

SAMUDRA

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SEAFARING COOK PLACE & TRAIN PROGRAMME Gets Underway



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SOS AND e2i KICK OFF SEAFARING COOK PLACE & TRAIN PROGRAMME

The Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) and NTUC's Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) have kicked off a new and upbeat culinary training programme that will offer Singaporeans and Permanent Residents a career head start in the maritime industry.

The new 'Seafaring Cook Place & Train Programme' – with a funding of more than S\$1 Million over a two-year period by the e2i, SOS and Workforce Development Agency (WDA) – aims to train up to 80 men and women, who possess a minimum 'N' level education or equivalent, to become qualified cooks onboard ships.

The 18-month programme, initiated by SOS and supported by shipping companies with SOS Collective Bargaining Agreement, will equip the trainees with the required competency to work both onboard ships and ashore, upon their graduation.

According to SOS General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat, there is a strong market demand for qualified seafaring cooks onboard merchant vessels. "The programme meets such a demand while providing eligible candidates with opportunities to earn a relatively decent livelihood and to embark on a culinary-related career," he said.



SOS GS Mr Kam Soon Huat giving his opening address at the Apron Presentation cum Learning Journey of the Seafaring Cook Place & Train Programme

Mr Kam added that the programme is advantageous to the trainees as the certifications will enjoy a dual recognition by the International Maritime Industry and the F&B industry.

"Such an initiative is in line with our Government's call for employers to hire Singaporeans in preference to foreigners wherever and whenever feasible. It complements our union's on-going efforts to encourage local seafarers to keep on training and upgrading their skills in the ever competitive employment market," he said.





Job Briefings

Both SOS and e2i have conducted three rounds of job briefings in late March and early April for hundreds of job seekers who turned up at the job briefings to find out about the programme.

Held at e2i and Kampong Ubi Community Club, the briefings consisted of a series of presentations from SOS, e2i, shipping companies and training institutes such as SHATEC. Preliminary recruitment talks and screenings were also held for potential candidates during these sessions.

During the briefings, the job seekers learnt about the participating shipping companies (i.e. Ocean Tankers, Neptune Ship Management Services, Posh Fleet Services, Wallenius Marine, PACC Ship Managers, Western Shipping and Maersk Tankers) as well as the benefits and entitlement as SOS members. They were also briefed on the necessary skills to acquire during the 18 month programme and the job scope of a seafaring cook.

SOS Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, who interviewed the candidates during the screenings, observed: "A majority of them are young men in their twenties. They are also excited about embarking on a seafaring career as cooks." Mr Mohamad, who has over two decades of experience as a seafarer, added that he was happy with the turn out for the job briefings and was pleasantly surprised that some candidates possessed basic certification in culinary.



Guides from SOS, e2i and APL with the trainees in the training room onboard APL Boston on 22 April

IR Assistant Manager Mr Maximilian Theodore (a former Executive Chef) who also conducted the screening said that seafaring cooks today enjoy competitive salary and good career prospects. "These trainees will have the opportunity to travel all over the world and with continuous training and some years of experience, many of them will have the chance to move up the career ladder into the more skilled and higher-paying position of a Chief Cook," he said.



SOS President Mr Mohamed Idris Mohamed Ibrahim (foreground, first from left) with APL Boston's chief cook and the trainees in the galley

Course Requirements

As part of the course requirement, the trainees will undergo 3 months of intensive classroom training with SHATEC, Seacare Thrift and Singapore Maritime Academy (Phase 1). They will also work as an apprentice under a professional chief cook during a 6-month On-The-Job-Training onboard vessels (Phase 2).

To hone their new skills and further broaden their exposure, they will be formally engaged by their shipping employers to work onboard merchant vessels, with a Minimum Service Period of 9 months (Phase 3) before the completion of the entire programme.

These trainees will receive monthly allowance throughout the programme – an initial S\$1,000 during the first 3 months, and a subsequent raise to S\$2,500 for the remaining period, upon their completion of the Basic and Higher Culinary Certificates and other mandatory certifications at the end of Phase 1.

Apron Presentation Ceremony cum Learning Journey

Sixteen of the 20 selected trainees attended an Apron Presentation ceremony cum Learning Journey during a soft launch held at the Seacare Maritime Hall on 22 April 2014.

Amid cheers and applause, Mr Kam congratulated them on being selected as the first batch of trainees for the programme and presented them with a commemorative e2i-SOS apron on stage. Mr Kam also posed with the trainees for a group photo to kick-off their learning journey that afternoon.

The trainees then joined their guides from SOS, e2i and Neptune Oriental Lines (NOL) and headed to PSA's Brani Terminal for their field trip onboard container vessel APL Boston. In groups, they were given an orientation around the vessel - including its galley, stores and places where they would spend most their time as Stewards during their apprenticeship.

Led by SOS President Mr Mohamed Idris Mohamed Ibrahim, the three groups also visited the mess rooms, cabins, gymnasium, bridge and deck as part of the Learning Journey.

It was an eye-opening experience for many of them as it was their first time onboard a merchant vessel. The trainees took photographs and posed questions to the Captain, Chief Engineer and Chief Cook to learn more about their job scope and daily responsibilities.



A tour round the vessel's storeroom

Classroom Training

The 20 Seafaring Cook trainees commenced their classroom training with the Singapore Maritime Academy (SMA) at the Singapore Polytechnic in May 2014. Some of the courses they must attend include Fire Prevention & Fire Fighting and Maritime Security Awareness Training.

