

*Serving Seafarers Since 1942*

# UNITED SEAMEN'S SERVICE

Annual Report 2020/2021



*USNS Watkins crew members waiting for a lift, Pier 8, Busan, Korea (2022)*



*Gift Shop, USS Diego Garcia (2021)*





# UNITED SEAMEN'S SERVICE

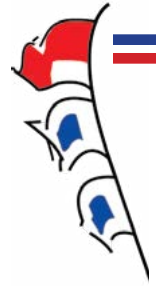
## OUR MISSION

The Mission of the United Seamen's Service is to promote the welfare of American seafarers and their dependents, seafarers of all nations, US government military and civilian personnel and other persons engaged in the international maritime industry.



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*The United Seamen's Service Annual Report 2020/2021 is dedicated to the International Brotherhood of the Sea, seafarers around the world who risk their lives to move America's trade and commerce.*



# The President's Message

## “America's Strength at Sea”

Strength at sea has always been crucial to America's prosperity and national security. The men and women of the U.S. Merchant Marine — and the thousands of other workers in our nation's maritime industry — have served America with distinction both in war and peace, and have made immeasurable contributions to the nation's economic strength, standard of living, leadership in the global marketplace and defense.

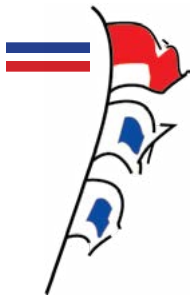


Due to a dangerous and unsettled world, it is increasingly important for America to maintain a strong merchant marine and maritime industry in order to safeguard our national security and maintain our long standing leadership role in the global economy. Looking back, we are proud the United Seamen's Service (USS) was organized in 1942 at a time when the country's future depended on merchant ships delivering supplies to the war front. USS was charged with caring for the ordinary human needs of the seafarers crewing those ships. USS met this challenge, and throughout our history we have provided relief and assistance to the American merchant marine and other seafarers of the world as well as to U.S. forces stationed abroad.

Today, due to the consequence of the wide-ranging ripple effects of a once in a century global pandemic that wreaked havoc in 2020 and 2021, and continues today, it is no surprise that Covid-19 has adversely impacted the ability of USS to operate and maintain services at its overseas centers. Fortunately, prior to the arrival of Covid-19, USS was able to maintain ongoing services for seafarers at each of six overseas service centers, due to an operational surplus at two of those centers, Busan and Diego Garcia, and with support from the maritime unions, shipping companies, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), the All Japan Seamen's Union (AJSU), ITF Seafarers' Trust, and more recently with the International Bargaining Forum (IBF). For years, USS has been generating only marginally sufficient revenue to operate its facilities, yet we have been able to remain open for seafarers of all nations!

Now, however, with the long lingering Covid, USS has found itself in a precarious financial position. Ship restrictions, lockdowns and mandated temporary closings of some centers have combined to present a difficult challenge. USS is working through these difficulties, and with continued support and assistance from our partners, we look forward to enhanced services to our Centers around the world.

Edward R. Morgan  
President



## Current Operating Status of USS Centers

The United Seamen's Service currently operates six centers in a network of port cities worldwide. The seafarer centers might best be described as Port Community Centers, with programs and services not only for the transiting seafarer, but also available to the American military, and all Government personnel plus other members of the Port Community.

### USS Diego Garcia

The USS Diego Garcia Center has long been an island favorite for seafarers because of its good food, friendly staff and room for large parties joining tables together that can seat up to 20 people. In early 2020, the Center's operations were affected by social distancing restrictions imposed to combat spread of the virus. All staff were required to wear masks, bar stools were removed from along the bar, tables were spaced farther apart and were restricted to no more than two customers. Customers were required to wear masks inside the Center except when eating and drinking. The British Indian Ocean Territory Police constantly checked to verify that all mandatory social distancing guidelines were enforced.

When Singapore closed its borders to most foreign travelers in an attempt to prevent the spread of Covid, Diego Garcia was impacted more than most USS locations because Singapore was the hub through which most merchant mariners and all our employees traveled to and from the island. For the employees, that problem was exacerbated when our longtime Philippine employment agency went out of business. Between the travel restrictions and the lack of an agent to process the necessary paperwork, no center employees were able to take their home leave and return to the Philippines to visit their families through all of 2020 and 2021.

