Women on board:
Hurdling gender-related challenges
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We at AMOSUP support women’s struggle for a gender-fair opportunity for employment on board ships.

Despite such incidents, however, women on board are still as tough as any male since they possess the same qualities as their counterparts at work in various types of ships. Experienced female crews in the union attest to these qualities which they have identified and endeared themselves with after spending years of sea service.

At the same time, technological advances on board have now put both sexes on equal footing for roles that require no great physical strength to accomplish their tasks and duties whether in engine or navigational side. And having women as part of the crew from a sociological standpoint has reduced the mood of isolation seafarers of the opposite sex normally feel when they see the presence of a wife-daughter-sister-girlfriend figure on board.

We also commend recent move by both the ICS and ITF in jointly publishing the ‘Guidance on Eliminating of Shipboard Harassment and Bullying’. The guidelines which have been distributed to members of the two federations worldwide provide the seafarer’s fundamental right to the elimination of harassment and bullying, which include from identifying and reporting of such incidents to measures of purging them.

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**QUOTE IN ACTION**

Women on board: Hurdling gender related challenges
Maritime industry sounds the alarm on HIV/AIDS; to take up collective acts

Recent forum also serves as venue for exchange of information regarding the status of the disease in relation to seafaring

Stakeholders of the country’s maritime industry have “sounded the alarm” and “took up the challenge” to collectively tackle the problem and provide preventive actions on HIV/AIDS.

A round table discussion sponsored by AMOSUP/ITF and the Joint Manning Group (JMG) tackled a number of measures needed to protect Filipino seafarers from HIV infection.

The measures included enforcement of education and information campaign about the dreaded disease and lower the stigma and discrimination among those infected by HIV. The forum, held at the AMOSUP Convention Centre last 16 February, also served as a venue for the exchange of information regarding the status of HIV/AIDS as it relates to the seafaring industry.

The forum was also attended by representatives from the World Health Organisation, Department of Health, Department of Labour and Employment, Philippine Seafarers Union, Seamen’s Hospital and Magsaysay Maritime. Magsaysay president Marlon Rono and ITF maritime coordinator Jaqueline Smith moderated the discussions.

Collective commitment

Former JMG chair Mr Eduardo Manese said that ship managers and manning agents are much aware of the problem as this has been integrated by most manning agencies into their crew’s pre-departure orientation seminars.

“Rest assured that the private sector works with the government regarding directives needed in the implementation of (the guidelines) against the spread of HIV/AIDS. The end result of this forum must be the collective commitment of the industry,” Mr Manese said.

The Department of Health said the Philippines has 3,988 overseas contract workers (OFW) who have tested HIV positive thus far. Although there is no figure as to the number of seafarers among those diagnosed with HIV.

Being HIV positive, however, bars no one from employment, according
70% of Filipino seafarers were still afraid to work with HIV positive shipmates.

3,968 OFW’s who have tested HIV positive thus far

54% were males who have sex with males.

33% believed that homosexuals and drug users would get HIV

15% of Filipino seafarers were into same sex relationship

30,000 Filipinos who have been HIV infected as of December 2015

Since 2015 it has been increasing on an average of 22 new cases per day

1984  2015

to AMOSUP president Dr Conrado F Oca. “In fact, with medicines right now, having HIV is just like having a chronic disease such as diabetes and hypertension many are suffering from.”

Dr Oca hopes the shipping industry can sweep away the stigma of those who have been infected, saying HIV-positive seafarers can still be gainfully employed.

Unlike 20 or 30 years ago when an infected showed up in hospitals or workplaces people wouldn’t even want to go near them for fear of contracting the disease, he said, “but now some individuals have come out in the open with the disease” and mingled with everyone living a normal productive life.

Stigma due to ignorance

Dr Oca urged shipowners and manning agents to employ a seafarer even if he is HIV positive “because he is not a threat to society. We need to address the problem of stigma and discrimination.”

Likewise, the ITF has also been committed against the spread of HIV AIDS. ITF maritime coordinator Jacqueline Smith said it supports the importance of removing the stigma and discrimination.

“The reason why it spreads is because of ignorance and because of the stigma others wouldn’t want to talk about it,” she said, stressing that within the ITF “there can be no place for complacency in fighting it.”
She underscored the need to work together on finding ways to get the message across the industry. She said talking about HIV is going to limit the exposure to the disease.

Smith commended the Philippine manning sector for taking on the challenge. “If we can find the template here in this country, I believe we can export it to other countries,” she added, referring to the concerted plans stakeholders in maritime wishes to enforce.

PH lags behind

Every year HIV cases in the Philippines are rising. In a survey the ITF carried out in 2015 the Philippines was cited as one of the countries whose seafarers lagged behind in terms of education and information about HIV AIDS.

Dr Altaf Asif of the ITF said their survey found that 70% of Filipino seafarers were still afraid to work with HIV positive shipmates. Even though on the ship one can never know who is positive, Dr Asif told the forum.

The survey also showed that 33% believed that homosexuals and drug users would get HIV and 41% used condoms during sex. The survey also found out that 15% of Filipino seafarers were in same sex relationship.

Dr Asif said that 55% of seafarers felt that the company or manning agent could be a good source of information about HIV AIDS. He added that 80% of seafarers are requesting information related to HIV in the workplace.

World AIDS

Statistics from the WHO showed that 15.8 million of the 36.9M with AIDS have been accessing treatment. This is very low as treatment is very important to prevent transmission to the partners, according to Dr Nerissa Dominguez, the WHO Philippines Country Office technical officer on HIV.

At the end of 2014, there were 2M new cases added to the global figures. And around 1.2M people died at the end of the same year. Dr Dominguez said among the 2M infected are those who are in the key population that include sex workers, trans-genders, men having sex with men (MSM), and those that are in close settings like prisons.

The high driver of the epidemic now is MSM, she noted. In Asia Pacific, people living in HIV are highly contributed by countries, namely India, Indonesia China and Thailand for the new reported infections in 2014.

Ms Mary Joy Morin of the DOH said the department has a data of 30,000 Filipinos who have been HIV infected as of December 2015. It’s a cumulative figure over the past 30 plus years. Since 2015 it has been increasing on an average of 22 new cases per day, according to Ms Morin, who is the project associate for treatment, care and support of the National AIDS and STI Prevention and Control Program at the DOH.

She said 13% of the reported cases were OFW. Of these cases,

“The greater challenge for DOH now, according to Ms Morin, is that even with the data “we are not seeing the real picture of HIV in the Philippines unless people would submit themselves for testing”

Though the Philippines has only 1% infected, this is “still very alarming because it is rapidly increasing,” according to Dr Dominguez.

She said the implementation of HIV programmes lags behind in many parts of the world as many countries are not implementing the way it should be. “However, we know what to do. The science is there, and we know how to tackle the problem.”

While it is not treatable but manageable, HIV infected person can live a productive life if given a chance. “The target now is for us not to have new infection, integrate HIV prevention into other health services for seafarers and sustaining the response. It cannot be a one-shot deal but a continuing commitment to control and eliminate HIV,” Dr Dominguez said.

Increasing cases

The Philippines, which started recording HIV incidents in 1984, is one of the nine counties with increasing cases. The Department of Health said when a country is classified in this category, it means a 25% increase in a “certain period when all other countries are stable or decreasing in their (HIV) cases.”

84% were males. Among the HIV positive males, 54% were males who have sex with males. DOH obtained such information during testing as they also provide pre-test counselling in which patients also disclose their sexual practices, Ms Morin said.

Males’ age range from 16 to 80 years old, with median at 33 years old. While for females, the age range of infected are from 14 to 73, with median age of 34 years old. Modes of transmission of HIV among OFW is still sexual with both males and females.

But from 2015, the mode of transmission has shifted from males to both – from sex between males and females to sex between males. It’s now more male-to-male transmission, according to DOH.

The greater challenge for DOH now, according to Ms Morin, is that even with the data “we are not seeing the real picture of HIV in the Philippines unless people would submit themselves for testing.”

She stressed that there might be Filipinos out there who are engaging in risky behaviour and can already infect others because they do not know their HIV status. Now it is also important to promote HIV testing.

8 Sailing Forward
Roadmap to excellence, lead in competent seafarers supply

PH must face and overcome threats to its industry dominance as technology makes the world smaller and deployment process faster

A ship manning convention in Manila has afforded hundreds of delegates to have themselves updated with industry issues and solutions in achieving the goals of continuing maritime excellence and preserving the country’s status as the world’s crewing capital.