Thereafter, the trainees will undergo training in SHATEC to complete their Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Higher certificate in Culinary Arts, Principles of Asian Cooking and Principles of Baking.

For more information and enquiries of the Seafaring Cooks Programme, email: thrift@seacare.com.sg



'Like' us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SeafaringCook



SOS IR Assistant Manager and former Executive Chef, Mr Maximilian Theodore (far right) giving the trainees a quick introduction and orientation of the galley in APL Boston

INAUGURAL CHINA-SINGAPORE MLC 2006 JOINT SEMINAR IN BEIJING



The first-of-its-kind China-Singapore MLC 2006 Seminar took place on 13 May 2014 in Beijing. The joint effort by Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS), Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU), Chinese Seamen and Construction Workers' Union (CSU) and All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), brought together 150 representatives from unions, maritime authorities and shipping companies from China and Singapore to discuss the implementation and challenges of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006.

Invited speakers and guests at the seminar included officials from the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA); China Maritime Safety Administration (CMSA); China

Classification Society (CCS); and shipping companies from Singapore and China. These officials were also joined by officers from China Manning Agents; experts from the shipping industry; training providers and representatives from SOS, SMOU, CSU and ACFTU.

The aim of the seminar was to strengthen international and regional relations and discuss the challenges on the implementation of the MLC 2006. The seminar was especially timely as a proposed amendment to the Codes of MLC, 2006 were adopted in April 2014 during the First Meeting of a Special Tripartite Committee (STC) held in Geneva. The proposed amendment concerned the provision of financial security to better protect seafarers from the consequences of abandonment in foreign ports.

The MLC 2006 Seminar kickstarted with a welcome address by Mr Wang Ruisheng, National Secretary of ACFTU, followed by a lineup of speakers from the maritime industry.



Capt Francis Joseph, Chairman of the Singapore Maritime Employers Federation (SMEF), among the delegates at the China-Singapore MLC 2006 Seminar

SOS Executive Secretary Mr Daniel Tan shared the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) guidelines on the training of Ship's Cooks and MPA's requirements for the training of Ship's Cooks and the provision of food on ships. In his subsequent presentation, Mr Tan also spoke about how SOS conducts the Certified Cooks Training programme for Ship's Cooks as well as the various challenges that cooks encounter during training.



▲ Delegates from SOS (from left): Mr Loh Suan Hin, Mr Chen Chuanyi, Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar; Mr Norani Md Rais, Ms Jullienne Low, Mr Kam Soon Huat, Ms Sharon Li, Ms Priscilla Han and Mr Daniel Tan



MLC Challenges & Issues' by Mr Alvin Cheong, Senior Industrial Relations Officer of SMOU.

The panel of speakers took questions from the floor during the Q&A session and gave their opinion and comments from the poll result generated live by the audience.

Other topics included 'MLC 2006 Preparedness in China' by Ms Zhu Kexin, Deputy Director of Maritime Safety Administration; 'MLC 2006 - Regulatory Perspective' by Mr Mark Lim, Deputy Director of Marine, MPA; 'MLC Implementation and Challenges - Singapore Shipowners Perspectives' by Mr Lim Tau Kok, Director of PACC Ship Managers Pte Ltd; 'SG Ship Manager - Challenges Complying with Requirements of Shipowners and Managing Multi-national Crew' by Mr Srinath Medepalli, Regional Business Development Manager (Asia) of Wilhelmsen Ship Management Singapore; and 'SMOU-Union's Perspectives:

The joint seminar not only fostered positive atmosphere for thoughtful discussions, it was a place where fruitful exchange among delegates took place. Many of the delegates found the presentation topics both relevant and beneficial, and expressed their desire for more of such seminars in the future to aid their readiness for the implementation of the convention.

MAY DAY RALLY 2014

Becoming Better Together

Better employers; Better workers; Better customers



While Labour Day around the world is marked by strikes, industrial action and protests, in Singapore, Labour Day is a day for celebration.

NTUC Secretary-General (SG) Lim Swee Say in his May Day speech paid tribute to the many workers who “work round the clock, serving the people of Singapore while doing their best to provide for their families and loved ones”. Addressing some 1,600 union leaders, key representatives from NTUC Social Enterprises, NTUC communities (such as nEbO, Young NTUC, U Family and U Live) and staff, as well as tripartite partners at the May Day Rally held at the Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability, SG Lim urged all Singaporeans to show respect to those serving them.

SG Lim highlighted that since the last May Day, Singapore continued to make progress – economic growth has been healthy. The labour market has been tight and wages continued to move up faster than inflation. These hard-earned achievements are due to the strong collaboration among employers, government and unions, working towards a universal goal for Singaporeans.

Our Pioneer Generation overcame long odds to set Singapore on the path to development. In the unions, many pioneers fought the Communists and worked with the Government to foster constructive labour management relations, build a competitive economy and deliver better lives for all. Let us honour them by upholding their spirit, building on their achievements and creating an even better Singapore for our children.

– Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong



Whether as employers, workers or customers, we depend on each other. We all have our roles to play to make things better for each other. As employers, we must learn to bring out the best in every worker and treat them better. As workers, we must value our jobs more and take greater pride in what we do. As customers, we should remember that people serving us are people too. Let's treat each other as equals with courtesy, respect and appreciation. Indeed, we can all become better employers, better workers and better customers, all at the same time. Do not wait for each other. Be the first to change. Together, we can make things better and emerge from this restructuring a better workforce, a better economy and a better society.

