

## Letter to the editor: Satcoms helps improve crew retention rates

Tue 20 Dec 2016 by Martyn Wingrove



Brent Bruun: Here are my five tips to help shipowners provide effective and affordable crew connectivity

I listened with interest to your video comment, entitled [\*Should we use technology to incentivise crew?\*](#) and concur with your assessment that the availability of onboard satellite communications services can help improve crew retention rates.

In fact in a recent survey, 73 per cent of seafarer respondents said onboard communications influenced their employment decisions. The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) also recommends that seafarers should be granted reasonable access to internet facilities where available. So offering seafarers off-duty access to satellite communications for personal use would seem to be one of the ways that owners and operators can demonstrate they care about crew welfare.

We have heard from many customers the positive impact on crew when they are able to view such content as news in their own languages, sports highlights of the teams they follow, and the latest movies and TV episodes.

I appreciate that choosing the right solution can be confusing as there are so many options available, so here are my five tips to help shipowners and operators provide effective and affordable crew connectivity:

1. Consider choosing a VSAT satellite communications service to offer a fast, affordable connection rather than older solutions.
2. Ensure the chosen solution allows administrators or shipboard managers to allocate data to crew members on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, to allow crew to use this data as they wish without exceeding the ship's monthly data package.
3. Ensure the satcoms solution offers flexibility in how crew can access the internet and other content such as via smartphones and tablets not just onboard PCs.
4. Think about whether the chosen connectivity should not only support licensed entertainment and personal use, but also professional development and training via e-learning services, to add value to your investment.
5. Choose a satellite communications solution that multicasts digital content for easy, affordable onboard access without consuming the ship's monthly data package.

...Brent Bruun, chief operating officer, KVH Industries

*If you have any opinions on video comments, written comments or articles on marinemec.com then please do not hesitate to write to the editor Martyn Wingrove at [martyn.wingrove@rivieramm.com](mailto:martyn.wingrove@rivieramm.com)*