The two-day Philippine Manning Convention 2015 (Philmancon) also enabled the industry to build a roadmap that would streamline state agencies processes for seafarers’ employment and further improvement in the field of maritime education and training. These goals expect to consequently increase the country’s current 27% share in the world maritime labour market.

Philmancon 2015, held last 10-11 November at the Manila Hotel, was the second conference the Joint Manning Group (JMG) has successfully initiated following the first convention in 2007, when the industry faced the worsening shortage of qualified officers and crew.

Overcoming threats

This time, however, the Philippines must face and overcome threats to its dominance in seafaring industry as technology has made the world smaller and deployment process faster, said JMG chairman Capt Emmanuel Regio.

With the STCW Manila amendments and changes in the global socio-economic environment, Regio said the Philippines dominant position in the ship manning industry faces a number of obstacles. But he stressed that the sector must look at these obstacles not as deterrents, but as challenges to get better.

“We cannot be complacent as other labour-providing countries are also getting their acts together to have more of their trained seafarers manning the global fleet,” warned Dr Conrado F Oca, president of Associated Marine Officers’ and Samen’s Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP).

Dr Oca said that AMOSUP is aware that some organisations from traditional maritime nations focus on the Philippines “policy weaknesses and try to question the qualification and certification processes of our seafarers. We have but to comply.”
The Philippines posted 401,826 in manpower deployment to oceangoing ships in 2015, a 21.93% growth from the previous year.

DOLE secretary Rosalinda Dimapiliis-Baldoz, the convention’s keynote speaker, said these challenges seem to paint a modest future for Filipino seafarers, citing the increased trend in crew deployment, not only of ratings but officers as well, over the last three years.

She said the Philippines posted 401,826 in manpower deployment to oceangoing ships in 2015, a 21.93% growth from the previous year. Thus there is still a growing demand for Filipino seafarers overseas, Secretary Baldoz pointed out.

Challenges and innovations

The DOLE chief gave a rundown of challenges her department faced over the last few years and how DOLE addressed them in the “context of an effective level of tripartism and social dialogue.”

Some of these include the implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006, improvement in disposition period of cases in the area of dispute settlement at the NLRC, anti-piracy measures to protect Filipino seafarers in the high seas, setting a standard in cadetship programme, and improvement in POEA processes.

The POEA has affirmed its continuing commitment to improvement of policies and processes. POEA administrator Hans Leo Cadac said his agency has laid down a policy “to think beyond the present, both within and out of the box.”

Some of these policies and innovations, Cadac said are linked towards the agency’s thrusts of its electronic and online systems such as the e-payment in fees for OEC issuance or exit clearance for seafarers, enhanced e-submission system by manning agencies of their seafarers contracts, online accreditation of foreign principals and enrollment of vessels.

POEA is said to be improving its monitoring system in the field of OEC issuance by taking advantage of the database sharing from the Bureau of Immigration. It also complements seafarers’ employment monitoring, including a plan to increase information sharing on social media through its website.

The recent Philmancon also provided deliberates the opportunity to get updates on important legislations affecting the maritime industry.

ANGKLA Partylist Rep Jesulito Manalo said that after the expected signing of the “Seafarers Protection Act” or the anti-ambulance chasing bill into law, the escrow bill would be the next piece of legislation related to crew claims that the bicameral House needs to work on.

Apart from legislation, Manalo said ANGKLA is advocating the improvement of the maritime industry as a whole, including shipbuilding, maritime research, and port development.

Education and training reforms

Maritime education and training, along with shipowners’ response to major issues dominated the Philmancon second day agenda.
MARINA administrator Maximo Mejia Jr said the need to comply with the revised STCW Convention is the key for the Philippines to have more Filipino officers in major positions on board merchant ships. He said MARINA has revised all-curricula, including "outcome base education" that was followed by reforms both in training management both on board and presentation of evidence ashore.

He stressed that reforms in certification such as the introduction of walk-in examination has greatly reduced queuing time and inconvenience to applicant seafarers, along with online registration, setting up satellite offices in AMOSUP headquarters, decentralisation of STCW functions and rationalisation of training system.

Panel discussions over the two-day conference remained the effective tools to clarify and answer doubts and queries on hot industry issues as resource persons fielded questions from delegates. JMG officials led by Josephine Francisco, Jose Kato and Miguel Oca moderated the panel discussions with various stakeholders.

Owners’ response

The response from shipowners such as the International Mariners Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ) provided hopes on state policies especially when it comes to expectations from government as it shapes the industry through its rules and guidelines.

Thus, IMMAJ chairman Capt. Masami Sasaki told delegates that Philmancon 2015 was successful in bringing together stakeholders from government, labour unions and manning agents. It appreciated the solidarity of the parties displayed in the convention.

“If such solidarity will be continued beyond the seminar, global maritime excellence will surely be assured by the Philippine manning industry,” Sasaki said. He added that suggestions contained in the speeches and presentations should be converted into concrete actions and be implemented immediately.

For its part, the International Maritime Employers’ Council (IMEC) welcomed the quality systems and processes introduced by POEA, but reminded the state body that quality is a never ending process.

IMEC Philippines representative Michael Estaniel also reminded MARINA that there are no shortcuts in STCW compliance. He hopes to see MARINA’s reform efforts soon. As for legal and legislative concerns, Estaniel noted that while finding solutions around the law may help in money claims, he hopes that a new law will solve them. However, he said that garnishment issue must be resolved with finality.

“IT is crucial that the Philippines resolve this issue, as this may lead to shipowners shifting to other countries (in the choice of officers and crew). In fact, it has already happened to other companies,” he warned.

Having heard the industry’s new roadmap, said the JMG is “now ready to sail on our next voyage, ready to face difficulties and unexpected obstacles we will see on the way.”

JMG asks the industry to “continue to trust Filipino seafarers, and the manning industry asks you to continue to invest in them.”
Women on board: Hurdling gender -

Andy Dalisay takes a look at how female seafarers confront prejudice and perform valuable roles on board in the pursuit of a sea career.

When the ILO decided to commission a study in 2003 on the potential of women for a sea career, it found out that only one to two percent comprised the female gender working in the world’s merchant marine fleet. Yet more than a decade after the study, which examined the struggle faced by women to gain employment and advancement on board ships, their number almost went unchanged, as female seafarers potentials apparently attracted little attention.

A more recent study which analyses the statistics of women on board concludes that there have not been much improvement in increasing the number of female seafarers. Shipowners and trade unions have cited a number of reasons that impede the recruitment of women in the male dominated seafaring profession. Their employment, especially on cargo ships, faced gender-related challenges even in crisis as when the industry saw the need in alleviating the shortage of officers.

Apart from common cases of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment or violence at sea,
other factors cited by the study carried out by Seafarers International Research Centre in Cardiff for the ILO, included the banning of women from enrolling in nautical courses in some countries; employers not hiring women in the "misled belief" that they will be at sea for less time than men; and women paid less than men for doing the same work. Other reasons were the reluctance of employers to promote women on board; women denied facilities available to men on board; and women having to prove themselves more than male crew by working to the limits of their endurance.

Most women on board are serving on cruise ships and ferries, mainly in the service sector such as in catering and hotel sections. "This reflects the division of labour by gender based on gender roles as there are still strong masculine cultural values that seafaring occupations require physical strengths and women are not suitable for such jobs," says Momoko Kitada, assistant professor at World Maritime University.
No strong muscles required

However, Kitada, points out that this norm is incorrect as modern ships are equipped with technology which does not require muscles to operate, and there are also some men who are not strong as such. She even traces as to how discrimination begins once female students start for their apprenticeship programme, saying: “Women cadets often cannot find a ship to get the iron-board work in order to be eligible for the CoC (Certificate of Competence).”

The experience of many Filipino female senior cadets in the Philippines is somewhat familiar. For instance, Nina Sue Da Silva, a former marine engineer at Maersk Line, did not escape discrimination when she began to board her first vessel as an apprentice mate and sexually harassed while serving as full time marine engineer whilst sailing on her 2nd engineer ticket.

Now a chief engineer, Da Silva says she experienced having been bullied by her former male Russian chief engineer on board when she was forced to work on another task that she was not supposed to perform. Sexual harassment occurred on her next ship when she was pestered for an offer for a “paid one-night stand for sex” by a Danish colleague, which prompted her to approach their British Captain to stop such a nuisance.

