

▶ MEDISEA ENHANCEMENT SCHEME FOR SEAFARERS (MEDISEA – EPEME)

To all Members employing Filipino and Indonesian seafarers

To help mitigate their Member's exposure to Crew Illness claims, the majority of the International Group of P&I Clubs have adopted an enhanced pre-employment medical examination (ePEME) for seafarers. These medicals are in addition to and are more thorough than the medicals required by the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006 (statutory medicals) and any industry medicals that maybe undertaken (e.g., Oil and Gas UK) although the examinations are combined. Each particular requirement will have its own certificate issued by the clinic.

During the 4th Quarter of 2017 the Shipowners' Club undertook a review of the illness claims it has handled over a five-year period, 2012 to 2017. The annual average number of illness claims during this period was in excess of 350 claims. These are quite significant figures as physically and mentally fit seafarers are vital to having a safe and happy environment on board.

Further analysis of the claims showed that heart related problems and strokes accounted for the majority of the claims. The situations were further exacerbated by the need to repatriate these patients and the ensuing anxiety associated with life-threatening situations arising due to the complexities involved owing to the trading patterns of vessels affected the morale on board as well as everyone involved in the process as well as led to escalated costs of claims. Although not as high in numbers or financial terms, cancer, high blood pressure and kidney problems account for a large proportion of the claims received.

When analysing the data during the five-year review period, it became apparent that many of the illnesses recorded were of a type that would have been detected and investigated had an ePEME been carried out and therefore there would have been a very good possibility many of these claims could have been avoided. It would be naive to say that the ePEME would prevent all illness claims of this type but there is no doubt the number would have been significantly reduced.

From other data¹ the Club has seen, the fail rate for seafarers undertaking an ePEME is an average of 4%, it is safe to assume that considering the numbers involved this 4% represents a huge saving in illness claims avoided. In fairness to the ePEME programmes the number of repatriations that are experienced from seafarers who have undergone an ePEME is a little over 1%² which is due to illness symptoms or indications that were not evident at the time of the medical. Of the 21 types of illness that have resulted in claims during the study period, 10 are of illnesses that are investigated during the PEEME examination and of these, 3 (heart problems, Strokes and Cancer) have resulted in claims in excess of twice the combined cost of all the remainder.

It is because of these benefits an enhanced medical scheme provides that the Club has commenced implementing its own "Medical Enhancement Scheme for Seafarers" (Medisea) for its Members. The scheme will be phased into those seafarers/regions and vessel types producing the highest number of illness claims

¹ Data provided by IG Clubs

² Data from the Clinics

and participation in the scheme is recommended. We have commenced our tailored Medisea programme to Filipino and Indonesian seafarers employed by our Members in SE Asia since Feb 2019.

The Club is acutely aware of the need to avoid exposing our Members to higher operating and insurance costs and therefore the Club will bear 50% of the combined cost of the statutory medicals required by the MLC and the Medisea. This broadly equates to the increased costs of the medicals over and above the statutory medicals.

The Medisea medicals will be valid for 24 months and must be undertaken at the same time as the ILO Medicals. Please see the FAQs for further details.

Because of the importance placed on the Medisea scheme and the need for seafarers to participate, any illness claims received after the scheme has been implemented where the seafarer has not undertaken a Medisea (where applicable as per the scheme), there will be increased minimum deductibles for the claim per incident and further increases in the event of repatriation requiring air evacuation &/or diversion involving substitution expenses arising from the same incident. Please contact the Club for further details on these deductibles.

So that the Club and Members can be assured of consistency with the scheme the Club will accredit medical clinics after careful auditing by a trained medical practitioner well experienced in this field. The clinics will be audited annually. Only clinics on the Club's [List of Accredited Clinics](#) should be used.

The Club has issued each of the accredited clinics with a **Designated Medical Examiner's Handbook** compiled by **Nigel Griffiths**, Chairman of **The Marine Advisory Medical & Repatriation Service** who is assisting the Club with the scheme. This handbook states what is and is not medically acceptable to the Club. It is issued purely for the avoidance of doubt and there are no unusually strict limits other than medical norms.

The Medisea scheme therefore promotes a greater healthier wellbeing for the seafarers that undertake them and also reduce the Members exposure to both claims reported to the Club and those that fall under the deductible but still have to be paid for.

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