



General Assembly – 2 July 2026 - Meeting Recap

This summary combines both parts of the General Assembly and is intended to give non-attendees a clear understanding of what was discussed, the outcomes of the CLA negotiations, and the topics that will require attention in the coming months. The meeting was chaired by **Ruud van der Meulen**, together with VOC board members **Pascal, Andrew**, and **Mathyung**, with support from **Nautilus International** during the first part of the meeting.

1. Purpose of the Meeting

The main purpose of the meeting was to:

- Explain the outcome of the recent CLA negotiations.
 - Discuss the reasoning behind the negotiated proposal.
 - Inform members about other topics discussed with Heerema.
 - Update members on VOC governance matters.
 - Discuss developments that may affect future employment conditions, particularly the creation of **Maritime Staffing Global (MSG)** in Singapore.
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2. Review of the Negotiation Process

The negotiating team reviewed the events leading up to the current proposal.

Following the rejection of the previous Heerema proposal in January 2026 (97% voted against), a petition signed by 340 out of 395 fleet employees was submitted to management. This demonstrated strong dissatisfaction among employees and helped bring the parties back to the negotiating table.

The team explained that much of the first half of 2026 was spent rebuilding the relationship with Heerema management. Several negotiation sessions were used simply to explain the motivations behind employee demands and to ensure management properly understood the concerns raised by the workforce. A vessel visit and crew consultation also played an important role in gathering feedback.

3. CLA Negotiation Outcome (2025–2026)

- **Initial Company Proposal**

Heerema's final offer before counter-negotiations included:

- A one-time payment of approx. 1.25% for 2025.
- A 2.5% salary increase in 2026.
- A maximum increase of €400 gross per month.

The negotiating team considered this inadequate because a one-time payment would not increase future salaries or pension accrual and because the cap would disproportionately affect employees in higher scales.

- **Negotiated Proposal**

The proposal now submitted for voting includes:

- No separate 2025 compensation.
- A structural wage increase of **4% in 2026**.
- A **minimum increase of €275 gross per month**.
- No maximum cap.

This structure particularly benefits employees in lower salary scales, where the actual increase can exceed 4%.

The negotiating team stated that while this was not the ideal result originally sought, they believe it is the strongest achievable outcome under current circumstances. ,

The proposed agreement will remain valid until **31 December 2026**, after which entirely new negotiations will start for a 2027 agreement.

4. Other Employment Topics Discussed with Heerema

- **Travel Arrangements**

The VOC requested a reduction in the built-in travel day compensation from 21 to 10 days but Heerema rejected this proposal.

Discussions instead focused on improving travel quality by:

- Optimizing flight schedules.
- Reducing unnecessary travel burden.
- Taking into account employees living far from Schiphol.
- Improving fairness of travel distribution across vessels where practical.

- **Expense Allowance**

The VOC requested an increase in the monthly expense allowance.

This was not agreed because the current allowance is already close to the tax-free maximum accepted by Dutch tax authorities. Heerema will nevertheless conduct a review of actual travel expenses and discuss the findings with tax authorities.

- **Parental Leave**

Following concerns raised by younger employees about the financial impact of parental leave, several improvements were achieved:

- Heerema will cover 50% of pension contributions during parental leave.
- Better guidance will be included in company documentation.
- Employees can request individual financial calculations before taking leave.

- **Plus Days**

The VOC raised concerns about increasing use of plus days.

Heerema committed to reducing unnecessary plus days.

- **Performance Evaluation System**

Many employees have expressed dissatisfaction about inconsistent application of the performance evaluation process.

The issue was extensively discussed and Heerema indicated it will place more focus on ensuring evaluations are carried out fairly and according to the intended system.

- **Sustainable Employability**

The future of age-related work arrangements and sustainable employability remained a major topic.

The VOC argued strongly that certain reduced-work arrangements are essential for employees whose physical health no longer allows them to work extended offshore rotations.

Heerema plans to launch preventive medical assessments later this year and use the findings to develop future employability policies. The VOC stressed that offshore work should be properly evaluated for its physical and mental impact.

Until the outcome of the preventive medical assessments is presented, the options within the 80-90-100 scheme remain the same.