Throughout the years, many women seafarers have learned to employ strategies in managing their situations on board, especially on cargo vessels, to avoid gender-related problems. In a study conducted in 2013, WMU professor Momoko Kitada found out that “majority of women changed their identity management strategies over time while at sea.”

Sexy women and CBAs

Female seafarers in her sample commonly felt uncomfortable when they were seen as ‘women’ rather than ‘people’ or ‘seafarers’ by their male colleagues on board ships. Out of 36 female seafarers in the Kitada research, 25 attempted to look less feminine in their appearance and/or behaviour (the obscurers of femininity). Some chose their clothes in terms of being not too sexy when they packed for the voyage because it might be inappropriate in front of men who have been away from family and lovers for a long time and do not often see women on board their ships.

Maritime unions lament that gender-related issues continue to exist at sea, just like it does elsewhere in society. The Norwegian Seafarers’ Union (NSU), which affiliates with AMOSUP in collective agreements (CBA) for Filipino crews working on NIS-flagged vessels, says it sees an increased awareness on discrimination and gender-related issues, but they also have seen great results from years of focus on the problem.

“All of our CBA include comprehensive text prohibiting all forms of sexual discrimination, just as in the model agreements from the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF),” stresses Lena Dyring, assistant director of NSU’s Cruise Operations. Female seafarers in the cruise/passenger vessels covered by NSU collective agreements consist of around 20-25 percent of

NSU works with are said to have different types of sensitivity training about sexual discrimination, harassment and bullying. Dyring explains that some companies have a “very systematic, deep-reaching approach to these issues and we do see great improvements as a result.”

More women are confronting prejudice and becoming valuable as ship’s crew, according to the ITF, which has a “women’s committee” to advice its Executive Board on gender related matters.

“Some companies have a very systematic, deep-reaching approach to these issues and we do see great improvements as a result”

shipboard personnel. The number varies slightly between companies. Dyring says this number encompass all nationalities on the ship and the majority of women work in hotel and catering departments.

As an extension of the policies in the CBA, the shipping companies

Unions’ call for priority

Likewise, it has produced guidelines on dealing with gender-related problems for women. From discrimination to maternity rights, the ITF has encouraged female seafarers to face the problem of gender issues and consult their trade
Owners, seafarers’ unions jointly launch guide on elimination of harassment and bullying

Maritime employers and seafarers’ unions have joined forces to publish the new international ‘Guidance on Eliminating Shipboard Harassment and Bullying’.

The new guidelines, developed by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), can be downloaded from the ICS and ITF websites.

These Guidelines have been launched in advance of an important International Labour Organization (ILO) Special Tripartite Committee on the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), in February in Geneva, at which ICS and ITF will co-ordinate the representation of the social partners alongside governments.

Under the ILO MLC, governments are already required to satisfy themselves that their laws and regulations respect the fundamental right of seafarers not to be discriminated against during their employment on board ships.

Recognising that any form of harassment and bullying can have serious consequences for seafarers, the new industry guidance takes the additional step of setting out what shipping companies, seafarers and seafarers’ organisations can do to help prevent bullying and harassment from becoming a serious concern.

As well as providing advice on company policies on reporting, complaints and grievance procedures, the Guidance addresses the responsibilities of seafarers and their employers to use these procedures appropriately and for being aware of any harassment or bullying that might occur within the maritime workplace. This includes any instances of cyber-bullying.

The important role of seafarers’ organisations in these awareness raising activities is also underlined. ICS secretary general, Peter Hinchliffe, remarked: “Shipowners fully accept the need to develop policies and plans to eliminate harassment and bullying as a matter of good employment practice. Bullying has serious consequences for the physical and emotional health of seafarers and can also compromise teamwork with negative consequences for the safety of the ship and its crew. The fact that ICS and ITF have collaborated to produce this new Guidance is therefore a very positive development.”

ITF general secretary, Steve Cotton, said: “Bullying and harassment in the workplace are unacceptable wherever they happen – but they have a particular horror at sea, where those affected may be isolated and alone, hundreds of miles from home. Until now there has been a lack of practical common sense guidelines and we’re delighted that we have been able to work side by side with the ICS to address this need.”

The Guidelines are now being distributed throughout the global shipping industry via ICS national shipowners’ associations and ITF union affiliates. The authors are also encouraging their use by maritime training providers and other parties with an interest in promoting the elimination of harassment and bullying within the global shipping industry.
Unions bid for gender-fair roles of women on board

As an extension of CBA, shipping companies the unions deal with have different types of sensitivity training about sexual discrimination, harassment and bullying

Maritime unions have adopted several measures to highlight the situation of female seafarers that would encourage them to a gender-fair employment on board merchant ships.

The Norwegian Seafarers’ Union (NSU) and AMOSUP, through the ITF system, have worked on encouraging women on many fronts to improve their conditions while at sea. Examples of which are in the area of maternity benefits.

Between 20 to 25 percent of female seafarers covered by NSU collective agreements (CBA) with shipowners serve on cruise and passenger vessels. This number encompasses all nationalities on the ship, with majority working in hotel and catering departments.

Lena Dyring, NSU’s assistant director for cruise operations, says they are attempting to ban pregnancy and pap-smear testing as part of pre-employment medicals, among other issues. They also carry out annual trade union cruise seminars in the Philippines and in other countries such as Indonesia, India, Jamaica and Trinidad where union affiliates in those countries have established CBA on ships registered under NIS.

Joint efforts with affiliates

NSU always cooperates with the national unions on this type of pro-active efforts that serve as venues for discussions of work-related issues. Together with AMOSUP in the Philippines, for instance, it has reserved a day for a seminar just for female seafarers that usually takes place in March. A record number of female officers and crew have been expected this year. NSU considers the activity as an example for other countries of the excellent work of the two unions in having women as participants.

Dyring admits that discrimination does exist at sea. But she says the unions have seen an increased awareness on the issue and has also obtained great results from years of tackling the problem. This is because all of their CBAs provide comprehensive text prohibiting all forms of sexual discrimination.

As an extension of the policies in the CBA, the shipping companies the NSU works with all have different types of sensitivity training about sexual discrimination, harassment and bullying. Some have a very systematic, deep-reaching approach to these issues and the union do see great improvements as a result.

While there is no available data on the potential increase of female seafarers, Dyring sees the presence of more women in marine and technical roles when visiting ships now, compared to just a few years ago. And the number of Filipino female seafarers compared to other nationalities seem to be a bit higher than the average, she says.

She noted that the cultural acceptance for women going out
to work at sea on board cruise and ferries seems a bit higher in the Philippines than many other countries. Though percentage for other types of vessels of female seafarers is significantly lower.

**Women’s performance and benefits**

When it comes to performance of women on board ships, studies still have to be made. However, from the unions’ experience from visiting ships and handling grievances from female mariners, NSU and AMOSUP can see that female seafarers are typically doing very well in their respective roles.

Dyng says it may be due to a number of reasons. One of these is that women sometimes feel have to work a little bit harder than their counterparts on their way up through the system.

This is apparently the reason NSU and AMOSUP encourage female employment in all kinds of roles. While change do come slowly as more women are doing well in high ranking roles, the unions believe that an increase of female employment at sea in all positions is imminent.

Dyng explains that it is also very important to put policies in place, such as maternity benefits, shorter contracts and priority for rehire following child birth for women, among others, which make it possible to combine the roles of having a family and working at sea.

For instance, they have union members who are married couples working in companies being able to work on the same ships so they can share a cabin and have synchronised contracts and vacations. Of course, it benefits both men and women. “Other issues, such as focusing on sexual harassment and discrimination on board are extremely important in order to create a safe working place for all seafarers,” according to Dyng.

The ship is not only the workplace for seafarers, they also live there for months at a time, she says. “Being exposed to harassment can affect all aspects of that seafarer’s life if it is not dealt with in a professional manner.”

“Being exposed to harassment can affect all aspects of that seafarer’s life if it is not dealt with in a professional manner”

Between 20 to 25 percent of female seafarers covered by NSU collective agreements with shipowners serve on cruise and passenger vessels.
Qualities you need to know about women on board merchant ships

By C/E Nina Sue Da Silva
There have been advantages of having women seafarers on board a cargo ship. With years of experience working aboard a number of ongoing cargo vessels, many female officers and crew can identify and endure themselves with the qualities that they have maintained and developed as they spend their careers at sea.