– NTUC Secretary-General
Lim Swee Say



Be better employers

“Employers have to learn to make better use of every worker, and treat every worker better. The labour market will remain tight till 2020, and even tighter all the way to 2030. Competition for good people will not ease. Only better employers can attract and retain better people and grow more profitably.”

Be better workers

“In a world of job shortages, global unemployment may not improve as businesses embrace new technologies and new methods to stay ahead. The increasingly widespread use of Cheaper, Better and Faster robots and cyber-based services is a case in point. The best way to attract more good jobs, create more good careers and sustain good wage growth for our workers is for us to value our jobs more and take greater pride in what we do.”

Be better consumers

“As customers and consumers, we can change for the better too. The globalised world thrives on mutual dependency, mutual support and mutual acceptance. Good services beget good customers, and good customers beget good services. As we strive to become a more advanced economy, we must also strive to be a nation of better customers and better people.”

– NTUC Secretary-General
Lim Swee Say

May Day Photos: NTUC



Representatives from the Seafarers group at the First Meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee at the ILO in Geneva

AMENDING THE CODES OF MLC 2006 AT ILO'S FIRST STC MEETING



Some 400 delegates, including Government officials, Shipowners, Seafarer unions and social partners attended the First Meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee (STC) at the ILO from 7 to 11 April.

These delegates were invited to share their insights and advice on a set of proposed amendments to the Codes of Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006, which were jointly submitted by representatives from the Shipowners and Seafarers groups.

The proposed amendments - relating to Regulation 2.5 and Regulation 4.2 of the MLC - would require Shipowners to provide financial security and entitlement for seafarers in the event of abandonment, death and long-term disabilities due to occupational injury and hazard.

The STC meeting, which has unanimously voted in favour of the amendments, marked a symbolic milestone in maritime history that the plight of abandoned seafarers and the provision of financial security for seafarers' claims have been addressed in binding international law.

Adoption of the amendments

Maritime industry players would concur that the adopted amendments in Geneva - to be delivered to the ILO's International Labour Conference in June 2014 for approval - would contribute significantly to the international shipping industry.

Upon meeting the conditions for the entry into force, the new amendments will allow some 1.5 million seafarers in the world to enjoy stronger protection and social security benefits through national laws and practices applying the MLC to the ships on which they work.

"The legal standards would provide relief and peace of mind to abandoned seafarers and their families," said Dr



The delegates from Singapore: (From left) SSA Executive Director Mr Daniel Tan; Swire Pacific Offshore Fleet Safety Manager Capt Pierre Deletaille; SOS GS Mr Kam Soon Huat; MPA Deputy Director Mr Mark Lim; SMOU EGS Mr Thomas Tay; MPA Legal Counsel Mr Martin Marini; MPA Seafarers Management Department Assistant Manager Mr Glendon Goh; SMOU Senior IR Officer Mr Alvin Cheong; and SOS Corporate Communications Assistant Manager Mr George Foo



Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, Director of the ILO Labour Standards Department.

“The new measures will guarantee that seafarers are not abandoned, alone and legally adrift for months on end, without pay, adequate food and water and away from home... They also clearly make flag states responsible for ensuring that adequate financial security exists to cover the cost of

abandonment, and claims for death and long-term disability due to occupational injury and hazards,” she added.

New Provisions

Under the new provisions of the MLC, ships would be required to carry onboard a certificate or other documentary evidence to establish that financial security exists to protect seafarers against the risk of abandonment, death or long-

term disability of seafarers due to occupational injury and hazard, as set out in national law, the seafarers' employment agreement or collective agreement.

The new provisions would also highlight that failure to provide such protection may cause a ship to be detained in a port. In addition, a copy of the certificate would be required to be posted in a conspicuous place onboard, where it is available to the seafarers.

According to the ILO, the new requirements, if approved, would be sent to states that have ratified the convention, with a two-year period for disagreement; once they are agreed upon, the amendments are expected to enter into force by early 2017.

Today 61 countries representing 80 percent of the world gross tonnage have ratified the MLC, which entered into force on 20 August last year; Southeast Asian countries that have recently ratified the convention include Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam. Under the protection of the Convention, seafarers have a right to a safe and secure workplace, where safety standards are complied with, where they enjoy fair terms of employment, decent living and



Dr Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry (left) receiving The Silver Bell Award for her contribution to the welfare of merchant mariners and the MLC 2006



The MPA receiving recognition as one of the nominees for ISWAN's Port of the Year Award

working conditions, including social protection such as access to medical care, health protection and welfare.

At the STC Meeting

Some special event took place on the margins of the STC Meeting in April. The International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) presented the "International Seafarers' Welfare Awards 2014" for four award categories: Seafarers' Centre of the Year, Shipping Company of the Year, Port of the Year, and Welfare Personality of the Year.

The Welfare Personality of the Year Award is named after Dr Dierk Lindemann, who passed away on 17 March 2014. Dr Lindemann served as the Shipowner's Group spokesperson at the ILO and took a lead role in getting the MLC adopted.