For seafarers, a charter flight every two months was contracted out of Baltimore to rotate U.S. merchant seafarers to and from Diego Garcia. Seafarers and any others using the flight had to observe strict quarantine procedures in Baltimore prior to departure, and then upon arrival on island, they were quarantined on island for another 14 days. Once on board their respective ships, the entire crew of that ship then had to quarantine for yet another 14 days. Finally, in mid-2021, the quarantine restrictions were eased for fully vaccinated people to three days in Baltimore and ten days on the island if they were being assigned to a land-based activity. Seafarers still had to do a full fourteen days' quarantine on the ships, regardless of vaccination status. There was an upside to the strict quarantine restrictions, staff and customers were allowed to dispense with masks, and the restrictions on bar stools and table limits were removed.

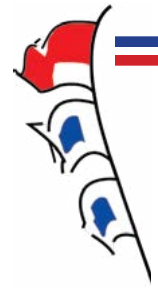


*Maritime Day 2021, USS Diego Garcia.*



*Maritime Day 2021, a special celebration for American seafarers.*





Diego Garcia, B.I.O.T., remains a cornerstone of the U.S. defense posture in the Indo-Pacific region and the prepositioned squadron – with its merchant mariners – remains the most flexible, forward-based tool in the nation's logistics arsenal. Additionally, the U.S. Air Force deployed B-1 bombers to the island for extended periods and British and U.S. Navy warships made port calls throughout the year.

**USS Busan**

USS Busan, Korea, remains open, but with local Government, U.S. military and shipping companies restricting liberty at times for their seafarers. USS Busan also services the satellite port of Chinhae offering seafarers telephone card sales, cellular phone rentals, Korean gift items and currency conversion from U.S. dollars and Japanese yen to Korean won.



*Seafarers from the USNS Henson Relaxing and Dining, USS Busan, Korea.*

**USS Yokohama**

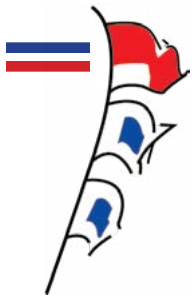
USS Yokohama, Japan, remains open to support seafarers transiting the busy port of Yokohama. USS Yokohama serves American seafarers crewing U.S. Flag ships and international seafarers from foreign flag vessels transiting the port as well as the local port community. USS Yokohama, remains open with financial support from All Japan Seamen's Union (AJSU), the International Bargaining Forum (IBF), the ITF Seafarers' Trust and Covid-19 Relief Fund from the Port of Yokohama (Kanagawa State Government). During the early stages of the pandemic in March of 2020, USS Yokohama was able to provide limited access for merchant seafarers to the internet, telephone, currency exchange and transportation in the port areas. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic and current Japanese Government regulations prevent merchant seafarers from leaving their ships in the Port of Yokohama.



*USS Yokohama Assistant Director, Jack Spiwak (right) discusses port activities with ship escort aboard the USNS Howard O. Lorenzen (T-AGM-25).*

**USS Okinawa**

USS operations in Okinawa, Japan, have had a series of ups-and-downs in 2020-2021 due to the corona virus sweeping across Japan and the world. Seamen's Center operations have been adversely impacted by the government-imposed State of Emergency that resulted in closing the Center's restaurant and bar operations in the evenings. Our center in Naha for the most part remained open for U.S. Forces and members of the port community during the day, except in May & June 2021, when a member of the kitchen staff, Mr. Morihito Itoman, contracted COVID and passed away a day later, sending the Seamen's Club into a quarantine mode. For five weeks the Center was closed while the building was cleaned and decontaminated before reopening on 1 July 2021.



While the COVID pandemic and accompanying Japanese State of Emergency regulations prevented merchant seafarers from leaving their ships while at Aja Port in Naha, Japan, the rules governing Naha Military Port permitted port personnel and seafarers to utilize the Seamen's Club dining room and gift shop.

The challenges posed by COVID-19 resurgence in late 2021 again found the club closed at night due to reimposition of a Japanese State of Emergency and concurrent military directives imposing a lockdown on all personnel and families. The Seamen's Club has adapted to these new realities, and modified operations to maintain customer services to the extent possible, for merchant seafarers, military personnel and other members of the port community.