Female seafarers can bring in to build a normal social environment on board. As in the last several years, the nature of seafarer’s life has changed. Having women as part of the crew has reduced the sense of isolation being felt by several seafarers of the opposite sex when they see the presence of a wife-daughter-sister-girlfriend figure on board.

Women seafarers are more determined, courageous and positive in their attitudes at work. Since it takes guts and strength to choose the seafaring profession, most women seafarers have become more prepared mentally, physically and emotionally on the job. With very few of them in the industry, most women working in many a cargo ship usually exist as the lone female member of her kind. She can hardly share her feelings and thoughts in time of loneliness, homesickness and boredom.

Female seafarers always take the initiative and try to be respectful. In many instances, a female crewmember’s first big challenge is to get accepted by the rest of the shipboard personnel each time she embarks on the vessel. This is why women on board have opted to always prove their worth for being competent and respectful of fellow shipmates around them.

They are brave and strong. Being away from home and working in a man’s world shows an act of bravery enough. Likewise, women in cargo vessels need to have a strong heart, as they expect to learn — not necessarily experience — those instances of humiliation, bullying and even verbal harassment which are part of the job.

Good leadership strategy always comes in with women on board. Female seafarers working in cargo ships have experienced difficulties in leading fellow seafarers of the opposite gender, especially those working with a mixed European crew. She too has developed the advantage or strategy of getting one step ahead with men when it comes to knowledge on the job. Another one is firmness in making decisions in order to gain the trust of other crewmembers. Women sometimes tend to be aggressive if one can sense that all her efforts are not good enough. Women seafarers maybe strict enough at work but that leads them to be fair and just.

Women are also hardworking and full of enthusiasm. Each day’s challenge on board offers a new hope, new beginning and new learning. And they have become diligent especially when it comes to family matters and for the betterment of and thinks that work is fun and enjoyable.

They are smart and obedient. Women are clever especially when it comes to their rights and responsibilities. A well trained and competent female seafarer shows smartness and confidence in her job. She follows a high performance standard and even excels at work. Another great asset of women is their obedience to the regulations of the company they work for and to superiors on board.

Since it takes guts and strength to choose the seafaring profession, most women seafarers have become more prepared mentally, physically and emotionally on the job.

They have one of the highest levels of emotional stability. In seafaring — and a woman at that in one of the most hazardous professions — most women maintain their calm even in time of distress. When they experience the darkest moment or even while under pressure at work and in stressful situations, still they are capable of keeping their cool. Though women by nature are sensitive, yet they are capable of and have learned to control their emotions.

Women are more particular regarding safety issues on board. There is always same risk in working aboard the ship but women strictly follow rules especially when using personal safety equipment.

A mark of integrity and courage is with them, too. Women see to it that any mistakes and accident on board the vessel could not be an option. Being reliable towards work is very essential. They always face challenges and hardships but remain confident that they will surpass all the trials which indicate how strong their will they have mustered.
Sailor’s Home: Giving extra mile for female members needs

New facilities that are in the pipeline for the women section include exercise room that will have the essentials for fitness buffs

Since very few of them serve the shipping industry, female seafarers may have obtained a certain privilege when they are away from home. At AMOSUP Sailor’s Home Annex, where their small presence is seen among men, the Union sees to it that the needs of female members are well taken care of.

Staying in hotels or dormitories temporarily is akin to having the comfort of other necessities of daily living back home when one can access them within her reach. This is why AMOSUP has exerted the extra mile in planning by providing upcoming improvements for facilities at its accommodation area for women.

New facilities that are in the pipeline for the female members section in Sailor’s Home Annex include an exercise room that will have the essentials for fitness buffs such as treadmills, stationary bikes and others. Once set up, the new facility will enable female occupants to do their usual fitness routine without leaving the premises.

Female members, same with the men, who avail accommodation services at Sailor’s Home hail from various provinces who have to attend training classes in Manila or in transit to the vessel for their next joining port.

At the laundry area, women will have washing and dryer machines for their own use so that they won’t have to join the men’s section when they need to do the laundry. AMOSUP also plans to have additional feature with wi-fi access in the female’s floor area, apart from existing internet access in the library and mess hall.

Sailor’s Home Annex in Manila has been a place that assures the safety and security of women seafarers while preparing to embark on their maritime career. The four-storey transient pads for seafarers has a 20-bed capacity for the union’s female members.

The annex has the trappings of home designed to make it more comfortable to stay in. Some of...
Sailor’s Home Annex in Manila has been a place that assures the safety and security of women seafarers while preparing to embark on their maritime career.

these features lead them to easier and closer access to more useful areas such as elevators and stairways.

Unlike the old sailor’s home, the new pads have been designed with access to facilities such as baths and toilets, laundry and lounge areas that are just for female members. Female occupants enjoy the benefits of audio and visual systems within their lounge area like their male counterparts.

The house rules on conduct and behaviour bars male-member occupants from entering or loitering in the female sleeping quarters, toilet and shower rooms in their designated floor. The same rule applies to female occupants for the same exclusions within the male’s own domain.

Not all of the women seafarers checking in are bound for cruise lines and passenger ships for their assignments. There have been women officers working on cargo vessels who have stayed in Sailor’s Home as their temporary shelter.

AMOSUP expects that the number of women member occupants is about to spike with the increase in the union’s collective agreements involving female crew. They may not only include those officers and crew serving on board cruises and ferries -- from which AMOSUP maintains CBA jointly with the Norwegian and Italian unions -- but, hopefully in cargo tonnage like bulk and container ships as well.
Seamen’s Hospital Ob-Gyn Department: In the frontline for women health care

The department also conducts regular lectures on pre-natal, breastfeeding, family planning, and disease prevention such as cervical cancer, being the second most common ailment in women.

As one of the most in demand key services for female seafarers and their dependants, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital has been in the frontline for women’s medical and health care.

The Department, which receives an average of more than 4,000 patients a year, deals with all types of medical cases related to female reproductive organs’ health and pregnancy management.

Under the chair of Dr. Lazarto Villamar, the Seamen’s Hospital’s OB-Gyn Department also promotes the hospital as a centre for training for residents-practitioners and continuing medical education of its staff.

OB-GYN of the hospital is among the departments that promote education on women’s health.

Specifically, it also carries out regular lectures on pre-natal, breastfeeding, family planning, and disease prevention such as cervical cancer, being the second most common ailment in women. It offers easy access to anti-cervical cancer vaccines for those who wish to get vaccinated.

Dr. Villamar says the department also carries out family planning lectures apart from treating all related ailments on women. At the same time, he says they also motivate female seafarers to undergo test for the prevention of cervical cancer, a major illness among women next to breast ailment.

He says that due to the nature of their job, seafarers when visiting ports often lead to unsafe sexual behaviour or end up having multiple partners in the long run. This puts the wife vulnerable to the virus that might lead to cervical cancer.
“As much as possible, we motivate them to be vaccinated.”

The department has eight consultants and another eight resident doctors on training who comprised the hospital’s vital service in providing optimum health care in the field of Ob-Gyn to AMOSUP members and their dependants.

The hospital will soon enhance its information dissemination within the hospital, specifically, on women seafarers’ health, updates benefits for women under the Republic Act 9710 otherwise known as the “Magna Carta for Women” and provide useful tips to help women seafarers handle gender-related issues especially when they are at work.

Since 1992 the department had been accredited for service and since 1996 for training by the Department of Health.

The department’s office is located at the second floor of the Hospital’s main building and the OB-OPD is on the first floor. It has been renovated to satisfy the needs of a modern obstetrical department.

The department provides a total of 38 service beds and boasts of a breastfeeding ward, which is accredited by the DOH as a mother-baby friendly hospital in compliance with Republic Act 7600 or The Rooming-In or Breastfeeding Act of 1992.

The department is also equipped with modern diagnostic technologies like laparoscope, hysteroscope (both diagnostic and interventional), colposcope, ultrasound machines, and fetal monitors and modern laboratory technology for diagnosis and evaluation of medical cases, as well as the experts in the field of OB-Gyn.

The Hospital recently acquired modern laboratory facilities to house its own histology section for the preparation and interpretation of slides and specimens for biopsy and histologic diagnosis. Laboratory equipment for diagnosis are state-of-the-art that is required by modern times.