Mr Douglas B. Stevenson, Director, Center for Seafarers' Rights also presented The Silver Bell Award to Dr Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry to honour her outstanding commitment to merchant mariners and issues facing the maritime industry. Dr Doumbia-Henry, who missed the Silver Bell award conferment in New York last year, is recognised for playing an instrumental role in making the MLC 2006 a reality today.





Ship Abandonment

Each year, the lives of hundreds of seafarers are put at risk when they are left stranded without money, food or water after the vessels they are working onboard are abandoned by their employers.

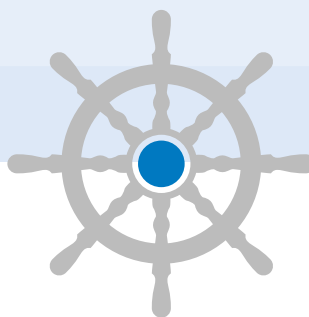
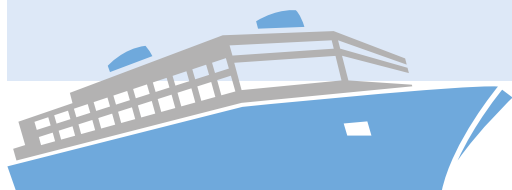
According to the ILO's Abandonment of Seafarers Database, there were close to 200 reported cases of abandonment in the past decade. While abandonment cases are relatively fewer this year, compared to the same period in previous years, the figures - and the aftermath suffered by seafarers - remain a source of concern among members of the international maritime community; particularly the seafarers unions.

SOS Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, who has chronicled some 30 cases of vessel arrests in regional waters during the past two years, shared that ship abandonment can happen for different reasons - though most are often calculated economic decisions by shipowners facing bankruptcy, insolvency or the arrest of its vessel by creditors.

"Legal actions will be taken against the employer once the claims of outstanding or delayed wages were verified to be true. In Singapore, most vessels would be detained and barred from leaving the port until all outstanding wages have been paid to the crew. In some cases, the employers may also have evaded the cost of running the vessel," said Mr Mohamad.

"When shipowners abandon their vessels, the crew will face a dire predicament if they run out of fuel, fresh water or basic provisions. They will seek help from unions and missions and request to be repatriated. There have also been cases where the legal proceedings for the sale of the vessel lasted for months so the crew were stranded onboard during the entire process. Some may also run out of phone credits and cannot contact their families. It can be a very frustrating experience for the seafarers, whose families depend on them for survival," he explained.

According to data from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), each year, crew members on some 1,500 ships would file complaints against their employers, of delayed or non-payment of their wages; many of these seafarers were also abandoned in ports far away from home without pay, cheated and abused. Cases of abandonment, the ITF noted, may occur more frequently on older ships at the end of their sea life, which in some cases are worth less than the money owed to crew and debtors.



ITF YOUNG TRANSPORT WORKERS ENGAGE WITH UNIONISTS FROM THE ARAB WORLD

SOS Assistant Director and Member of ITF Young Transport Workers' Committee Ms Sharon Li joined other young union activists for the Young Transport Workers' Committee meeting, held in Amman, Jordan from 28 to 30 April 2014.

The Young Transport Workers' Committee meeting offered the chance for interaction with young transport workers from the Arab World and was part of its first global engagement programme.

Particular focus was given to the situation faced by transport workers in Palestine. The ITF Young Transport Workers wanted to form a delegation of global young transport workers to visit Palestine to show solidarity with their brothers and sisters. As a result, a proposal on a visitors programme to the country was devised. Work has begun and the wheels are in motion for a trip to take place in the near future.

Representing the voice of SOS, Ms Sharon said, "The meeting with the young workers in the Arab World has not only given us the opportunity to hear the current issues faced by the Arab World affiliates, it has also provided us with the chance to show them our support in person, which was clearly of great importance to them". In addition a resolution was passed to express solidarity with the labour movement there.

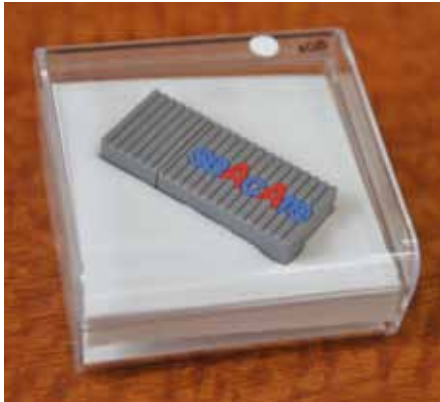
From other discussions held it was found that similar scenarios affecting youths were being faced throughout the world; these were primarily youth unemployment and the precariousness of job stability. Leaders would be raising these issues to the next ITF Congress to be held in August 2014.



Ms Sharon Li (second from left) with friends from the ITF Young Transport Worker's Committee.

The young transport workers are changing hands. The meeting in Amman represented the last time outgoing members would gather. They have done much good work that has been brought to the Executive Board. We wish them well with their future endeavours.

The Amman meeting developed a work programme that can now be utilised at the next Inter-Congress gathering.



SHIP VISITS - KEEPING MEMBERS UP TO SPEED

The roving SOS IR team faithfully conducts ship visits whenever a vessel anchors in Singapore waters. The IR officers would take the time to touch base with the crew, update them with home front news and check on their welfare, while bringing along greetings and souvenirs from the union.

