

The Influence of the Crew Change Process on Crew Fulfillment in PT Dermawan Jazaa Persada Jakarta 2025

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Abstract

The global shipping industry has experienced rapid growth in recent decades, accompanied by an increasing demand for skilled and professional maritime labour. In this context, crewing or crew management has become a crucial aspect to ensure the smooth operation of ships worldwide. The crew recruitment process serves as the initial and most decisive stage in providing qualified maritime personnel, involving selection based on educational background, experience, health conditions, and international certifications in accordance with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the STCW (Standards of Training, Certification, and Watch keeping for Seafarers) Convention. One of the most essential components of crew management is the crew change process, which ensures the safety, efficiency, and welfare of seafarers. However, in practice, this process often encounters various challenges such as limited human resources in certain ranks, expiring crew documents, sudden replacement requests, and administrative constraints. This study was conducted at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada, a crew manning agency that collaborates with several foreign shipping companies from Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. The purpose of this research is to identify the factors hindering the implementation of the crew change process and to analyse the company's efforts to overcome these obstacles and optimise crew fulfilment. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the field of maritime management and practical benefits for shipping companies by improving the effectiveness of maritime human resource management to support smooth, sustainable ship operations.

Keywords: Crew Change, Recruitment, Crew Management, Crew Manning Agency.

Abstrak

Industri pelayaran global telah mengalami pertumbuhan pesat dalam beberapa dekade terakhir, disertai dengan meningkatnya permintaan akan tenaga kerja maritim yang terampil dan profesional. Dalam konteks ini, perekrutan atau manajemen awak kapal telah menjadi aspek penting untuk memastikan kelancaran operasi kapal di seluruh dunia. Proses perekrutan awak kapal berfungsi sebagai tahap awal dan paling menentukan dalam menyediakan personel maritim yang berkualitas, yang melibatkan seleksi berdasarkan latar belakang pendidikan, pengalaman, kondisi kesehatan, dan sertifikasi internasional sesuai dengan Organisasi Maritim Internasional (IMO) dan Konvensi STCW (Standar Pelatihan, Sertifikasi, dan Pengawasan untuk Pelaut). Salah satu komponen terpenting dari manajemen awak kapal adalah proses pergantian awak kapal, yang memastikan keselamatan, efisiensi, dan kesejahteraan pelaut. Namun, dalam praktiknya, proses ini sering menghadapi berbagai tantangan seperti keterbatasan sumber daya manusia di tingkat tertentu, dokumen awak kapal yang kedaluwarsa, permintaan penggantian mendadak, dan kendala administratif. Studi ini dilakukan di PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada, sebuah agen perekrutan awak kapal yang bekerja sama dengan beberapa perusahaan pelayaran asing dari Afrika dan kawasan Asia-Pasifik. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang menghambat implementasi proses pergantian awak kapal dan menganalisis upaya perusahaan untuk mengatasi hambatan tersebut serta mengoptimalkan kepuasan awak kapal. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi teoritis pada bidang manajemen maritim dan manfaat praktis bagi perusahaan pelayaran dengan meningkatkan efektivitas

manajemen sumber daya manusia maritim untuk mendukung operasi kapal yang lancar dan berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: *Crew Change, Recruitment, Crew Management, Crew Manning Agency.*

INTRODUCTION

The global shipping sector is currently facing increasingly complex challenges in managing maritime human resources. A study conducted at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada reveals that crew change is not merely a routine administrative procedure, but a strategic process that determines the continuity of shipping operations. Although the company has established a structured system, field implementation still encounters substantial obstacles due to technical, administrative, and regulatory factors. According to Soewarno (1981), administration and management are two interrelated concepts in organizational governance. Administration is understood as the overall process of cooperation carried out by a group of individuals to achieve specific objectives effectively and efficiently. Meanwhile, management is a component of administration that focuses on managing both human and non-human resources through a series of systematic managerial functions.