The department has gone a long way since its conception in 1978. Today, it continues to serve the obstetric and gynecologic needs of the seafarers’ dependants.
Survey pinpoints gaps in women health provision

The new report was designed to identify key areas of concern for female seafarers as the centrepiece of health and wellbeing of women working at sea.

A n online survey of about 600 female seafarers from more than 50 countries have identified perceived health gaps and well-being provision in their jobs.

The 595 participants, mainly under the age of 40 from 54 countries, were asked to select their top three challenges showed that 47% identified joint/back pain, while 43% chose stress/depression/anxiety.

Joint/back pain was less commonly identified by those working on cargo ships or tankers than in those working on cruise ships. However, stress/depression/anxiety is the top health challenge in both sectors.

Participants in the survey from non-traditional maritime states are said to have been younger. European seafarers and those from the non-cruise sectors are relatively over-represented.

The survey was supplemented by the findings of two focus groups for cruise staff in the Philippines. It is acknowledged that those studied may not be representative of all groups of women working at sea. However, these results provide important new information and update findings from earlier studies.

Higher rating participants

This difference may reflect the higher proportion of rating participants from the cruise sector who had physically demanding jobs. This is supported by the focus group participants, who felt their joint/back pain was linked not only to the weight of the objects they carry, but also the distance they have to carry them.

Some 75% reporting joint/back pain, and 78% of those who experience stress/depression/anxiety considered that their health problems were connected to their work. Other common challenges were overweight/obesity issues (selected by 21% of respondents overall and 36% of the 51-60 age group), and heavy or painful periods (selected by 19%). Nearly a quarter of participants said they did not have any health challenges.

Problems with access to healthcare included confidentiality, selected by 37% of respondents working on tankers, 23% on cargo ship workers and 19% working on cruise ships. This is likely to be linked to concerns about job security.

However, 50% of participants felt they had no difficulties in accessing healthcare on board or in port. Nearly 40% of respondents said they did not have access to a sanitary bin on-board; however, there were notable variations across ranks and sectors. Access was usual in the cruise and ferry sectors (85%, 63%), but much lower elsewhere especially on tankers (27%).

17% of respondents identified sexual harassment as a problem, but nearly 50% of participants in an earlier pilot study said it was an issue; younger women reported this more frequently.

Recommendations include wide consultation on the need for further investigations, as well as the adoption of a range of relatively straightforward and inexpensive interventions. For example, the production of gender specific information on joint/back pain, mental health, nutrition and gynecological complaints. In addition, the introduction of means for disposing sanitary waste for all female crew on all ships, as well as improved availability of female sanitary products on-board and in port shops worldwide.

The new report was designed to identify key areas of concern for female seafarers as the centrepiece of health and wellbeing of women working at sea. The survey was a joint initiative by the International Seafarers’ Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA), and the Seafarers Hospital Society (SHS).

Much to be done

Among the findings of the survey, which was completed by 595 women seafarers, are that:

- Nearly half of all respondents reported joint/back pain, and stress/depression/anxiety were the two biggest health challenges they faced.
- The biggest issue preventing women seafarers accessing healthcare while at sea was lack of confidentiality.
- Over half of respondents would welcome routine wellness checks.

ITF maritime coordinator Jacqueline Smith commented: “This survey underlines how relatively little research there has been so far into women’s working lives at sea. It helps fill those gaps and shows how much more has to be done for us to see the number of women at sea break out of the current and unacceptable one to two percent of the workforce.

“We particularly welcome the fact that the survey points to relatively
inexpensive and easily instituted improvements that can help make that change possible: confidentiality, a focus on stress, [and] better health information."

Georgina Robinson, Health Development Manager at SHS said: "Partnership working has meant looking beyond the development of health initiatives, to the advantages of collaborative working. By sharing expertise, resources and capacity, new approaches in assessing health have been promoted through active involvement of community members, welfare representatives and researchers in all aspects of this with action to benefit the community involved."

Outdated and gendered health perspective

It is estimated that 1-2% of the world’s 1.25m seafarers are women, serving on some 87,000 ships, mostly in the cruise sector. Research suggests that they continue to face discrimination, and that there are areas where women seafarers’ specific needs are often overlooked. Health is likely to be one such area, and there has been a growing concern among health and welfare organisations that medical handbooks and other literature aimed at women seafarers are outdated and fail to provide a gendered perspective to health or to consider health and related issues that are specific to women.

After recognising this possible gap in available health information and provisions which address health issues specific to women seafarers, representatives from IMHA, ISWAN, ITF and SHS designed an online pilot survey to find out how women currently working at sea view their health needs.

This was conducted from the beginning of June 2014 for two months, and was completed by 100 respondents. After reviewing the questions and results, a revised survey was devised and conducted between December 2014 and April 2015. In addition to the survey, two focus group sessions were held in Cebu with 20 Filipina cruise ship workers.

Focus group participants discussed their survey answers in more details and gave useful insight into the most common health challenges reported by respondents. The responses received highlight a small number of areas where relatively simple and low-cost interventions might improve the health and welfare of women seafarers, as well as some complex issues which will need further investigation.
Female cadets brace themselves to find more supportive owners

AP Moller-Maersk, Stolt-Nielsen and other members of the International Maritime Employers Council are among the companies that train and recruit women for their ships.

In maritime academies around the world, there is always this compelling observation that women perform better than men. However, this general tendency has been challenged by shipowners' unwilling attitude to provide female cadets the onboard training they need.

The AMOSUP-managed Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) makes no exception to this challenge. While the academy gets no limit in the intake of female cadets, MAAP president VAdm Eduardo Ma R Santos (AFP, ret) says the academy relies on sponsorships from shipowners and managers who wish to employ Filipino women on board their ships.

"If we take as many women as the academy could, it will be useless if cadets have no employers or shipping companies to end up with when they graduate," Vice Admiral Santos points out.

Women cadets at MAAP are housed separately from men. "They can study without disruption and they do more conscientiously than men as there are women who really excel but not in all classes," he says.

Women who excel

Vice Adm Santos admits that about 75% of MAAP's female cadets normally climb to the top 10 in terms of academic excellence on a year-on-year basis.

The academy normally admits an average of five percent share of female cadets per year. Cadets undertake their in-house practical training programme through the AMOSUP-owned training ship Kapitan Felix Oca.

Maritime education is a combination of training, athletics, academics and non-academics which are all graded. Male and female cadets have the same training system. Although in physical exercises, the academy has removed those that are not supposed to be for women such as the push and pull-up workouts.

MAAP has graduated over the last 12 years some 80 women officers.
who have worked on board various types of cargo ships. Others have found jobs ashore in the Navy and in various shipping or ship management companies. European companies such as AP Møller-Maersk, Stolt-Nielsen and some members of the International Maritime Employers Council (IMEC) are among the companies that sponsor and recruit female cadets for their ships.

Shipowners’ commitment

Company-sponsored students get to have their practical training as shipping companies have their own training programme for cadets before they get promoted or placed as regular crewmembers.

Asian owners, however, still have to make a commitment in education and training of female cadets, including their employment. It’s a cultural thing for other owners though, to refuse women on board.

Women in the shipping industry tend to experience discrimination based on gender since most jobs are largely dominated by men and gender-stereo types across the sector. Women also find it difficult to balance work and life especially when they start having their family.

These are probably the reasons why some managers complain that when a female officer gets married, problem of continuity (in employment) starts. “It’s quite natural since she has to go on a maternity leave and take care of the baby,” VAdm Santos says, stressing that this gives, however, no assurance of a job renewal due to the parenting priority. It takes time for the concerned officer to get on board anew.

It also puts the shipmanager to take some adjustments in maintaining the smooth flow of shipboard personnel. Loyalty counts to achieve a continuing pool of shipboard personnel. “You know someone will be with the company for the next 10 or 20 years, for instance. But with the maternity factor you can’t be sure how long she’ll be (with the company).”

VAdm Santos says some female officers who have no ship to work on have found alternative jobs in the Navy ashore. Those who have worked in shipmanagement companies and manning agencies ashore sometimes get the chance to sail to update their skills or for experience.

“Maritime education is a combination of training, athletics, academics and non-academics which are all graded. Male and female cadets have the same training system”
The ITF Helpline

As you are aware the ITF and its affiliated unions work together to fight for the rights and standards for all seafarers from around the world. To support seafarers the ITF has a global network of inspectors who are on the spot to go on board and deal with any problems that seafarers may have. For those areas of the world where we do not have inspectors available the Maritime Operations team (MOPs), based in the ITF office in London, will deal with the seafarers problems.

