Nautilus International (formally NUMAST) is the trade union and professional organisation for maritime professionals at sea and ashore. The organisation represent 24,000 shipmasters, officers, officer trainees (cadets) and shipping industry personnel, such as ship pilots, inland navigation workers, vessel traffic services operators (similar to air traffic control), harbourmasters, seafarers in the oil and gas industry, and shore-based staff.

A few hours before Seafarers’ Day Nautilus International has called on the maritime industry to back a campaign to create decent working and living conditions for all seafarers.

IMO’s Day of the Seafarer (25th June) is an annual opportunity for the public to remember that seafarers deliver more than 90% of the goods in the supermarket and say ‘Thank You’ to seafarers. However, the Union would like the industry itself to go one step and further and ensure that all seafarers can enjoy the same standards of living and working conditions that shore-side workers enjoy.

Said Nautilus General Secretary Mark Dickinson, “Saying ‘Thank You’ is very important and we would encourage members of the public to take this opportunity to reflect on the amount that seafarers do to bring them their everyday goods. However, the maritime industry itself needs go further than just passing on their gratitude once a year.

“We all need to work together to ensure that all seafarers, where ever they work in the world, enjoy a decent standard of living. Therefore, Nautilus is calling on companies working in the maritime industry to support our Fair Transport campaign, and the establishment of a Fair Transport mark, to show that they provide their seafarers with good conditions and encourage other companies to do likewise.”

The Fair Transport campaign is designed to be similar to the FairTrade Mark which promotes equality for developing world countries involved in global food production. This mark does not extend to the transportation of these goods and therefore, even ships carrying FairTrade produce can be substandard.

The Union is working to establish a Fair Transport Mark which would improve the visibility of the shipping industry, recognise quality ship operators and deliver decent working conditions for seafarers.

For more information on the Fair Transport campaign readers are invited to study www.nautilusint.org then for more information about Day of the Seafarer visit www.imo.org