

Statement from Guy Platten, Secretary General of the International Chamber of Shipping, on the refloating of the Ever Given.

“Along with the wider shipping community, ICS is pleased and relieved by the news that the Ever Given has been successfully refloated, and that traffic will begin to return to normal in the Suez Canal in the coming week. We applaud the team which led this herculean effort, working around the clock as the world watched.

“This incident has brought to centre stage the importance of global shipping to daily life, and the delicate nature of the global supply chain it underpins.

“An estimated 12% of global trade passes through the Suez Canal, comprising of more than one billion tonnes of goods each year. This includes the majority of trade between Asia and Europe; I am relieved that goods like food, fuel, vital medical equipment and PPE will begin to move freely once again.

“ICS expects the results of a full investigation into the incident to be made public once complete, to ensure any vital lessons are learnt.

“There is also another, more pervasive issue threatening global trade right now, shipping’s ongoing crew change crisis. 200,000 seafarers are being impacted by restrictive travel policies which stop them boarding or disembarking ships.

“I hope this incident will remind governments of the vital role that seafarers and shipping plays in keeping world trade moving. Seafarers must not be forgotten as soon as this incident is over.

“Last Friday, the WHO, IMO, ILO, and other United Nation bodies called for all governments to prioritise seafarers and aircrews for the vaccine. This must happen now, so that global trade can safely continue.”

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About ICS

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) is the principal international trade association for merchant shipowners and operators, representing all sectors and trades and over 80% of the world merchant fleet.