### USS Bremerhaven

The mission in 2022 for the United Seamen's Service Bremerhaven, Germany, is burdened with challenges as the Center transitions from perils and closings centering on the COVID pandemic that emerged in early 2020 through 2021.

As the pandemic unfolded, the Bremerhaven center was confronted with health and safety restrictions imposed by the German government, including masks, social distancing requiring reducing the number of tables and patrons permitted. By late Spring 2020, all restaurants and bars were ordered closed to contain the virus for several months, leaving USS with finding creative ways to serve the merchant seafarers on ships at the Bremerhaven port.

The New Year, January 2021, dawned a bit more brightly, with easing of restrictions, only to have the Omicron variant of COVID-19 sending the government and businesses retreating again. Requirements for all shoppers and restaurant patrons to be vaccinated or have daily COVID-19 antigen tests made life difficult, and merchant seafarers were again ordered to remain on their ships. Due to circumstances, USS Bremerhaven was unable to provide services to the ships.



*A lunch break for a Special Service Tour for new arrivals at the USS Okinawa Center (2020).*



*Seafarers enjoying a game of pool, USS Bremerhaven, Germany (2020).*





As the Omicron variant was controlled, travel restrictions and rules for utilizing public services, stores, restaurants and other businesses became routine, life in Bremerhaven settled into the new normal. The Seamen's Center began the process of preparing for reopening, with an eye to find the necessary funds to reopen and once again provide port center services to the merchant marine.

**USS Casablanca**

USS Casablanca, Morocco, was closed due to Covid-19 by the Ministry of the Interior on the 16th of March 2020. Seafarers were restricted to their ships and all restaurants and bars were ordered closed for several months to control the virus. Over the summer of 2021, as the Omicron Variant became somewhat reduced in intensity, USS Casablanca began the process of preparing for the re-opening. However, after the center being closed for almost two years and the Port Area of Casablanca experiencing several major sand storms, the premises in some areas of the building had deteriorated.

The center reopened on the 5th of February 2022, but with restricted hours of services and programs. The U.S. Consul General is working with the Casablanca Port Welfare Committee to resolve several outstanding issues related to establishing a full service program for USS Casablanca.



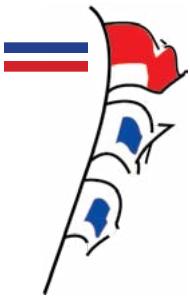
*USS Casablanca was closed due to Covid-19 by the Ministry of the Interior In March 2020, and re-opened in January 2022.*



*USS-AMMLA library reading area at USS Diego Garcia (2020).*

**USS Finances, Policy & Commitment**

For nearly 80 years, USS has been providing relief and assistance to seafarers of the world and this is not the first time that USS operating centers and our services to seafarers have been affected by developments in the ever-changing international scene of world politics and economic conditions. Today, in six USS port facilities, seafarers find a safe and friendly environment where they can relax, take care of their personal needs and connect with loved ones “back home”. Such access helps the seafaring life of solitude, loneliness, and separation from family become more bearable. The USS Board recognizes the importance of these services to seafarers and has always worked consistently to ensure that the centers remain operational, knowing well that once a center is closed, it is almost always impossible to re-establish services in that port.



## Port Center Services and Programs

### International Communications

Communications with family and friends back home is an essential part of merchant seafarers' contentment and USS Centers are continuously striving to make those connections as frequent and easy as possible when ships are in port.

Technology has been key to offering more communications services. The ever-changing nature of the digital world has seen light years of progress over the past quarter century, with USS Centers going from phone booths and phone cards to facilitate calling home, to banks of computers connecting seafarers for free, to Wi-Fi services allowing such services as Magic Jack, to new and improved ways of connecting as this new era has dawned. Cellular phones, tablets and iPads, and laptop computers have made it easier to hook up with home, but have also offered new challenges to our field directors and staff.

High speed internet, once an expensive luxury, is now an essential service everywhere. On-board internet services, i.e. Immarsat, are too expensive for the average seafarer, so arrival at a Seamen's Center clamoring for quick access so they can connect with home is easily accomplished. Evolving technology now has SIM cards a universal requirement, largely replacing the phone cards that have been staples for decades.

