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**Stena Line’s Able Seamen Volunteer for Mercy Ships**

**After a successful volunteer program in 2018, two more employees are preparing for a three-month adventure, joining the Mercy Ships hospital ship ‘Africa Mercy’. In addition to fundraising and raising awareness for the humanitarian NGO, Stena Line also aims to contribute the unique technical and naval competence held by its employees to the work of Mercy Ships.**

In the next few days two Stena Line Able Seamen, Martina Thowsen and Alexander Gustafsson, will commence their journey in the Las Palmas ship yard where the hospital ship Africa Mercy is scheduled for maintenance before continuing the journey down to the coast of Senegal. Exactly what their specific tasks will be depends on the ship’s needs at the time, but they both up for the challenge.

“I feel very prepared for what is yet to come and want to thank my colleagues at Stena Line who have shared with me their very valuable experience and knowledge”, says Alexander Gustafsson, Able Seaman at Stena Nautica, operating on the Varberg - Grenaa route.

There are more than 200 different roles required to run the Africa Mercy ship and even though medical care is the substantive part of the operation, other professions are much needed including carpenters, mechanics, security officers and chefs to mention just a few. Onboard there will be around 50 different nationalities sharing their knowledge and onboard experiences as part of the team.

“I am looking forward to meeting people from other cultures and countries, but most of all I am looking forward to contributing to this great cause. Even though I’m not working with the medical care team, on Africa Mercy I will still be helping to improve people’s lives”, says Martina Thowsen, Able Seaman on Stena Scandinavica, which operates the Gothenburg - Kiel route.

The volunteer program is part of Stena Line’s sustainability strategy, which combines three dimensions of sustainability; economic, ecological and social. The program was launched in 2017 and employees from all eight of the shipping company’s regions are encouraged to apply. In accordance with Mercy Ship´s values, all volunteers work for free. Stena Line guarantees leave of absence and provides overhead expenses and all necessary vaccinations.

**Ends.**

FACTS
Since 2017, Stena Line is a proud sponsor of the humanitarian organisation Mercy Ships, who sails fully equipped hospital ships operated by volunteers delivering free, life-saving medical care to countries that need it the most. The aim of the partnership is to raise awareness of Mercy Ships, increase the interest in donations among Stena Line’s customers and partners, as well as promote volunteering among employees to share their unique technical and naval competence. Read more [www.stenaline.com/mercyships](http://www.stenaline.com/mercyships)

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***About Stena Line***

Stena Line is one of Europe's leading ferry companies with 38 vessels and 20 routes in Northern Europe. Stena Line is an important part of the European logistics network and develops new intermodal freight solutions by combining transport by rail, road and sea. Stena Line also plays an important role for tourism in Europe with its extensive passenger operations. The company is family-owned, was founded in 1962 and is headquartered in Göteborg. ***For more information please visit*** [*www.stenaline.com*](http://www.stenaline.com)

***About Mercy Ships***

Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to deliver free, world-class health care services, capacity building and sustainable development to those without access in the developing world. Founded in 1978 by Don and Deyon Stephens, Mercy Ships has worked in more than 70 countries providing services valued at more than $1.3 billion, treating more than 2.5 million direct beneficiaries. Each year Mercy Ships efforts involve an average of 1,000 volunteers from up to 40 nations. For more information please visit [www.mercyships.org](http://www.mercyships.org)