On 20 May 2014, SOS Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, together with Assistant Secretary Mr David Shoo and IR Assistant Manager Mr Maximilian Theodore carried out their routine ship visits with bags of goodies from the union. Among the goodies included thumb drives pre-loaded with the English and Chinese edition of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006.

The ship visits are focused on assisting union members in their application for their SPF withdrawal, as well as to share with them their rights and protections, such as health protection, medical care and social security, as stipulated in the Convention. In a systematic and clear



SOS President Mr Mohamed Idris Mohamed Ibrahim and Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar (second from left and right, respectively) presenting thumb drives preloaded with electronic edition of the MLC 2006 to visiting seafarers at the SOS office.

manner, the three SOS officers spent time answering any enquiries on SPF and members' privileges as well as the benefits of the MLC, 2006.

The gifts of SOS towels and thumb drives were particularly welcomed by the crew. "The crew members are very happy that we are here to visit them. All of them are very receptive to the idea of accessing the MLC from thumb drives or their laptops. We hope they now have a better understanding of some of the regulations and their basic rights as a seafarer working onboard," said Mr Mohamad.



Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar and Mr David Shoo with SOS members

TUG-OF-WAR CHAMPIONS ARE WE INTERNATIONAL SPORTSWEEK FOR SEAFARERS



They came, they played, they reclaimed their title as tug-of-war (local category) champions! It was exhilaration for SOS/Seacare team at the International Sportsweek for Seafarers held on from 9 to 12 April 2014.

SOS/Seacare has been a faithful participant in the annual International Sportsweek for Seafarers organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA). The International Sportsweek, held in conjunction with Singapore Maritime Week, promotes a healthy lifestyle and fosters team spirit among local and foreign seafarers. It has always been a popular event among local and foreign seafarers, many of whom relish the opportunity to play games such as basketball or football, as they seldom get a chance to do while onboard vessels.

The event this year attracted some 1,000 participants of different nationalities, in which 20 sports games involving soccer, basketball, Tug-Of-War and track and field events.

A highlight of the games was the Tug-Of-War (local category) which SOS/Seacare reclaimed top prize for. The victory was a sweet one considering that Team SOS lost the top spot in the same category a year ago. Consisting of retired seafarers, with the youngest member aged 50-years-old, the two teams brought home the First and Second prize for Tug-Of-War, after facing multiple teams with opponents half their age.





Team SOS/Seacare with their trophies

SOS/Seacare also dominated in the 1500m with SOS members taking the top three places. Mr Musa Sias clinched first place in the 1500m race with a time of 7.37 minute, beating off stiff competition from Mr Jeffrey Chew and Mr Jamaludin who came in second and third respectively. SOS also took a respectable second and third place in the Long Jump (Open) with Mr Yusof Abdul Rahman and Mr Rahmat Abu Bakar representing the union. In the 4x100m Relay (Open), SOS team did a good job at third place. Other games played were shot putt, telematch, 60m dash, 100m dash and 400m race as well as soccer and basketball.

“There were many hard fights but the boys went all out and won the games with much sweat, grit and determination,” said SOS Vice President Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, who was in charge of coordinating the SOS/Seacare home team. He commented: “I thank all participants for their remarkable display of sportsmanship and camaraderie throughout the event. Their performance was brilliant and inspirational. Most importantly, everyone had a good time out there.”



RAISING COMPETENCIES OF PRE-SEA TRAINEES IN NANTONG



For some three years, Singapore (Nantong) International Maritime Institute (SNIMI) has been the choice venue for the training of seafarers to increase their competencies and to reach their fullest potential. This joint venture between Singapore Organisation of Seamen (represented by Seacare Thrift Pte Ltd), Nantong Shipping College (NTSC) and Singhai Marine Services (S) Pte Ltd (SMS) has been a strategic decision by SOS to provide relevant training to meet the needs of the global shipping industry.

The Seacare Quality Ratings Training (SQRT) had its 26th run at SNIMI from 28 April to 23 May 2014. The four-week programme focused on Maritime English to help pre-sea trainees improve on their conversational and communication skills.



One of the hurdles for most Chinese pre-sea trainees besides learning the know-hows of working onboard ships was having to pick up the English Language. As part of the training, English teachers from SNIMI conducted intensive lessons that included a series of weekly tests, which ended with final assessment to better evaluate their performance and progress. The trainees thought the Maritime English course was very useful and practical. They also felt more confident in their English and felt a sense of achievement.



I have not only had a basic introduction to the maritime industry but have benefitted greatly from the modules taught such as Safety Onboard, Fire Fighting and Personal Protective Equipment which was covered in detail. I now understand how to better protect myself and other crew members.

- Mr Meng Song Tao, 23 years old, Anhui

Apart from learning English, trainers share with us their experiences on board a ship. As a result we are able to gain more insight into the industry. We are better prepared and more confident to give answers in interviews. This course improves your chances of doing well in interviews and hopefully success in being offered a job.

- Mr Zhang Jun, 21 years old, Hunan

Some of the trainees' standard of English was not very high, so during the lessons we were encouraged to speak in English. We were inspired to improve ourselves. The course helped us to upgrade our language skills and gain a competitive edge in the industry.

- Mr Ye Hai Tao, 32 years old, Shan Dong

SMS RENEWED WITH MORE BENEFITS



Eyes Are The Windows To Health

Comprehensive Eye check up can detect Health Conditions

Are the eyes the windows to the soul, as ancient Proverb has it? Perhaps, but they are certainly the windows to our health, say eye specialists.

