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## **Thanks expressed to seafarers: video message on board from VDR President Hartmann thanks thousands of seafarers on ships of the German merchant navy for commitment and dedication during the corona crisis / crew changes remain major problem**

On the occasion of the forthcoming Easter holidays, the President of the German Shipowners' Association (*Verband Deutscher Reeder – VDR*) addressed all seafarers of the German maritime shipping fleet with a brief video message, expressing his gratitude to them for their devotion to duty. Alfred Hartmann, owner of the Hartmann shipping group, said the following in this message: "During this coronavirus pandemic, it is especially hard to be away from family. To the thousands of you out there at sea right now, please know that you are providing an extremely important service. With enormous dedication, and against all the obstacles, you are ensuring: that goods of all kinds reach their destination in ports here in Germany, in Europe and elsewhere, that the shelves in supermarkets are full, and that we get medication and protective clothing we need."

In the message, Hartmann also addressed the ever-increasing problem that hundreds of thousands of seafarers worldwide cannot disembark as planned at the end of their actual missions out at sea. "Many of you are receiving troubling news from home. And you are often unable to get there. As it is almost impossible to have crew changes at this time," said Hartmann, adding that the German Shipowners' Association was making every effort in cooperation with many others: "We are doing everything we can to ensure that this changes soon."

Finally, the VDR President once again emphasised the importance of a functioning maritime shipping system: "Without shipping and without you, our seafarers, there would be no trade, no provisions and no resupplies. So: take care of yourself. Stay healthy, and stay strong! All of us here on shore need you."

The video message will be available immediately for viewing in German and English on the social media channels of the VDR on Twitter ([German/English](#) version) as well as on LinkedIn ([German/English](#) version). We will be pleased to provide the video directly to you on request.

### **About the German Shipowners' Association**

The German Shipowners' Association (*Verband Deutscher Reeder, VDR*) is responsible for representing the common business and social policy interests of German shipping companies at federal and state government level as well as in relation to European and international bodies. The VDR was established in 1907, and in 1994 it merged with the Association of German Coastal Shipowners. With a membership of around 200, the VDR represents the majority of Germany's merchant fleet. Further particulars are available at [www.reederverband.de](http://www.reederverband.de).

### **Press photographs of Alfred Hartmann:**

<https://www.reederverband.de/presse/pressefotos.html>

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