In the past a seafarer may not have known the contact details of the local ITF inspector or they may have tried contacting the ITF out of office hours and found no one was available. However, since July 2012 the ITF has operated a 24-hour Helpline service for seafarers, but it seems that some seafarers are not aware of it.

The ITF Helpline operates a 24-hours per day, 365-day per-year, multi-lingual service and can be contacted by telephone, email or SMS text.

Contact details are:

Telephone  +44 207 940 9280
Email       help@itf.org.uk
SMS Text line +44 7950 081 459

Please make a note of these contact details in case you need them at some time.

When you contact the Helpline the operators will ask you a number of questions including your contact details, the ship’s IMO number, name, type, and the flag it is registered under. They will ask about your location where the ship is going, your nationality and they will need a brief explanation as to what the problem or problems you have.

The Helpline Operators will then either refer your case directly to an inspector or to the MOPs team and they will contact you back as quickly as they can.

The ITF Inspectors, MOPs team and the ITF Helpline are all here to help protect seafarers’ rights and standards worldwide, please feel free to contact them whenever you need to.
Seamen’s Hospital: Gender-fair access to health, medical care for union members

The hospital administrative director Elena Jilocca says handling the administration aspect of its operation entails a lot of decision making and perseverance, and an unending learning process as well.

As a healthcare worker and a woman, she could lead female seafarers to be on top in terms of policy priorities for union members’ medical and health care needs.

But Seamen’s Hospital administrative director Ma Elena “Gysrell” Jilocca has quickly cast off any aura of sexual preference that she can be hands-on in dealing with the health care of AMOSUP union members.

Uplifting the members’ well-being regardless of gender is the hospital’s primary concern as part of the Union’s advocacy for a gender-fair health service delivery. That also equally applies to the families of active members and hospital employees.

Though the number of female seafarers represents a small percentage in the Union, AMOSUP ensures that all its members are treated equally in all aspects. When it comes to health care, Gysrell says members similarly gain the services and facilities the hospital offers.

Women concerns

For its purpose, management encourages the staff to become proactive to achieve the goals of the hospital’s different departments. She stressed that the various departments, including the research unit, are working together to assess the needs of patients. “We are sensitive to their needs and we always welcome their comments/suggestions and find ways to accommodate them whenever possible and feasible. And we resolve conflicts as soon as possible,” she says.

The hospital will soon enhance its internal information dissemination system, especially on female seafarers’ health, updates on their benefits in compliance with Republic Act 9710 which is “An Act Providing the Magna Carta for Women”, and to offer useful tips to help female seafarers handle gender-related issues especially when they are at work.

The hospital has revived its breastfeeding programme to help
promote the Mother-and-Baby Friendly initiative of the government. A dedicated room for out-patient, breastfeeding mothers such as the female members, members’ wives and employees of the union can use the facility. It also carries out regular lectures on pre-natal, breastfeeding, family planning, and disease prevention such as cervical cancer, being the second most severe among women.

The hospital offers access to anti-cervical cancer vaccines for those who wish to get vaccinated. In the pre-employment medical examination section, the medical facility also improved its service by assigning a dedicated female doctor who will examine female seafarers during their pre-employment medical examination.

Organisational structure

Handling the administrative aspect of the Seamen’s Hospital operation entails a lot of decision making and management and perseverance, but makes unending learning process as well, according to Gysrell.

Based on its organisational structure a number of departments fall under her administrative division whose operations Gysrell oversees. They include the human resources, pharmacy, hospital information system, medical records, engineering, maintenance and general services, and the dietary and food services. She also co-ordinates with other branches in regard to their operations and other duties as assigned by the Union president.

Gysrell’s primary duty is to support the hospital’s vision of an internationally recognised maritime medical center of excellence for healthcare delivery, training and research. She must see to it that the medical institution engages in more programmes that would enhance its services in a cost effective manner and lower the cost of operation without compromising the quality of service. She also takes charge of maintaining and improving the standards being practised in the hospital to comply with the requirements and maintain accreditations from the different regulatory bodies.

Job throwbacks

Gysrell began working as an apprentice/receptionist in the Pathology of Seamen’s Hospital in November 1988 after she graduated from college. The medical facilities at the time had just moved from the South Harbour Pier area to the current Intramuros site. She recalls that the hospital was then in the stage of transformation as it embarked on a more challenging mission for Union members’ welfare. This means that major departments such as Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Surgery had begun performing fully into their respective services and specialties, with the acquisition of medical equipment and computers.

For several months as Gysrell landed a full-time job in the hospital,
What she likes most in her job is the chance to participate in policy making of the hospital. “It lets my creativity to think of new ideas that I can contribute in making policies and programmes that I believe would help enhance the delivery of good quality service to AMOSUP members and their families.” The rewarding part, she notes, is the “support of the management and cooperation of my co-employees to transform these ideas into action.”

Problems or issues are common in any organisational setting. But Gysrell has learned well as her job “molded me to treat these as challenges and opportunities to learn new things that help me grow personally and professionally and contribute more to the hospital and the Union.”

Support and appreciation

Of equal importance is the appreciation of the patients to the service the hospital provides. Despite the establishment of provincial branches plus a satellite clinic, the out-patient consultation continued to increase over the years. Gysrell says this is a sign of the trust the institution and the organisation earned from its clienteles with “excellent service in terms of top of the line equipment, excellent personnel performance and management.”

The admin director also expressed that the “support and appreciation of the top management by means of the implementation of the ideas/projects/policies that were suggested is truly significant and cannot be equated by money and that I will sincerely value for the rest of my life. The opportunity to meet people and the ideas you get from them is a valued learning and experience.”

On a personal note, she says that her unexpected appointment came also together with her wish to take up a master’s degree, which is a requirement for the job. The trainings and seminars here and abroad equipped her to confidently and effectively do her duties and responsibilities.
Provident Fund: Expedient processing of members claims

The Fund’s Regina Lansang says AMOSUP makes sure that members' requirements are efficiently served to have their retirement fund
background in banking, plus a husband who is a former seafarer, makes her fit for the job of assisting the administrator of the Provident Fund in the operation of the office. It certainly makes the job closer to her heart as well.

That is where Regina “Reggie” V. Lansang, the administrative supervisor of AMOSUP’s Provident Fund Office, draws passion in performing her duties and functions in one of the Union’s socio-welfare service programmes to its members.

The Provident Fund is a benefit scheme for AMOSUP members wherein participating companies contribute to the seafarer’s account in the form of “forced savings” that will yield future earnings at maturity. It was established by the Union under several collective agreements it negotiated with various groups of shipowners.

Reggie assists her boss in handling and monitoring all bank transactions of the Provident Fund Office (PFO), including giving out (through e-mail and telephone) of information inquiries as to the benefits and services related to the Fund that the Union extends to its members. She also deals with the nitty-gritty of clerical office duties from preparing employees’ payroll to maintaining files of all bank transactions/office expenses.

“In the day-to-day operation of the office, we make sure that we efficiently serve the requirements of the members,” Reggie says. She notes that the office has expedited the processing of members’ claims from a waiting period of one month previously to the present two weeks over the last two years. Last year, it processed a total of 10,107 claims.

The nature of her job is both secretarial and supervisory which is primarily to assist the administrator of the Provident Fund in its operation.

Communicating and coordinating with international and local banks form part of her other duties with regards to provident fund concerns.

Reggie considers the trust and confidence her boss gives her have greatly contributed to her professional growth in AMOSUP. She says her superior has “high level of expectations and given as such, you need to perform well. And I hope I am up to it.”

**Seafarers’ Mindset**

As envisioned by AMOSUP’s founding president, Capt. Gregorio S. Oca, the Provident Fund was established to provide financial security to its members upon retirement. Though Reggie noticed that most of the members prefer to claim their contributions the moment they are qualified to do so. However, others also let their Fund stay to accrue interests.

“**In the day-to-day operation of the office, we make sure that we efficiently serve the requirements of the members**”

At AMOSUP, a qualified member is entitled to receive the total amount of his contributions, plus interest earned, in accordance with the Fund’s rules. The qualified member receives, in lump sum and in Philippine pesos, the entire amount contributed under his name, plus 100% of the earnings or interest.