The United Seamen's Service continues to adapt, always seeking new ways to improve its options for seafarers. The agency works with the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), ITF, Seafarers Trust and other maritime organizations to capitalize on technology to improve the ashore experiences. High speed internet makes those precious hours ashore more productive for seafarers with their telephone, audio and video calls to loved ones, and to simply surf the web.

USS remains dedicated to providing the most up-to-date technology to enable seafarers to stay in touch with their loved ones, while at the same time remaining abreast of world affairs.



*Seafarer mailing a package home, USS Okinawa, Japan (2021).*



*Seafarers purchasing phone cards to call friends & family, USS Yokohama Japan (2021)*





**Transportation, Shopping Assistance and Visitors' Information**

Due to long intervals at sea, there are many tasks mariners must accomplish when ashore. Upon arrival in port, seafarers can access transportation to visit the USS center. This shuttle service is beneficial to seafarers as an efficient and affordable alternative to taxis or buses.

The center directors also make regular visits to ships in the various ports to ensure that seafarers are aware of the USS centers and the services provided. Ship visiting is an important part of each USS center ensuring that the center director maintains close contact with the ships coming and going in port and the needs of the seafarers.

At the USS center, the director and staff give mariners information about the many services USS provides. Seafarers can take care of business such as exchanging currency or purchasing essential personal items. Also at USS facilities, mariners can get assistance with shopping or even touring the area. If a seafarer has no specific agenda, they can just sit back and unwind at the center.

**International Partners**

International partnerships are increasingly important in order for USS to raise awareness and address welfare issues affecting today's seagoing workforce. These collaborative partnerships bring together organizations from many regions of the world and all segments of the maritime industry, including governments, industry, labor and welfare organizations, to share experience and coordinate projects and activities that benefit seafarers.

USS partners with a number of organizations in support of seafarers' welfare projects; including the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), All Japan Seamen's Union (AJSU), International Bargaining Forum (IBF), the Apostleship of the Sea, Committee Du Patronage, Port of Casablanca, Mission to Seafarers and the City of Yokohama.

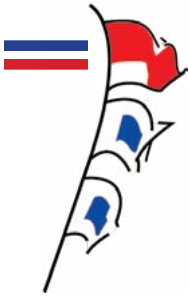
Two partners of special note. USS is extremely grateful for the continued support of the ITF Seafarers Trust in providing USS with financial grants for capital improvements and for the purchase of passenger vans for the transport of seafarers. Further, of particular note this year, the IBF has once again provided an operational grant of \$80,000 for the support of USS Yokohama's programs and services.



*USS Diego Garcia van transports seafarers from the USS Center to the launch dock area for prepositioned crews (2021).*



*USS Casablanca "Committee Du Patronage" members meet with new member Lawrence M. Randolph, Consul General to Casablanca, Morocco (2022).*



## 2020 USS Statement of Financial Position

### ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$389,380
Accounts Receivable	84,917
Contributions and Grants Receivable	110,375
Merchandise Held for Sale at Lower of Cost or Market	107,227

Plant Fund (Land, Buildings & Equipment) 615,375

Total Assets \$1,307,274

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$680,084
Vacation, Repatriation and Severance	406,455

Total Liabilities \$1,086,539

Net Assets 220,735

Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$1,307,274

### SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenues and Gains	
Contributions	\$497,845
Special Events (Less direct cost)	140,362
Sales and Services at USS Centers (Less cost of goods sold)	1,599,611
Rental Income	22,342
Interest and Dividends	82
Donated Services	7,800
Other Income	1,178
Foreign Exchange Fluctuations	6,811
Total Operating Revenues and Gains	\$2,276,031

### OPERATING EXPENSES

Program Services	\$1,714,787
To provide health, welfare and recreational services and on-board library services to the personnel of the American Merchant Marine and to the International Seafarers of all Friendly Nations	

