

On 25th of June 2023 the United Nations celebrated the International Day of the Seafarer - Key role of Mein Schiff environmental officers in protecting the seas

To express its appreciation for seafarers, in 2010 the United Nations (UN) announced the International Seafarers' Day, with a different theme in focus each year. The worldwide organisation is convinced that they are an important part of the solution when it comes to protecting the marine environment, so this year is all about the contribution of seafarers to the protection of the seas. This is therefore a great day to thank the Mein Schiff Crew for their tireless efforts in implementing our environmental standards. In recent years, the environmental officers, who implement these standards on board and ensure compliance, have been a major contributor to the progress we have made towards sustainable and climate-neutral cruises.

Working behind the scenes

For our guests, the work of the environmental officers is often not directly visible as it sometimes takes place in areas of which they are unaware. It starts deep in the belly of the ship, where the on-board sewage treatment plants ensure that every drop leaving the ship is cleaned to the highest environmental standards. Compliance with the defined-limit values is continuously monitored and adjusted by the environmental experts. They lead meetings in order to determine, together with the ship's management, ways of saving energy and thus fuel. These numerous measures also mean, for example, that the ship uses less fresh water than a similarly large hotel.

Also on the lower decks are the technical installations which process or incinerate all waste generated during the operation of the vessel. What remains is sorted and handed over to carefully selected waste disposal companies in the ports – all under the control of the environmental officers. But the focus is not only on waste and wastewater treatment. The implementation of the shipping company's "Wasteless" programme for reducing plastic on board is also an important part of the task. Waste prevention, reuse and recycling in all departments – all of this falls within their remit.

And finally, environmental officers are, of course, at the heart of TUI Cruises' corporate strategy for reducing emissions. Just as they control sewage and waste in the depths of the ship, they continuously monitor emissions in the chimney system and ensure that the operation of the complex exhaust gas cleaning system, with its catalytic converters and scrubbers, reliably delivers the intended reductions.

Unique work at sea

But, of course, the environmental officers cannot do all this on their own. As part of the company's "Save the Waves" programme, every new crew member who joins the ship is trained by them, introduced to the applicable standards, and made aware of the opportunities to contribute to the sustainability commitment of the Mein Schiff fleet in their respective work.

The importance of environmental officers for TUI Cruises is already evident in the fact that they report directly to the captain. For example, their work is a key component of TUI Cruises' "Sustainability Strategy 2030". All for the common goal of being able to offer the first climate-neutral cruises by 2030.

Lucienne Damm, Head of Sustainability at TUI Cruises: "The environmental officers of the Mein Schiff fleet are part of two crews in their role. As crew members and management officers on board, they do outstanding work for the environment, every day and with great commitment. They are also the extended part of our sustainability team on shore. They ensure that the initiatives and projects we develop for the Mein Schiff fleet are implemented locally and successfully. We are all proud of their day-to-day commitment."