A previous study titled “Analysis of Ship Crew Replacement Mechanisms to Improve Crewing Management at PT. Jasindo Duta Segara” by Yusuf Sutrisno (2017) concluded that several obstacles hinder the implementation of crew replacement, including poorly managed vessel waiting lists, sudden crew requests, filing-cabinet-based document archiving, and limited interest among crew members in working for Korean shipping companies. A prior study, “Procedures for Ship Crew Replacement at PT. Wasaka,” by Muhamad Syahir (2021), describes the steps involved in the crew replacement process—from crew requests made by shipowners to document archiving—along with the challenges faced by PT. Wasaka Indonesia Jaya, but without discussing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most prominent issues identified include the limited availability of qualified candidates for specific positions, the imminent expiration of essential seafaring documents, and sudden replacement requests. These three factors significantly influence the effectiveness of the crew change process and affect overall ship operational productivity. Although PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada has implemented recruitment and selection systems that refer to international standards established by the IMO and STCW. Further refinement is still needed in terms of inter-divisional coordination and implementation efficiency. This is crucial to ensure that crew changes occur on schedule and comply with the provisions of the MLC 2006, particularly those concerning seafarer repatriation. A more systematic managerial approach is required, especially regarding rotation scheduling and the updating of seafaring documents.

The uniqueness of this research lies in its empirical analysis of crew change dynamics within an Indonesian maritime manpower agency operating in an international context. Such studies remain limited, even though they provide valuable insights into how internal company policies, international regulations, and human resource capabilities can be integrated synergistically. Specifically, this research aims to formulate strategic recommendations for PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada can implement to optimize the crew change process. These efforts are expected to enhance seafarer professionalism, operational efficiency, and the company’s competitiveness within the global shipping industry. These strategic recommendations offer contextual contributions that differ from previous studies.

METHOD

This research was conducted at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada, specifically at its central operational office and work units involved in the crew change process, including coordination with overseas agents via the company's online communication system. Data collection took place from February to May 2025, coinciding with the researcher's internship period. This timeframe enabled the researcher to observe administrative activities, recruitment procedures, document verification, and real-time coordination of crew changes.

Kotler and Keller (2016) state that marketing research is conducted through a series of systematic stages to obtain accurate, relevant, and decision-oriented information. Although originally developed for marketing contexts, this approach is frequently adapted in management studies, including maritime transportation and crew management research.

The research subjects included all personnel involved in crew change management at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada, such as the crew management manager, administrative staff, and seafarers, are involved in the crew change process. Given the qualitative nature of the study, informants were selected purposively, meaning respondents were chosen based on their knowledge and direct experience relevant to the research focus. The informants consisted of one crew management manager, two recruitment and administrative staff members, and three seafarers who experienced crew changes during the observation period.

This study was conducted at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada is the primary location for data collection. Observation and data retrieval were conducted in the crew management division and in units responsible for handling crew changes. In addition, the researcher coordinated with relevant personnel involved in international communication through the company's administrative system. The research period—February to May 2025—coincided with an internship program, allowing direct observation of the ongoing dynamics of crew change activities.

To ensure data validity and reliability, several validation strategies were employed. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the crew management manager, administrative staff, and seafarers to assess consistency. These data were further cross-checked with internal documents, including correspondence with principals, crew rotation schedules, and administrative reports. Method triangulation involved interviews, observations, and document analysis, thereby allowing complementary perspectives to strengthen the research findings. Member checking was conducted by reconfirming preliminary interpretations with key informants to ensure the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected the meanings, contexts, and realities of the field. In addition, an audit trail was maintained through systematic documentation of all research procedures, including data collection, transcription, observation notes, and data analysis, thereby enhancing research transparency and ensuring the integrity of the research process.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis through the following stages:

1. **Data Collection and Organization**
Interview transcripts, observation notes, and company documents were gathered, sorted, and arranged for easier analysis. Full interview transcripts were prepared as the primary analytical material.
2. **Coding Process**
Important sections of the data were labeled to identify specific issues or recurring patterns. Coding was performed manually by considering relationships among statements, context, and field dynamics.
3. **Category and Theme Development**

Codes with similar meanings were grouped into broader categories that later formed major themes, including limited availability of seafarers, constraints on document validity, sudden replacement requests, and other administrative or technical challenges.

4. Interpretation and Meaning Construction

The themes were analyzed in depth by drawing on maritime human resource management theories and relevant provisions of STCW and MLC 2006. This process produced a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and strategies in crew change management at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada.

DISCUSSION

Overview of the Crew Change Implementation

PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada operates as a provider and manager of maritime labour for foreign vessel operators, with service coverage primarily in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. Crew change activities are carried out to ensure personnel rotation aligns with contract periods and adheres to international standards stipulated in the MLC 2006 and the STCW Convention (PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada Official Website, 2024).