Program Development and Expansion 3,116

Total Program Services \$1,717,903

Supporting Services	
Management and General	\$409,700

Fund Raising 17,427

Total Supporting Services \$427,127

Total Operating Expenses \$2,145,030

Operating Net Income \$131,001

Change in Net Assets \$131,001

Net Assets – Beginning of Year \$89,734

Net Assets – End of Year \$220,735



## 2021 USS Statement of Financial Position – Unaudited

**ASSETS**

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$600,236
Accounts Receivable	97,625
Contributions and Grants Receivable	52,455
Merchandise Held for Sale at Lower of Cost or Market	117,442
Plant Fund (Land, Buildings & Equipment)	524,189
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,391,947</b>

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$629,757
Vacation, Repatriation and Severance	366,996
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$996,753</b>
Net Assets	395,194
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,391,947</b>

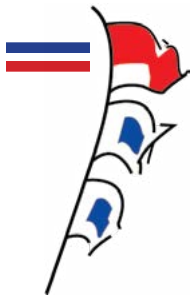
**SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

Operating Revenues and Gains	
Contributions	\$113,336
Special Events (Less direct cost)	340,918
Sales and Services at USS Centers (Less cost of goods sold)	1,628,919
Rental Income	21,894
Interest and Dividends	143
Donated Services	6,240
Foreign Exchange Fluctuations	8,605
<b>Total Operating Revenues and Gains</b>	<b>\$2,120,055</b>

**OPERATING EXPENSES**

Program Services	\$1,442,618
To provide health, welfare and recreational services and on-board library services to the personnel of the American Merchant Marine and to the International Seafarers of all Friendly Nations	
Program Development and Expansion	6,482
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$1,449,100</b>
Supporting Services	
Management and General	\$406,643
Fund Raising	89,853
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>\$496,496</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,945,596</b>
Operating Net Income	\$174,459
Change in Net Assets	\$174,459
Net Assets – Beginning of Year	\$220,735
Net Assets – End of Year	\$395,194

Note: FORVIS' audit for the year 2021 is ongoing and will be completed in early 2023



## The Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award 2021

*United Seamen's Service Honors Leadership in the Maritime Industry and the Heroism of Mariners at Sea*

Each year the United Seamen's Service selects three leaders from across the maritime community to honor at the Admiral of the Ocean Seas Gala in New York. These honorees are selected based upon their individual or collective contribution(s) to the welfare of merchant seafarers, which is the purpose and objective of the USS mission.

The 2020 AOTOS awards, the 51st year of such honors, were presented virtually due to the impact of the disruptive COVID pandemic. The 2020 virtual ceremony was held at the U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington D.C. and honored the four pillars of the maritime community: the U.S. Maritime Administration, the merchant mariners, U.S. – flag shipping companies and longshoremen. The traditional silver statuette of Christopher Columbus – the first Admiral of the Ocean Sea – was accepted on behalf of honorees by The Honorable Elaine L. Chao, U.S. Secretary of Transportation.



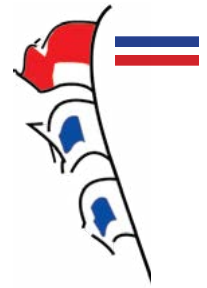
*2021 Admirals: (left to right) Jean Harrington, accepting on behalf of Bill Woodhour, Anthony Naccarato, Kathy Metcalf and Dave Heindel.*

After being restricted to a virtual AOTOS in 2020, in 2021, more than 600 maritime industry supporters turned out to watch presentation of the prestigious statuettes to David Heindel, Secretary-Treasurer of the Seafarers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO; Ms. Kathy Metcalf, President and CEO of the Chamber of Shipping of America and William Woodhour, President and CEO of Maersk Line Limited. Ceremonies were held at the Sheraton New York Times Square Hotel and also included a special AOTOS honor to Anthony Naccarato recognizing his more than five decades in the American maritime industry and the recipients shared the evening with a group of American seafarers who were honored for acts of bravery at sea.



*AOTOS 2021 Dais*





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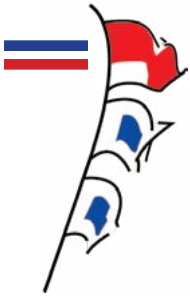
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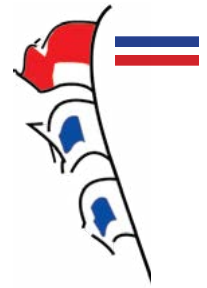


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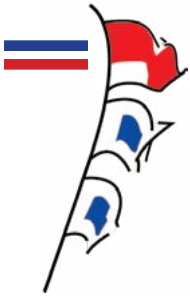
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## **Public Law 91-603: The “Seamen’s Service Act”**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled, that this Act may be cited as the “Seamen’s Service Act.”