After 16 years in a private bank before joining AMOSUP, and married to an ex-seaman, Reggie surely knows how valuable the provident fund is to the seafarers when they retire. It cannot be denied, she insists, that the wife or beneficiary receives allotments that is normally more than enough for the mariner’s family’s daily needs. And that leaves more room for savings, especially if the seafarer’s wife also works, she opines.

Reggie believes that it would be better for a seafarer’s wife to be employed so that the family does not solely rely on the husband for their financial requirements. “That way, she really learns the value of money and knows how to save. A working wife knows the value of saving the provident fund for the future.”

**Fund set up**

Reggie joined AMOSUP when the Provident Fund was established by the Union in 1988. She was then with Security Bank and Trust Company as executive secretary to the Fund’s future administrator, Mr. Conrado Silva.

“One of our (bank’s) valued clients, Capt. Gregorio Oca, was a good friend of my boss,” Reggie recalls her first encounter with AMOSUP’s late founder and president and how she was employed. Capt. Oca offered the administrator position to Mr. Silva, with Reggie consequently in tow.

Today, all AMOSUP members who have been on board a vessel covered by an AMOSUP agreement with provident fund provision automatically become a member of the Fund. There are various types of Funds with varied rates of contribution.

The members of the Fund are issued a passbook by their manning agents where their contributions are posted. To determine payment, members must present their passbooks to the Provident Fund Office for validation.

A member can apply for the withdrawal of his contributions if he is either: a) 50 years old or b) has been a member of the Fund for 10 years or c) has been inactive from the Fund for two years counted from the date of his last disembarkation.
STCW Manila amendments take effect on Jan 2017

In view of the implementation of the 2010 Manila Amendments by 01 January 2017, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) has issued a number of STCW notices in the form of “advisories” and “circulars.”

The advisories and circulars serve as guidance by seafarers and other industry stakeholders for compliance to changes in the standards of training, certification and watchkeeping (STCW) convention that will be enforced beginning next year. Some of these amendments are as follows:

For Radio Electronic Officer (STCW Advisory No 2015-16) Revalidation of NTC issued certificate for radio electronic officer
All seafarers with Certificate of Competency (CoC) for Radio Electronic Officer issued by the National Telecommunications Commission may revalidate their REGs with the MARINA STCW Office. These certificates will be valid until 31 December 2016.

Deck and engine cadets applying for shipboard training (Advisory No 2015-15)
Advises that the publication of the status of Maritime Higher Education Institution (MHEI) in the MARINA website relates to MHEI that are recognised to offer BSMT and BSMarE to first year students for the coming school-year 2015-16.

Students who will be enrolled for second year and upwards in the coming school year 2015-16 are in no way prejudiced by such publication and shall be recognised by MARINA, provided their schools continue to be recognised by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Shipping companies are hereby enjoined not to discriminate cadets applying for shipboard training who have completed or are completing their academic requirements from maritime schools that are not included in the list of MHEI allowed to offer first-year BS programs mentioned above for school-year 2015-16.

For candidates of Master on ships of less than 500gt not engaged on near-coastal trade (STCW Circular No 2015-01)

Mandatory minimum requirements for examination, assessment, licensing and certification of Master on ships of less than 500gt not engaged on near-coastal voyages shall meet the standard of competence by passing 1) Theoretical examination (Annex I) 2) Practical assessment (Annex II) 3) GOC exam or existing valid CoC.

Assessment of competence by completing: 1) Basic training 2) Proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats 3) Advanced firefighting 4) Medical first aid and Medical care.

Candidate for certification shall also submit: 1) Proof of successful completion of the approved ECDIS simulator training (or its approved alternative) 2) Proof of approved completion of MLCD (Category C) or its approved alternative for Category A and B 3) Proof of approved seagoing service.

For OIC of a Navigational Watch (OIC-NW) on seagoing ships of 500gt or more and for OIC of an engineering watch (OIC-EW)on seagoing ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750kw propulsion power or more (STCW Circular No 2015-03) Training requirements for:
OIC-NW – 240 training hours, excluding the time needed for assessment
OIC-EW – 276 training hours, excluding the time needed for assessment

For revalidation purposes, the completion of the following Modules shall, among other requirements, be sufficient to revalidate the COC of OIC-NW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Module</th>
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| Function 1 | Module 1: Maintain a safe navigational watch  
Module 2: Use of ECDIS to maintain the safety of navigation |
| Function 3 | Module 1: Ensure compliance with pollution prevention requirements  
Module 3: Application of leadership and team working skills |

The validity of a duly revalidated COC mentioned herein can extend beyond 01 January 2017.

For revalidation purposes, the completion of the following Modules shall, among other requirements, be sufficient to revalidate the COC of OIC-EW

34 Sailing Forward
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Module</th>
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| Function 1 | Module 1: Maintain a safe engineering watch  
Module 2: Operate main and auxiliary machinery and associated control systems |
| Function 2 | Module 1: Operate electrical, electronic and control systems |
| Function 4 | Module 1: Ensure compliance with pollution prevention requirements  
Module 2: Application of leadership and team working skills |

Consequently, the Updating Training for OIC-NW shall be designed and offered in two (2) parts, as follows:

**PART-A:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Module</th>
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</table>
| Function 1 | Module 1: Maintain a safe Navigational Watch  
Module 2: Use of ECDIS to maintain the safety of navigation |
| Function 3 | Module 1: Ensure compliance with pollution prevention requirements  
Module 2: Application of leadership and team working skills |

**PART-B:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Function 1 | Module 3: Plan a voyage and conduct navigation (ML)  
Module 4: Determine position and the accuracy of resultant position fix by any means (ML)  
Module 5: Determine and allow for compass errors (ML)  
Module 6: Forecast weather and oceanographic conditions (ML)  
Module 7: Operate remote controls of propulsion plant and engineering systems and services (ML) |
| Function 2 | Module 1: Plan and ensure safe loading, stowage, securing, care during the voyage and unloading of cargoes (ML)  
Module 2: Carriage of dangerous goods (ML) |
| Function 3 | Module 3: Control trim, stability and stress (ML)  
Module 4: Monitor and control compliance with legislative requirements and measures to ensure safety of life at sea, security and the protection of the marine environment (ML) |

Thus, OIC-NW mentioned in section VIII above shall first complete Part A in order to revalidate their existing COC before 01 January 2017 and thereafter complete Part B of the Updating Training for OIC-NW in order to qualify to take the MLC for Marine Deck Officers.

The Updating Training for OIC-EW shall likewise be designed and offered in two (2) parts, as follows:

**PART-A:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Function 1 | Module 1: Maintain a safe engineering watch  
Module 2: Operate main and auxiliary machinery and associated control systems |
| Function 2 | Module 1: Operate electrical, electronic and control systems |
| Function 4 | Module 1: Ensure compliance with pollution prevention requirements  
Module 2: Application of leadership and team working skills |

**PART-B:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Function 1 | Module 3: Manage the operation of propulsion plant machinery (ML)  
Module 4: Plan and schedule operations (ML)  
Module 5: Operation, surveillance, performance assessment and maintaining safety of propulsion plant and auxiliary machinery (ML) |
| Function 2 | Module 2: Manage operation of electrical and electronic control equipment (ML) |
| Function 4 | Module 3: Control trim, stability and stress (ML)  
Module 4: Monitor and control compliance with legislative requirements and measures to ensure safety of life at sea, security and the protection of the marine environment (ML) |

Thus, OIC-EW mentioned in section VIII above shall first complete Part A in order to revalidate their existing COC before 01 January 2017 and thereafter complete Part B of the Updating Training for OIC-EW in order to qualify to take the MLC for Marine Engineer Officers. 4. All MTIs approved by MARINA to offer and conduct the updating
For all ship officers (MARINA Circular No 2014-01)

1) Adoption and implementation of the new Management Level Course (MLC) for marine deck officers and MLC for marine engineer officers in accordance with the 2010 STCW Manila Amendments

2) Adoption of the updating course for Management Level Marine Deck Officers and Marine Engineer Deck Officers certificated under STCW ’78, as amended in 1995

Implementation:

1) Management level marine deck officers certificated under STCW ’78, as amended in 1995, must update the “Updating Course for Management Level Marine Deck Officers” (Annex III of this circular) not later than 31 December 2016 in order to update their CoC to the 2010 STCW Manila Amendments.

