



# KALEIDO SCOPE

STANDING CONFERENCE OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

## PSEs at Service of Nation during COVID's second wave



SCOPE organizes  
**Tika Utsav**  
COVID19 Vaccination Drive



**Shri Ali Raza Rizvi**  
takes over as Secretary,  
Department of Public Enterprises





# Measures taken by SCI – COVID resurgence 2021

Last year, the advent of the pandemic brought on unprecedented challenges and SCI strived and provided uninterrupted shipping services to facilitate the trade movement. Initiatives like the Business Continuity Plan and Ship Outbreak Plan had been devised along with configuration of the IT systems to enable WFH and seamless functioning of operations. Despite the restrictive scenario, SCI complied with all the statutory obligations well before time without availing the concessions granted by the authorities. SCI continues to progress and adapt to the changing circumstances which has been necessitated due to the resurgence of the COVID which threatens the economic foundation of the nation.

SCI is part of service industry and is involved in operation of ships for commercial purpose. SCI has a massive fleet of crude oil carriers, product tankers, container carriers, gas carriers, offshore support vessels all of which are involved in ensuring that the required resources/goods reach the desired destinations safely and in time. Certain vessels are involved in transporting goods along the entire coastal line of the country, while some are involved

in importing goods from other countries. These goods are either raw materials or finished goods required to ensure that the wheels of the economy run smoothly. The offshore support vessels are providing services to the Oil Sector in their E&P (exploration and production) activities.

## Operational initiatives

In order to ensure that the required support can be provided to the economy at this critical juncture, with the pandemic resurgence, it is necessary to ensure continuous and uninterrupted operation of ships. Accordingly, following steps were taken to ensure operation of vessels progressed unhindered, in turn ensuring that they continue to support the economy:

- For the safety of entire crew on board our vessels, SCI has taken decision to ensure that all necessary items such as PPE, masks, sanitizers, etc. related to protection from the COVID-19 pandemic are connected to the vessels.
- SCI has developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for all vessels and all have been advised to strictly comply with the same for maintaining

good housekeeping and hygienic conditions on board besides all safety precautions as per guidelines/circulars issued by Maritime Administration, IMO, Class, ISM Cell and other statutory authorities. Specific guidelines have been issued w.r.t. continuous monitoring of health of crew by Master and proper documentation of the same, precautions to be taken during sign-on and sign-off of the crew, garbage disposal, entry of visitors/charterers/authorities, etc.

- SCI team is constantly in touch with all vendors / suppliers and other authorities so that the spares, stores, bunkers, etc. are connected to all its vessels even during the lockdown period/ COVID restrictions, to ensure safety of vessel and crew and in order to maintain the vessel in operational condition.
- In some instances, wherein certain goods/services could not be connected during call of the vessel at a certain port due to restrictions, in such cases immediate arrangements were made to connect these goods at the next port of call, by spot tendering and thus ensured that vessel operations are unaffected.



- Despite the severe second wave of the pandemic, SCI ships have been operating largely smoothly and this has ensured that movement and import of crucial cargoes like crude oil, coal, limestone etc. have not been affected, there by meeting the energy needs of the nation.
- SCI Liners service has been instrumental in ensuring connectivity and movement of cargo to ensure it reaches the deficient locations as per local requirements. The services have been flexible in accommodating and adjusting to trade demands meeting emergency requirements of transportation of essential commodities, necessitated on account of impending labour shortage across locations leading to delay in delivery of stuffed containers at ports. The services are being ensured with minimal costs to the cargo interests and SCI supports trade by accommodating urgent containers of essential cargo/commodity.
- Even during these challenging times, the Shipping Service between India - Maldives sector which was undertaken in September 2020 for a specific mission by two countries, India and the Maldives, continues to deliver commendable results connecting essential cargo to the needy in the neighboring country.
- Remote working having become the norm for most businesses, SCI conducted all its statutory meetings on virtual platforms including the 'hands-on' jobs like dry-dock repairs were monitored electronically and meetings convened virtually.

### Human Resources' Care

With the onset of the second wave of Pandemic, SCI has geared itself and proactively introduced all the precautionary measures to safeguard the well-being of its employees, afloat (at sea) and ashore, which is very critical to the operational functioning of the Organisation.

### Fleet Establishment

Regular monitoring of seafarers on board is being done in a cohesive manner by the officers on board and the Group In-charge Teams ashore through effective communication. Report of sickness are dealt with immediately and swift action is initiated in consultation with Chief Medical Officer and Health Officer. Vessels are instructed to isolate any reported sickness with COVID-like symptoms on board and report them immediately. Vessels are also instructed to initiate COVID plan as per International Safety Management (ISM) immediately on confirmation of COVID positive case onboard.

**Online Crew Selection & Courses:** SCI mandated that screening and selection of officers and crew was done online. The briefing sessions were done telephonically by respective superintendents and DOs in the specialized International Safety Management (ISM) Cell. SCI deemed it important for employees to balance remote working with a consistent approach to maintain a sense of communal well-being. Resilience and Reflective Learning Programme and BBS (Behaviour Based Safety) Courses were also conducted to ensure increasing engagement

towards safety principles and awareness to safety policies aboard our vessels.

Seafarers joining the vessels are isolated ashore post collection of sample for COVID and only subject to a negative report, they are permitted to join the vessel to reduce the risk of infection through the enjoiners. At Mumbai, Offshore Fleet Officers and Ratings are provided lodging & boarding at Maritime Training Institute (MTI), SCI's Training Institute, to avoid contacts and unwarranted exposure. Mixing of crew of different vessels is also effectively avoided.

