

OCTOBER EDITION - 2026

siliconindia

SILICONINDIA.COM

**Bringing
Precision,
Perspective
and Patient
Understanding
to Neurological
Care**

Dr Kishore K V

Neurologist



NEOSEA TALENT MANAGEMENT:

Bringing an HR-First Approach to Maritime Talent

The maritime industry depends on a workforce capable of performing under demanding operational, regulatory and safety conditions. Yet effective ship talent management involves far more than filling vacancies. Shipowners need recruitment partners that can verify credentials, understand vessel-specific requirements, manage crew rotations, support compliance and, importantly, retain experienced professionals. As experienced officers become harder to retain and seafarer expectations evolve, the traditional placement-led approach to manning is giving way to a more structured, people-centric model.

This is the space in which NEOSEA Talent Management has built its proposition. Headquartered in Noida and operating as an RPSL-licensed crew manning and recruitment company under the DG Shipping framework, NEOSEA places Indian and international seafarers with shipping principals across tanker, bulk and container vessels. Its capabilities also extend to shore-based maritime recruitment and industrial and corporate staffing.

The wider group includes Seaspeed Marine Management, Neobridge Marine Management and Seavelocity Marine Management in Sharjah, connecting the organization with both the Indian talent supply side and the Gulf-based owner ecosystem.

At the leadership level, Sunil Kumar Singhal, Director – Operations, brings more than two decades of HR experience from pharmaceutical manufacturing companies including Ranbaxy, Alkem and Akums Drugs, and manages the crewing operations. His background has shaped the belief that maritime recruitment must be managed as a disciplined HR function, particularly in a highly regulated environment. Capt. Anil Agarwal, Managing Director, mentors the team in building this operational approach.

Treating Manning as a Talent Function

For NEOSEA, the distinction between recruitment and talent management is fundamental. The company manages the crew lifecycle from sourcing and screening through documentation, verification, pre-joining formalities, deployment and sign-off coordination. It also supports crew planning and recruits shore-based professionals,



Capt. Anil Agarwal
Managing Director

including superintendents, crewing managers and technical and operations personnel.

Candidate selection is deliberately vessel-specific. Rather than forwarding technically qualified candidates simply to close vacancies, NEOSEA evaluates whether a seafarer's experience aligns with the vessel type, cargo profile, operating environment and management culture. Documentation, including CDC, INDoS, STCW competency, endorsements, medicals and flag-state requirements, is verified before the candidate reaches the principal.

"Our approach is to complete the fundamental checks before presenting a candidate, so that the principal can concentrate on evaluating suitability rather than repeating basic verification," says Capt. Anil Agarwal.

Importantly, the company does not consider sign-on the end of recruitment. Contract completion, principal feedback and the seafarer's willingness to return are

treated as indicators of whether a placement has genuinely worked.

Building Reliability into the Crew Lifecycle

Crewing rarely follows a perfect schedule. Vessel movements change, visas are delayed, medicals can fail and joining timelines can shift unexpectedly. NEOSEA therefore focuses on identifying potential failures early rather than promising a completely seamless process.

Each principal has a designated account owner responsible for carrying requirements through the crew lifecycle. Documentation, planning and travel are managed through a sequenced process, reducing gaps between teams. Training follows a similarly pragmatic model. NEOSEA does not position itself as a training institute; instead, competency gaps identified during screening are addressed by directing seafarers to accredited institutes for required training or endorsements.

Welfare is embedded into the employment relationship through a strict no-fee policy, transparent communication of wages and contract terms, and a defined point of contact for families while seafarers are at sea. This approach reflects the company's broader view that retention begins with how professionals are treated before they even board a vessel.



NEOSEA's response is to build longer-term relationships rather than encourage constant movement between principals

Technology for Control, Judgement for Hiring

NEOSEA takes a practical view of maritime digitization. For the company, technology earns its place when it solves operational problems rather than merely replacing spreadsheets with another digital filing system.

Its planned crewing platform is intended to strengthen three critical areas: documentation, workforce planning and communication records. Certificates, medicals, visas and endorsements all carry expiry dates, and tracking these manually across a growing crew pool creates avoidable risk. Automated visibility can flag upcoming expiries before they disrupt deployment.

Workforce planning is equally important. A robust system should provide advance visibility into upcoming relief requirements, available seafarers and ranks likely to face shortages, enabling action months before joining dates. Digital records can also preserve a traceable history of commitments made to principals and seafarers rather than leaving critical information scattered across individual messages and devices.

Candidate selection, however, remains human.

"Software can filter rank, certificates, sea time and vessel type, and it should—that is mechanical work. But the decisions that determine whether a placement lasts are human," explains Sunil Kumar Singhal. "Twenty years of HR work has taught me that the candidate who looks best on paper and the candidate who performs are frequently two different people. Technology for tracking, planning and records. Judgement for the hiring decision."

That distinction captures NEOSEA's HR-first philosophy: use systems to strengthen control and consistency, but retain experienced human judgement where behaviour, suitability and long-term performance matter.



Building Trust for the Next Phase

Looking ahead, the organization is preparing to move to a higher RPSL slab while completing ISO 9001:2015 certification through IRQS. It also intends to strengthen its digital systems before scaling further and deepen relationships with a focused group of principals rather than pursuing presence in every market.

"For NEOSEA, success is ultimately defined by two relationships: a seafarer who returns for multiple contracts and a principal that no longer needs to look elsewhere for dependable talent," shares Capt. Anil Agarwal.

By bringing compliance, technology, HR discipline and workforce care into the same operating model, NEOSEA is working towards a clear objective: becoming not simply another manning agency, but a maritime talent partner built around reliability, retention and long-term trust. **Si**