Unknown to many, visual problems such as blurred vision or dry eyes may mask a host of serious health conditions, including stroke, glaucoma and brain tumour.

In addition, you may have heard that often, the signs of these conditions are visible in, on, or around the eyes long before symptoms appear. In some cases, eye problems are silent, meaning there are no symptoms at all.

This is why eye specialists often encourage people to take a comprehensive eye test by the age of 40, to detect eye and health conditions at its early stage before vision is affected.



Importance of Health Screening

According to health statistics, cancer, heart diseases, stroke and diabetes are some of the top killer diseases in Singapore. Most of these conditions are largely linked to an unhealthy lifestyle and diet, lack of exercise, stress and obesity.

Health screening plays an important role in detecting traces of these medical conditions in its early stages. It is not just for high risk individuals but suitable for everyone. Early detection can make a big difference between a simple course of treatment or life threatening diseases that require lengthy hospital stays.

Under the Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS), eligible SOS members can continue to enjoy free health screening and eye examination benefits till 31 March 2015. In addition, this benefit will be extended to one dependant per member at the Seacare Maritime Medical Centre (SMMC) and the New Optometry and Ocular Care Centre (NOOCC).

| Health Screening at the SMMC | Comprehensive Eye Examination at NOOCC |
|--|--|
| Medical Consultation & Complete Physical Examination | Visual Acuity Assessment |
| Biophysical Measurement | Pupil Assessment |
| Office Tests | Central Visual Field Screening |
| Imaging Studies | Intra-ocular Pressure Assessment |
| Lipid Profile | Slit Lamp Biomicroscopy |
| Liver Profile | Fundus Photography |
| Hepatitis Profile | Binocular Vision Assessment |
| Kidney Profile | Colour Vision Assessment |
| Endocrine Profile | Keratometry |
| Bone & Joint Profile | Refractive Status Assessment |
| Cancer Markers | Ophthalmoscopy |
| Venereal Profile | Summary Report |
| Urinalysis | |
| Full Blood Count | |
| Medical Review | |

Please contact SOS Membership Services Division **Ms Halimah** at **6379 5671** or **Ms Evelyn Yeo** at **6379 5672** to book your appointment.

Visit www.sosea.org.sg for more details.



Health Screening is available from Mondays to Saturdays from 9am to 12nn (closed on Sunday and Public Holidays) at:

Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd

100 Tras Street
#18-02/03 The Amara Corporate Tower
Singapore 088539
Tel: 6222 7728
Fax: 6224 6387
Email: seacaremedical@singnet.com.sg



Comprehensive Eye Examination

is available from Mondays to Saturdays from 9am to 6pm (closed on Sundays and Public Holidays) at:

New Optometry and Ocular Care Centre (NOOCC)

190 Changi Road, B1-01 MDIS Building
Singapore 419974
Website: www.noocc.com
Tel: 6471 1771
Fax: 6475 1771
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GETTING PERSONAL WITH PDPA

There has been much talk about personal data protection. If you are wondering how all this relates to you, as a member of SOS/Seacare/SSC, read on...

From 2 July 2014, organisations will have to comply with rules on the collection, use, disclosure and care of personal data in the Data Protection provisions of the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (PDPA). Along with the implementation of the Do Not Call provisions on 2 January 2014, the PDPA will now be in full effect after an 18-month transition period for companies to prepare for compliance.



PDPA in Singapore

The Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (the “PDPA”) establishes a general data protection law in Singapore which governs and regulates an organisation’s activities relating to the collection, use and disclosure of individuals’ personal data.

The PDPA provides for the establishment of a national Do Not Call (DNC) Registry. The DNC Registry allows individuals to register their Singapore telephone numbers to opt out of receiving marketing phone calls, mobile text messages such as SMS or MMS, and faxes from organisations.

The PDPA is intended to set the minimum standards that all organisations in Singapore must observe.

The Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) is a Singapore Government statutory body established on 2 January 2013 to administer and enforce the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (PDPA). The other roles of PDPC include undertaking public education and engagement programmes to help organisations understand and comply with the PDPA as well as to promote greater awareness of the importance of personal data protection in Singapore.

Website: www.pdpc.gov.sg

What is Data Protection?

- It’s the control over the collection, storage, accuracy, use and dissemination of personal information.
- Ensure that personal data is not improperly used without the knowledge or consent of the individual.
- Prevent the processing of incorrect or inaccurate personal data about a specific individual.
- Both employers and employees are responsible for complying with the PDPA.

The PDPA does NOT apply to:

- Personal data about an individual that is contained in a record that has been in existence for at least 100 years.
- Personal data of a deceased individual (for 10 years from death), except the need to make reasonable security arrangements to protect such data compliance with requirements in relation to disclosure.

What is Personal Data?

In this Data Protection Policy, “Personal Data” refers to any data or information about you from which you can be identified, such as

- your name
- NRIC, passport or any other identification number
- contact number(s)
- mailing address
- email addresses

- your employment and education background
- information with regards to your spouse, children and/or extended families
- records of courses/events which you have attended
- any other information relating to you which you have provided to SOS/Seacare/SSC or which has been collected in our interaction with you.

What does SOS/Seacare/SSC do with your personal data?