Crew change is carried out in a 'controlled' manner as per guidelines of the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), the regulatory authority for shipping in India, and while adhering to guidelines of local authorities to reduce risk of infection. The DGS addendums and guidelines even with respect to the safety on board the ships continue to be meticulously followed. The increased cost of crew changes does not deter the company in putting the seafarers first and ensuring their welfare. Crew changes were addressed with 'Safety First' approach and a qualitative crew change was ensured with due care, compassion, ensuring that the seafarer reached his home healthy and safe.

### Effective communication with the seafarers for ensuring their mental well - being and safety

- Ship support staff was encouraged to maintain frequent contact with seafarers over video conferencing mediums to maintain seafarers' morale and eliminate any sense of isolation.
- Implemented and reinforced

access for providing seafarers a chance to seek counseling or other support that they may need.

- Masters were counseled to remain strong and further disseminate the requirement of maintaining resilience among the seafarers.
- Access was provided to the seafarers to connect with friends and family members
- They were sensitized towards the necessity of adherence to utmost safety precautions.
- Constant liaison and networking with agents for compliance of DGS guidelines and Port SOPs for safe sign-on and sign-off of seafarers and their safe repatriation were conducted.
- All vessels were instructed to organize social interactions and team games while maintaining social distancing to alleviate mental stress for the seafarers.
- Seafarers were encouraged to support each other and be sociable through initiatives like exercise and arranging socially distant recreational activities.
- The general awareness among the crew was reinforced.
- A positive workplace culture was ensured to encourage seafarers to communicate openly about their feelings, struggles, anxiety and to feel assured for asking for help and support, through Senior Officers and Captains, the best role models at sea.
- Virtual sessions on non-ship-related topics were conducted on weekends to engage employees and nurture

employee bonding which included sessions on dealing with stress, happiness and harmony, employee engagement, etc. as a tool to bring employees together as well as medium of knowledge enhancement.

- Telephonic technical and ISM briefings of vessels were commenced for Management level officers prior their joining the ships, from comfort of their home.
- Emergencies on-board, especially relating to COVID, were managed expediently and effectively by the Fleet Personnel Department in close coordination with the Technical Dept. Full/Part-time Doctors and Nurses were posted wherever the need was foreseen to control sickness on-board.
- Liberalized Family carrying permissions to minimize stress from family fronts were a few of the constructive actions taken to ensure the well-being of the seafarers.
- CMD's messages expressing solidarity with the seafarers, evincing concern and compassion, seeking their patience and continued understanding while also urging them to stay safe and communicate with their families and loved ones and assuring them of attention at all times is a regular feature.

### Shore Establishment

Ashore too all precautions are being taken like regular sanitization of offices; nomination of COVID vigilance officers for monitoring that all protocols are followed strictly, also all Government guidelines issued from time to time are adhered to. Specific

details are enumerated below:-

- Advisories were issued for observing all COVID appropriate behaviours at all times and rosters were formed based on the requisite percentage as mentioned in the State/Govt./Local bodies' guidelines issued from time to time in relation to COVID-19 resurgence. A system of COVID vigilance officers has also been put in place to monitor compliance, facilitate contact tracing, etc.
- To reduce exposure, essential support staff has been provided with compulsory housing along with food, PPE, etc., and are rotated as a batch after fixed timeframe and with medical screening.
- To reduce risk of infection, all employees and support staff are screened for temperature while entering premises and entry of visitors is strictly restricted. Regular sanitization of premises is also being done.
- Apart from effectively using Aarogya Setu App, all employees were instructed to fill in the online declaration form available on the SAP ESS portal regarding status of health and exposure with respect to COVID-19 of self & family members. They were required to submit / resubmit the online declaration form every time before coming to office and any omission in this regard were to be viewed seriously. This data assists HoDs to monitor health and well-being status of subordinate employees.
- "Work from Home" mechanism initiated during 2020 continues to be resorted to, as and when, there is a requirement to isolate,

ensuring minimizing the impact of resurgence through 'break the chain' mission.

- With a view to facilitate travel during non-peak hours, the flexi time for entry to office would continue to be extended from 8 am to 11 am till the pandemic continues.
- Curb has been put on outstation travels in order to suppress unnecessary risk posed to employees during such travel.
- All eligible employees are being advised time and again to get vaccinated at earliest based on their age eligibility stated by govt. guidelines.
- SCI Maritime Training institute has taken to online mode for conducting classes as well as for carrying out fresh admission process, so as to reduce risk of infection and in compliance of guidelines by DGS and local authorities.

- Apart from extending/facilitating requisite medical assistance as per requirement, keeping in mind the mental well-being of the employees during the Pandemic, SCI has arranged online sessions like :

- Yoga workshops were conducted including Sahaj Yoga to give and insight to the employees to self-meditation and healing.
- Sessions on "Release Stress to Empower Self" followed by Meditation, "Master Mindfulness to create Emotional Harmony" followed by Meditation, "Master class 3 - Mind Detox - an essential practice" by Ms. Ekta Sibbal (a recognised gifted energy healer and an International Wellness and Meditation expert) were organized.
- Various health talks were organised to enable employee to ask the doctors about their fears

and doubts about COVID-19 and overcoming them by the doctors' expert advice.

- Knowledge sessions by Dr. Meghna Dikshit, a world-renowned trainer, life turn around coach and author on the "How to get over procrastination and fast track your success" and "How to enhance productivity" have been arranged.
- A tete-a-tete with Padmashree awardee, Dr. Sudha Murthy, Chairperson of Infosys Foundation, philanthropist, author was arranged to motivate employees.

### CSR initiatives

SCI has contributed by providing PPE, Sanitizer, etc. not only to front line warriors like Police, but also to needy like HIV+ kids at orphanage. An ambulance is also being provided to A&N Administration as per their requirement. ■

