world. We are lean team, but effective in what we do and focused on maintaining clarity around income and expenditure for our ministry and fundraising teams worldwide.
Regional Director, Southern Africa
The Revd Cedric Rautenbach

I was privileged to be able to attend the first Regional Directors’ Conference in Singapore in Oct 2014. At that conference the directors defined the purpose of Mission to Seafarers as, “sharing God’s love and grace with seafarers by caring for them in the many difficult and challenging circumstances they encounter.” This is made possible in our region by the dedicated chaplains, centre staff and volunteers who faithfully reach out to seafarers each day in the ports in Africa with Jesus’ love and grace.

Volunteer, UK
Talbot Clark

I first became involved in the Mission in 1970, and I have been highly encouraged by what we have achieved over the last few years. Our Woolly Hat Day Campaign was great fun and I look forward to working with new volunteers who are joining us every day. The Mission is at heart successful because of our people and their commitment to do good for the benefit of seafarers and their families everywhere.

Fundraising Team IHQ, London, UK
Patricia Daniels

My role here is to develop productive and mutually beneficial relationships with our highly valued and loyal supporters, to bring in significant income, not only in our traditional markets in the UK, but to support new initiatives in our expanding regions. Our vision is for a sustainable and compassionate mission, where local supporter networks will flourish and grow.

Chaplaincy Assistant, Tilbury, UK
Jake Pass

My primary role is to deliver essential ship-visiting services as part of our ecumenical team in Tilbury UK and give pastoral care to seafarers in need. The Mission has been providing this vital care and support for nearly 160 years and I am proud to share the Good News of love and service with seafarers from all over the world and who are from many different faith backgrounds.

Our vision is for a sustainable and compassionate mission.
Our Future

Our work for the next five years will be full of challenges, but has been designed to deliver:

- **A clear reaffirmation of our core purposes:** We know who we are and what we are here to do.
- **Purposeful work:** We will continue to ensure that what we do is relevant to our service users, and is flexible and creative.
- **A regional structure:** Our network is broad, it is only by creating a viable regional structure that we will be able to move forwards together in an effective way.
- **Clear priorities:** No plan can ever be complete. In order to succeed, we will need to follow our main priorities contained herein whilst retaining flexibility to build new services to meet the developing needs determined by our users.
- **Sustainability:** We have a long and distinguished history. We wish to make sure that we remain able to support and aid seafarers in times of hardship and distress for as long as they need us. We believe this plan will take us in that direction.
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Registered charity no: 1123613

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