2) Management level marine engineer officers certificated under STCW ’78, as amended in 1995, must update the “Updating course for Management Level Marine Engineer Officers” (Annex IV of this circular) not later than 31 December 2016 in order to update their CoC to the 2010 STCW Manila Amendments.

3) Officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500gt or more shall have completed the revised BSMT program under CHED CMO No 31, series of 2013, starting March 2017, must complete the MLC for Marine Deck Officers (Annex I of this Circular) in order to meet the minimum standard of competence for certification in the Management Level position.

4) Officers in charge of an engineering watch of ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750kW propulsion power or more who shall have completed the revised BSMT program under CMO No 32, series of 2013, must complete the MLC for Marine Engineer Officers (Annex II of this Circular) in order to meet the minimum standard of competence for certification in the Management Level position.

5) Officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500gt or more who completed the old BSMT program under CMO No 13, series of 2005, until March 2016, must first complete an updating course for officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500gt or more in order to qualify to take the Management Level Course for Marine Deck Officers.

6) Officers in charge of an engineering watch on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750kW propulsion power or more who completed the old BSMT program under CMO No 13, series of 2005, until March 2016, must first complete an updating course for OIC of an engineering watch on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750kW propulsion power or more, in order to qualify to take the Management Level Course for Marine Engineer Officers.

7) Deck Officers who completed the Management Level Course for marine deck officers covered by the provisional approval granted by the Administration from 17 September 2013 to 30 April 2014 must take the “Updating Course for Management Level Marine Deck (Annex III of this Circular) not later than 31 December 2016 in order to update their CoC to the 2010 STCW Manila Amendments.

8) Engineer Officers who completed the MLC for marine engineer officers covered by the provisional approval granted by the Administration from 17 September 2013 to 30 April 2014 must take the “Updating Course for Management Level Marine Engineer Officers” (Annex IV of this Circular) not later than 31 December 2016 in order to update their CoC to the 2010 STCW Amendments.
### Modified Pag-IBIG 2 Savings Program

**Sample Computation of MP2 Savings (PhP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Remittance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Time Remittance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*May vary year-after-year

- Enjoy HIGHER dividend earnings, TAX-FREE
- 5 year (2011-2015) average dividend rate: 4.78% per annum
- 5-year maturity period only
- Government-guaranteed savings
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- Save any desired amount with a minimum of PhP 500

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**2015 Dividend Rate**

5.3%
“We are attempting to ban pregnancy and pap-smear testing as part of pre-employment medicals... and through our trade union cruise seminars in the Philippines.”

Norwegian Seafarers’ Union assistant director for cruise operations Lena Dying, on the pro-active programmes carried out in the Philippines to highlight the situation of female seafarers in their jobs at sea.

“We are sensitive to their needs and we always welcome their comments/suggestions and find ways to accommodate them whenever possible and feasible.”

AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital administrative director Elena Jiloca, on measures to achieving the goals of the hospital’s different departments.

“Rest assured that the private sector works with the government regarding directives needed in the implementation (of the guidelines) against the spread of HIV AIDS.”

JMG director Eduardo Manese, in reference to the commitment of shipmanagers and manning agents’ awareness and cooperation to educate seafarers about HIV AIDS.

“If we can find the template here in the Philippines, I believe we can export it to other countries.”

ITF maritime coordinator Jacqueline Smith, in praising the Philippine manning industry’s efforts for taking on the challenge to take up collective actions to fight the spread of HIV.

“If we take as many women as the academy could, it will be useless if cadets have no employers or shipping companies to end up with when they graduate.”

Vice Admiral Eduardo Santos, on MAAP’s reliance from sponsoring shipowners who wish to employ Filipino women on board their ships.

“A working wife knows the value of saving the provident fund for the future.”

Provident Fund Office admin supervisor Regina Lansang, on the importance of the seafarers partner or wife attitude towards future finances.
Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific - Kamaya Point
Associated Marine Officers’ and Seamen’s Union of the Philippines - PTGWO-ITF

Kamaya Point, Brgy. Alas-asin, Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines
Tel.: (02) 784-8100 Fax.: (02) 741-1006 Mobile No.: (0917) 533-8263
E-mail: info@maap.edu.ph
URL: www.maap.edu.ph

Welcome Aboard!

Courses Offered:
BSMT - Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation
BSMarE - Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering
BSMTE - Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and Engineering

Geographic destiny has given the Filipino the innate talent to be an excellent seafarer. To enhance this natural skill, the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) was established on January 14, 1998. The Academy stands on a 103-hectare property in Kamaya Point, Mariveles, Bataan.

The Associated Marine Officers’ and Seamen’s Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) founded by the late Capt. Gregorio S Oca, capitalized and developed the Academy. The new AMOSUP President, Dr. Conrado F. Oca, heads the Academy’s board of governors. The board is comprised of representatives from the private sector, the International Transport Workers Federation, the Filipino Association of Maritime Employers, the International Transport Workers Federation, the All Japan Seamen’s Union, the International Mariners’ Management Association of Japan, the Norwegian Seafarers’ Union, the International Maritime Employers’ Committee, the Danish Shipowners’ Association, the Norwegian Shipowners’ Association, and the Japanese Shipowners’ Association.

MAAP conducts shipboard training aboard T/S Kapitan Felix Oca, a 5,020 DWT dedicated training ship capable of accommodating 180 midshipmen and 9 instructors in 30 air-conditioned cabins and six berths.

Our Curricula

MAAP students are all scholars who are entitled to free tuition, board and lodging. They receive a comprehensive, up-to-date and well-rounded education that fully complies with the requirements of STCW 95 and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). To ensure that the highest standards of quality, MAAP adheres to a Quality Standards System that has been certified to comply with ISO 9001 version 2008, the Det Norske Veritas (DNV) Rules for Maritime Academies, and the Productivity and Standard Board (PSB) of Singapore. The Academy offers three main programs: the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE) and the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and Engineering (BSMTE). The curricula for the three courses were designed with the help of the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. Courses are four-year courses with sea phases scheduled in the third year.

The BSMT curriculum requires a total of 192 units: 152 at MAAP, 40 practicum/shipboard units on board T/S Kapitan Felix Oca and/or a shipping company sponsorship. The BSMarE curriculum requires a total of 193 units: 153 at MAAP, 40 practicum/shipboard units on board T/S Kapitan Felix Oca and/or a shipping company sponsorship.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMOSUP Seamen’s Center</td>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSOCIATED MARINE OFFICERS’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and SEAMEN’S UNION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the PHILIPPINES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen’s Hospital - Manila</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen’s Hospital Annex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manila - On-going</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailor’s Home - Manila</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailor’s Home Annex - Manila</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Anchors Cultural Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen’s Village - Cavite</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slop Chest - Manila</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime Academy of the Asia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and the Pacific</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/S Kapitan Oca</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAAP Pier - Bataan</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen’s Training Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAAP Campus - Bataan</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAAT - Cebu</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailor’s Home and Slop Chest</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cebu Sports Complex</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen’s Hospital - Cebu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen’s Hospital - Iloilo</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.O.R. Seamen’s Hospital</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSU - AMOSUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davao Activity Center</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davao Sports Complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iloilo Multi-Purpose Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other welfare facilities in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership with Affiliated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSU-AMOSUP Mariners’ Home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSU-AMOSUP Maritime Museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; Sports Complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

- AMOSUP Seamen’s Center (+63 2) 527 8481-98 / 527 3535
- Seamen’s Training Center (+63 2) 741 1024 / 527 2110
- Seamen’s Training Center (+63 2) 741 1024 / 527 2110
- Seamen’s Hospital - Cebu (+63 2) 527 2110 / 527 2110
- Sailor’s Home Manila (+63 2) 527 3605
- Slop Chest - Manila (+63 2) 527 2109
- Seamen’s Village (+63 2) 630 0370
- JSU-AMOSUP Mariners’ Home - Manila (+63 2) 521 5180 / 400 0461 / 400 0463-64
- Sailor’s Home - Iloilo (+63 32) 346 2598
- Sailor’s Home - Cebu (+63 32) 236 9928
- Slop Chest - Cebu (+63 32) 236 9928
- Seamen’s Hospital - Davao (+63 32) 321 3523
- AMOSUP-DSK Multi-Purpose Center - Davao (+63 32) 234 7185
- G.O.R. Seamen’s Hospital - Davao (+63 32) 234 7185