It is the purpose of this Act, by authorizing appropriate departments and agencies of the United States Government to cooperate with the United Seamen’s Service in the establishment and operation of facilities for US Merchant Seamen in foreign areas, to promote the welfare of such seamen essential to the overall interests of shipment of United States goods and supplies to such areas. . .

Ninety-first Congress of the United States of America at the second session begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, January 19, 1970 and approved December 31, 1970.

### **Serving the men and women of the American Merchant Marine and Seafarers of the world**

In accordance with the “Seamen’s Service Act of 1970” (Public Law 91-603) and the “Seamen’s Welfare in Ports” Recommendations International Joint Marine Commission, Geneva, 1936.

- Help to seafarers and their families in home emergencies
- Assistance when in hospitals abroad or detained ashore
- Recreation, entertainment and club facilities ashore
- Legal aid, liaison with authorities, help with repatriation
- Postal services, international phone, fax and internet access
- Currency exchange, money orders and transfer of funds
- Souvenirs and PX articles
- Library service, in cooperation with the American Merchant Marine Library Association (AMMLA)





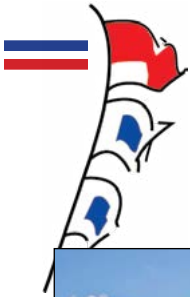
*The American Merchant Marine  
Library Association distributes  
seagoing libraries to the officers  
and crews of U.S. flag ships.*

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# USS Activities 2020/2021



Former USS Center Director Michael "Mickey" Spillane, passed away on Diego Garcia in December 2020. The on island team of crew boat members named a new crew boat "Mickey" in honor of his service to seafarers and the Port Community of Diego Garcia.

October 19, 2020

Mr. Korner,

My name is CAPT Blake Tornga. I am the former Commanding Officer of Navy Support Facility Diego Garcia. I want to thank you for the outstanding support provided by your team in Diego Garcia. "Mickey" Spillane and his team continually provide a friendly sanctuary, fantastic dining option, not to mention an ice cold beer on a hot day. I am extremely thankful for Mickey's full support of COVID-19 mitigation measures from the very beginning of the pandemic. I would not have been able to maintain mission capability without his support.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,  
Captain Blake "Stonz" Tornga  
Commanding Officer  
Navy ROTC, University of Minnesota



"Currency Exchange." Seafarers aboard the USNS Watkins in the port, USS Busan, Korea.



"A Day Off" Seafarers enjoying lunch at USS Diego Garcia.



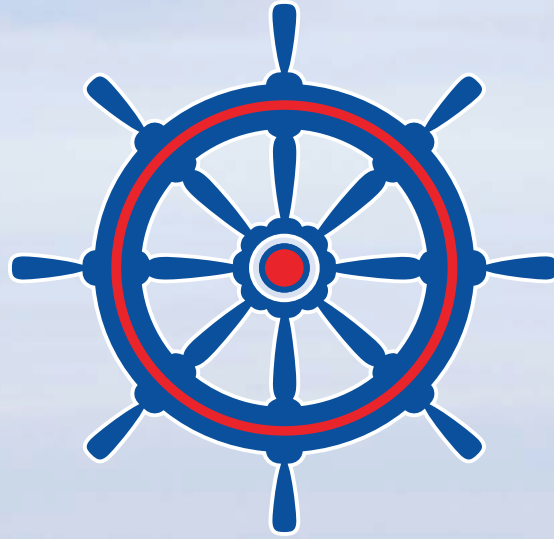
Seafarers returning to the ship after purchasing sundry & snack items, USS Bremerhaven, Germany.



Jack Spiwak, USS Yokohama Assistant Director, greets arriving Filipino crew members aboard the Michigan Highway.



# UNITED SEAMEN'S SERVICE



80 years of service to American and international seafarers of the world





*Maritime Day observances, USS Diego Garcia, (2021)*



*USS Center, Yokohama, Japan (2021)*



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