5. Items That Were Successfully Protected

The negotiating team successfully prevented changes to:

- The 30% promotion-related allowance for employees in the 70-scale.
 - Existing arrangements for acting positions and temporary higher responsibilities.
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6. Items That Were Not Achieved

The team was unable to secure:

- Automatic salary adjustments linked directly to inflation.
- Automatic purchasing-power compensation mechanisms within the CLA.

These topics are expected to return during the 2027 negotiations.

7. Maritime Staffing Global (MSG)

The most significant forward-looking discussion concerned Heerema's announcement of **Maritime Staffing Global (MSG)**, a new staffing entity that will be established in Singapore.

The VOC and Nautilus expressed concerns that:

- Future employees may increasingly be hired outside the CLA framework.
- The number of employees covered by the CLA could gradually decline.
- Collective bargaining power could weaken over time.
- Union representation may become less effective if the covered employee population shrinks.

The board indicated that MSG will become one of the highest priorities for discussion with Heerema and the Works Council after the summer.

- **Impact on Current Employees**

The information received from Heerema indicates that:

- Employees currently employed under HFP contracts will retain their existing employment conditions.
- Employees with current one-year HFP contracts should be offered the opportunity to remain under HFP when their contracts expire.
- Employees may also be offered the choice to move to MSG, although details of future MSG employment packages are not yet known.

The board advised employees to carefully assess any future MSG offers and to seek independent financial advice before making decisions.

8. VOC Governance and Financial Reporting

During the members-only portion of the meeting, the board discussed several organizational matters.

- **Financial Reporting**

The board acknowledged that due to the intensive CLA negotiations, the annual financial reporting process had fallen behind schedule.

Members were asked to approve an extension to allow:

- Completion of the financial report.
- Independent review by two members.
- Presentation of the figures at a dedicated meeting later this summer.

No objections were raised, and the extension was accepted.

- **Finance Review Committee**

Because no volunteers came forward, Treasurer **Mathyung** will appoint two members to review the VOC finances as required by the association's statutes.

9. Fit for the Future (Fitvermogen) Scheme

Questions were asked regarding the future of the **Fitvermogen** arrangements.

The board explained that:

- The current benefits remain in place (for now).
- Discussions have taken place regarding possible future changes.
- According to statements made during negotiations, any future modification should not result in employees losing the associated value or contributions.
- Future pension reforms may influence how these arrangements are structured.

The VOC committed to closely monitoring any proposals and ensuring that employees do not lose accrued value.

10. Proposed Changes to VOC Articles of Association (“statuten”)

The board announced plans to modernise the VOC Articles of Association.

The proposed changes include:

- **Modernisation**
Replace outdated references to postal voting with digital voting.
- **Future Membership Eligibility**
Allow the possibility for employees from other Heerema entities, including potentially MSG employees, to become VOC members in the future.
This would strengthen representation while maintaining that CLA benefits remain linked to the applicable employer entity.
- **Spanish Representation**
The board proposed removing the mandatory Spanish representative position because:
 - Very few Spanish members remain.
 - No volunteers have come forward for the role.
 - It is no longer considered necessary or practical.

The proposed statute amendments will be published and voted on during a future General Assembly. Approval will require the statutory voting majority.

11. VOC Rebranding

Members were informed that the VOC has introduced a new logo and is currently working on a renewed website and updated communications platform.

The objective is to modernise the organisation's appearance and improve communication with members.

Key Messages

- **What was achieved**
 - 4% structural salary increase for 2026.
 - Minimum increase of €275 gross per month.
 - Improvements regarding parental leave and pension contributions.
 - Commitments relating to travel optimization, plus day reduction and performance management improvements.
 - Protection of several existing CLA benefits.
- **Main concerns for the future**
 - No automatic inflation correction mechanism.
 - Impact of MSG on future employment conditions and bargaining power.
 - Long-term sustainable employability arrangements.
 - Future pension and Fit for the Future discussions.

Next steps

- Voting on the CLA proposal remains open until **8 July 2026 at 17:00 CET**.
- A follow-up General Assembly will be organized to present the financial results and vote on proposed statute changes.
- Preparations for the 2027 CLA negotiations will begin after the summer, with MSG expected to be a key agenda item.

In conclusion, the board stated that although not all objectives were achieved, it believes the negotiated package represents the best attainable result at this stage and provides a solid basis for continuing discussions on wages, employability, pensions and the future structure of Heerema's offshore workforce.