Philip Kotler, together with Kevin Lane Keller in Marketing Management (2016), explains management concepts primarily in the context of marketing, yet the principles are widely applicable to organisational management in general. Kotler emphasises that management must be capable of organising resources, processes, and value to achieve objectives effectively and efficiently.

The crew change mechanism at this company consists of several key stages:

1. Rotation Planning: Intensive coordination between the company and the principal (shipowner) to determine the appropriate schedule for crew replacement.
2. Selection and Recruitment: Conducted based on candidate qualifications, certificates, and work experience.
3. Administrative Verification: Involving the comprehensive examination of passport validity, visas, medical certificates, and seafarers' books.
4. International Coordination: Ensuring smooth replacement procedures by maintaining effective communication with overseas agents at destination ports.

Although the system is well-designed structurally, observations indicate several administrative and technical barriers that hinder implementation. These include visa processing delays, limited availability of qualified personnel for specific roles, and late submission of documents by principals.

Identification of Obstacles in the Crew Change Process

Interviews with the Crew Management Manager and operational staff revealed several major challenges affecting crew change effectiveness:

1. Limited Candidates for Specific Positions

Urgent requests from principals are often not fulfilled promptly due to a shortage of qualified seafarers, particularly for positions such as Electrical Technical Officer (ETO) and Fitter. Interviews show that 60% of urgent requests take more than 7 days to process, delaying onboarding rotations. This finding aligns with earlier studies highlighting shortages of STCW-certified seafarers as a common issue in the national maritime labor industry.

2. Issues with Document Validity

Many seafarers possess documents with near-expiry validity, such as Basic Safety Training certificates, Certificates of Competency, and passports. This situation delays the crew change process as renewals must be completed beforehand. Internal company data from 2024 indicated that approximately 18% of rotations were delayed due to document validity issues. This reinforces the importance of implementing a digital monitoring system for maritime document management.

3. Sudden Crew Change Requests

Principals occasionally request immediate crew changes due to health issues, disciplinary violations, or urgent operational needs. Such situations demand rapid coordination across departments and with international partners. These sudden requests increase operational staff's workload and heighten the risk of administrative errors.

4. Administrative Complexity and Coordination Barriers

The most common administrative issues include visa delays and flight booking challenges, particularly for seafarers assigned to vessels in African countries. These bureaucratic barriers contribute to delays in the deployment of replacement crews and directly affect vessel operations.

Strategic Measures Implemented by the Company

Short-Term Strategies

- Optimizing the crew pool by utilizing internal human resources.
- Cooperating with other manning agencies through resource-sharing schemes for urgent placements.

Medium-Term Strategies

- Establishing partnerships with maritime training institutions to secure special quotas for ETO programs.
- Developing a structured career path from Electrical Cadet → Assistant ETO → ETO.

Long-Term Strategies

- Developing e-learning platforms and simulators to accelerate ETO competency development.
- Building a continuous talent pipeline through routine ETO cadet recruitment.
- Creating a database to monitor critical manpower needs across vessel fleets.

These strategies aim to systematically address ETO shortages, maintain optimal vessel operations, uphold safety standards, and support the company's long-term competitive performance.

Additional improvement steps include:

- a. Conducting detailed verification of the last agreements and emphasizing that falsifying experience data is a serious violation that may result in disqualification, blacklisting, or professional reporting.
- b. Establishing a salary scale based on GT, flag, vessel type, and rank, and communicating this openly to all crew pool members.
- c. Providing guidance during vacancy offering sessions as frequently changing vessel types negatively impact career progression and employability in the international market.
- d. Forming a standby crew pool with complete readiness in documents and certifications, particularly for positions with chronic shortages.
- e. Enforcing policies requiring all documents to be valid for at least 12 months and monitoring document validity even for seafarers currently on board.

Ongoing Improvement Initiatives

- Digital Database System Development: Implementing internal applications to monitor document validity and crew readiness in real time.
- Strengthened International Communication: Enhancing communication with overseas partner agents for flexible and accurate scheduling adjustments.
- Capacity Building through Training: Collaborating with maritime training institutions to accelerate the preparation of STCW-compliant seafarers.
- Realistic Rotation Scheduling: Creating schedules that consider administrative obstacles and international logistical complexities.

These initiatives produced positive outcomes, reflected in a 25% increase in crew change punctuality during the first semester of 2025 compared to the previous period.