To preserve the confidentiality of all information you provide to SOS/Seacare/SSC, we maintain the following privacy principles:

- We only collect personal information that we believe to be relevant and required so that we can better serve our members.
- SOS/Seacare/SSC will not disclose information collected about you to third parties such as vendors and contractors.
- We aim to keep your personal information on our records accurate and up-to-date and will require you to update us of any changes.
- We maintain strict security systems designed to prevent unauthorised access to your personal information.

How is data collected?

SOS/Seacare/SSC may collect your Personal Data in various ways, including the following:

- when you register for training courses or events organised by the SOS/Seacare/SSC.
- when you access our website or perform an online enquiry.
- when you interact with any of our administration team members.
- when you request to be contacted.
- when you submit your Personal Data to SOS/Seacare/SSC for updating of your personal particulars.

Protection Obligation

- SOS/Seacare/SSC will keep all personal data confidential and accessible to only authorised and need-to-know personnel.
- Soft copy databases will be password protected where applicable and stored in the dedicated departments.
- Access to the softcopy databases will only be given to authorised staff of SOS/Seacare/SSC.
- No one is allowed to save any copies of databases in their personal computer hard drives or portable storage drives, except for the purpose of transfer of information from one computer to another and contents will be deleted once the said purpose is achieved.
- Hardcopy registration files/forms containing personal information will be kept strictly under the membership department's care in locked cupboards.

For personal data collected after 2 July 2014, we will notify and obtain the individual's consent to the collection, use and disclosure of his or her personal data.

Privacy Policy and Consent to Use of Data

By interacting with, submitting information to or signing up for any organised activity offered by SOS/Seacare/SSC, you agree and consent to our organisation collecting, using, disclosing and sharing amongst the relevant departments your personal data, for the purpose of engagement, operational planning of activities, as well as communication of events and programmes. SOS/Seacare/SSC respects personal data and privacy, and will not share such information with any third party. Should you wish to withdraw or limit your consent, please contact us at:

**Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS)
Seacare Co-operative Ltd
Seacare Seafarers' Club (SSC)**

52 Chin Swee Road,
#09-00 Seacare Building, Singapore 169875
T: 6379 5666, F: 6734 5525



Join The **SOS** Team!

As a maritime union that represents seafarers in the local, regional and international maritime industry, **Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS)** is always growing, so that we can serve seafarers better.

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Billing & Administration Executive

For more details, please visit Career Opportunities at our website
<http://www.sosea.org.sg/main.html>



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HAPPINESS WORKSHOP ZIPS BACK

After a resounding success last year, the “Zany, Zeal, Zest and Zing: The Z way to Happiness” workshop was back by popular demand at the Seacare Building on 25 April 2014.

Organised by the Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd, the highly interactive and fun-filled workshop exceeded the expectation of the participants, who come from 18 learning institutes and organisations.

Trainer, Ms Zaibun Siraj did not hesitate to lead the participants to the doors of happiness right from the beginning of the workshop. The 30 participants went through interactive lectures, discussions, experiential activity and presentations. They were also given individual exercises and group work, where they were trained to overcome negativity and empowered to adopt a positive attitude in life.

Through dedicated guidance, the participants acquired simple strategies to recover the Zs in their lives using unique formulas. They were trained to observe the good characteristics of a happy worker and discovered numerous ways to smile and laugh more - to inculcate happiness, confidence and improve one's well-being.

At the end of the workshop, all participants left the room with a spring in their step. Many said they will strive to improve relationships with their spouse, children, colleagues and friends – they have understood that a happier employee is indeed a productive employee.





Workshop Title: **Zany, Zeal, Zest and Zing, The Z Way To Happiness**
Date: **25 April 2014**

Participants who have completed the workshop

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Blangah Rise Pri Sch | Lissy Kozhikottu |
| Bukit Panjang Pri Sch | Quah Koh Kheng |
| CHIJ Pri (Toa Payoh) | Tan Geok Kim |
| Damai Sec Sch | Gan Wendy |
| | Ong Hock Lee Georgina |
| Endeavour Pri Sch | Sa'adah Bte Mohamed Amin |
| Fuchun Pri Sch | Quek Chay Huang |
| Greenwood Pri Sch | Ong Seow Leng |
| Maris Stella High Sch(Sec) | Eulogia Hong Kwai Hoi |
| | Heng Kim Keow |
| | Mah Choi Chue |
| Methodist Girls' Sch (Pri) | Chew Phui Yong |
| | Subaidah Bte Motea |
| | Tan Poh Neo Jennie |
| | Kaliyamurthy Ambika |
| Millennia Institute | Salmah Binte Saat |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Outram Sec Sch | Tan Siew Loon |
| Pioneer Sec Sch | Letchimi d/o Ayasamy Mrs Letchimi Ravesadran |
| River Valley Pri Sch | Tan Nguan Cheng |
| | Teo Siew Yin |
| Swiss Cottage Sec Sch | Giam Chin Leong |
| | Jamila Bte Saim |
| Tampines Sec Sch | Mohamad Bin Syed Ali |
| | Sum Kwai Ling |
| Victoria Sch | Sim Hui Choo |
| | Rohana Bte Hadi |
| Woodlands Ring Sec Sch | Umamageswari d/o Arumugam |
| ZhongHua Sec Sch | Lim Geok Choo |
| Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd | Fong Wan Xin |
| | Phua Sze Lu |

SEACARE CO-OPERATIVE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



Ms Kathryn Ang presenting her group's idea for developing a successful co-operative in the 21st century



Seacare delegates (First row from left): Ms Desiree Chan, Mr Ong Zhiwei and Ms Kathryn Ang. (Second row from left): Mr Zainulabiddin Omar, Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar and Mr Lim Chye Teen



Seacare delegates (from left): Ms Tang Yit Mei, Ms Pauline Lim and Ms Sulena Supaat

Annual Co-operative Leaders' Conference 2014

16 to 19 April 2014
Bandung, Indonesia

The Annual Co-operative Leaders Conference (ACLC) 2014, organised by the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), was successfully concluded on 19 April, following a series of multi-disciplinary presentations aimed to strategise and develop successful '*Co-ops in the 21st Century*'.