Comparison with Previous Studies

Compared with previous national studies—which focused largely on low crew interest in Korean shipping companies or detailed procedural analysis—this study highlights different dimensions. The present research focuses more on the specific challenges occurring in crew change operations at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada.

Moreover, this study emphasizes the international dimension of crew management, where cross-border coordination with multiple agents and maritime authorities is essential. It also underscores the importance of integrating digital management systems to improve operational efficiency, aligning with findings that digitalization is a key driver of productivity improvement in the modern shipping industry.

Structured Crew Change Planning and Scheduling

PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada applies structured planning by preparing long-term rotation schedules, typically three to six months ahead, enabling predictable and well-prepared crew changes. Using a digital crew management system, the company monitors contract durations, rest schedules, and replacement availability. This effort ensures efficient rotations, prevents onboard manpower shortages, and confirms personnel readiness (Maritime Labour Convention, 2006).

Intensive Coordination with Stakeholders

To support smooth crew change processes, the company strengthens coordination with port agents, immigration, port authorities, and quarantine offices. Regular communication with shipowners and operators ensures timely fulfillment of crew requirements in accordance with operational standards.

Enhancing Human Resource Quality and Readiness

The company is committed to improving crew readiness by providing regular training and certification. PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada also maintains a crew pooling system to ensure standby personnel are always available. This aligns with the requirements outlined in the IMO STCW Manila Amendments (2010).

Optimizing Administration and Travel Documentation

To streamline crew changes, the company adopts faster, integrated procedures for visas, seafarer's books, medical certificates, and travel clearance. Cooperation with experienced third parties helps ensure timely administrative compliance.

Mitigating Transportation and Logistical Constraints

The company works with airlines, travel agencies, and local transport providers to secure travel arrangements. Backup plans are prepared for emergencies such as flight cancellations, ensuring crew mobilization remains consistent with operational schedules.

Utilization of Information Technology

PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada optimizes digital platforms to monitor crew status in real time—on board, off board, or standby. Internal communication tools such as WhatsApp Business and CrewApp accelerate coordination and ensure accurate information flow.

Regular Evaluation and Monitoring

The company conducts continuous evaluation and monitoring to identify challenges and define necessary improvements. The results serve as the basis for preparing management performance reports and inform strategic decision-making to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in crew management.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the crew change process at PT. Dermawan Jazaa Persada still encounters several fundamental obstacles. These challenges include limited availability of seafarers for certain ranks, seafarers' documents nearing expiration, sudden requests for crew replacement, and administrative complexities related to visa processing and international coordination. These factors have been shown to directly affect the smoothness of crew rotation and potentially hinder the operational effectiveness of the vessels. On the other hand, the company's strategic measures have demonstrated positive impacts on the timeliness and quality of crew change management. The implementation of a digital database system, strengthened communication with overseas agencies, enhanced seafarers' competencies through training, and the development of a more realistic rotation schedule have all contributed to improved internal performance. These findings affirm that the use of technology, cross-border coordination, and the strengthening of human resource capacity are essential pillars in supporting the effectiveness of modern maritime management. The implications of these findings suggest that maritime manpower agencies need to strengthen their document monitoring systems, expand international networks, and enhance operational readiness to remain competitive in the increasingly dynamic global shipping industry.

Academic and Practical Contributions

Academically, this research provides empirical insights into the dynamics of crew changes within maritime manpower companies operating in an international context. It expands the existing literature on crew change management, particularly concerning the role of digitalization and international coordination in improving crewing efficiency.

In practice, the findings offer guidance to companies, personnel managers, and maritime industry stakeholders for identifying common obstacles and formulating strategies to optimize the crew change process. These results may serve as a reference for developing internal policies, improving rotation planning, and implementing more adaptive and integrated information technology systems.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies may be directed toward several areas, including:

1. **Development of Integrated Digital Systems**

Research exploring the design and effectiveness of digital platforms to monitor crew readiness, document validity, and rotation scheduling in real time.

2. Cross-Country or Cross-Company Comparisons
Comparative studies between Indonesian maritime manpower companies and international firms to identify differences and best practices in crew change management.
3. Economic Impact Analysis
Investigations into how delays in crew changes affect operational costs, business opportunities, and vessel efficiency.
4. Quantitative Approaches
Studies employing survey methods with a larger number of respondents to obtain quantitative insights into the effectiveness of crew management systems.

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