Held in Bandung, Indonesia, the three-day conference was attended by some 130 delegates from 31 Co-operatives from Singapore, including a group of representatives from Seacare Co-operative – Ms Desiree Chan, Ms Kathryn Ang, Ms Pauline Lim, Ms Sulena Supaat, Ms Tang Yit Mei, Mr Lim Chye Teen, Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, Mr Ong Zhiwei and Mr Zainulabiddin Omar.

The delegates said the conference provided timely insights into the updates and challenges of the co-operative sectors in Singapore and on a global scale. They also responded positively to the favourable conditions and opportunities for networking and experience sharing.

This year, the ACLC featured high-ranking and distinguished chairs and speakers who shared brilliant ideas to help businesses gain competitive advantages in the Co-operative practices.

For instance, Mr Siva Devireddy, Managing Director of GoCoop.com, illustrated how co-operatives and community-based enterprises could leverage on technology to list and sell their products online.

In another presentation, Founder of Bliss Restaurant & Catering, Ms Christine Low, who provides job opportunities to the disadvantaged and ex-inmates, shared how profit-making and social mission could co-exist in a business enterprise.



The participants listened intently as speaker, Mr P Ramesh, Manager of Marketing & Events, SNCF, expounded on the benefits of different social media platforms and revealed ways to maximise their benefits. Mr Ramesh's enthusiasm captivated many of the participants, who later came forth to seek his expertise in their businesses' marketing and communications strategies.

"I have learnt from speaker, Mr P Ramesh that social media can be used as a communication tool to make businesses accessible and visible to potential clients who may not know about their products. Social media is so diversified that it can be used in whatever settings that suit the interests and the needs of any business," said Ms Desiree Chan, Manager of Seacare.

Ms Kathryn Ang, Senior Manager of Seacare Foundation, agreed: "Much has been talked about social media and it is an assumption that everyone is using social media actively. However, there is still a handful who do not actively use it. During the ACLC 2014, the need to make use of social media which can reach out more effectively amongst co-operatives and its network was emphasised."

The three-day conference also included panel discussions and breakout sessions, during which the delegates discussed, formulated and presented their strategies in groups.

Each group tackled on the topic of '*Raising Awareness through Collaboration*' and was tasked to generate innovative solutions to key challenges faced by Co-operatives today: '*How can co-ops collaborate amongst themselves – and with other organisations – to raise awareness for sustainability?*'

Speakers assigned to the breakout groups contributed their expertise during the hour-and-a-half long session, before the groups presented their proposals. The delegates agreed that the breakout sessions were well-received and provided contrasting perspectives and added clarity on fundamental issues.

"The ACLC conference is a timely reminder for co-operatives to stay relevant in a fast-moving world where technology is ever changing," said Mr Ong Zhiwei, Manager of Seacare.

Mr Ong stressed the need for local businesses to adapt and keep pace with latest practices in order to effectively reach their targets. "Co-operative should evolve to stay connected with the communities which they are serving, ensuring that their needs and interests are fulfilled," he added.

The Seacare delegates said they have gained extensive insights and inspiration through ACLC 2014 and are empowered to embark on their quest to create a successful co-operative in the 21st century.



A blindfold game was played where participants had to walk a pre-determined route, blindfolded with the assistance of a helper. The game enabled participants to feel the world through the perspective of the "less-abled" and empowered the "more-abled" with the necessary skillset to help them.

HONG KONG RETREAT FOR SEACARE MANPOWER STAFF



Staff from Seacare Manpower Services enjoyed a well-deserved vacation in Hong Kong during their annual company retreat from 10 to 13 May 2014.

The fifteen staff, led by Managing Director Mr Lee Van Chong, took the opportunity to explore the sights and sounds of the bustling city with a busy itinerary that includes a city tour, Dim Sum feasting at traditional teahouses and endless retail therapy.

The excited group said that Hong Kong was a perfect getaway to unwind and recharge their 'inner batteries' as the lively city is known for its exciting retail experience.

During their free time, the groups explored the lively and popular street markets of Mongkok, which is in close proximity to their hotel. The shopaholics also spared no efforts to savour popular street snacks, purchase high street labels and visited book cafes, dessert shops and manicure parlours.

Ms Evelyn Siow, Senior Manager of Seacare Manpower, agreed that such trip could build good relationships among colleagues and develop a personal attachment to the company.

"The short getaway is a celebration of our hard work and dedication, it is also a much deserved break for all of us who live by our personal motto 'Work hard, play hard,'" she said.



The all smiling staff from Seacare Manpower Services enjoying their company retreat in Hong Kong

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