AMOSUP’S FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT RODRIGO DUTERTE

Former mayor never fails us thus far  p 3
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MAAP Profile

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 Employees, 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 Japan Shipowners’ Association.

MAAP conducts shipboard training aboard T/S Kapitan Felix Oca, a 5020 DWT dedicated training ship capable of accommodating 180 midshipmen and 9 instructors in 30 air-conditioned cabins and six berths.
“It makes us proud that the next Philippine president, by any indication, might now give maritime and the seafarers the importance they need among many issues”

The President’s Message

This issue comes in the midst of the country’s leadership turnover to a new administration as we inaugurate Rodrigo Duterte as our incoming president. Exactly a year ago this June, AMOSUP officers, members and employees had their first encounter with the then presidential aspirant, better known as Mayor Duterte.

AMOSUP and the rest of the seafaring world traditionally celebrate the ‘Day of the Seafarer’ every 26th of June, but what made the Union’s 2015 bash more special was the Davao mayor’s guest appearance. He was then starting to get noticed by the electorate as a possible contender for the presidency whilst the Mayor could not decide whether to run as a candidate.

It is worthy to recall that the future president of the Republic didn’t disappoint us in our invitation to attend and speak before our ‘Day of the Seafarer’ celebration. Adoring fans from hundreds of seafarers in the Union greeted the Davao mayor with warm welcome as he entered the AMOSUP Convention Hall in June last year.

The Mayor found a hard time to proceed to the stage podium to speak as union members mobbed him, shaking hands and taking pictures with him like a new rising celebrity. Eyes and ears were on him when he spoke. His nearly two-hour speech was laced with stories about his experiences in Davao as a mayor.

Little did we know that some of those stories he narrated before us would be repeated that put the Mayor’s discourses colourful and courted controversies in his succeeding countless campaign sorties. Needless to say, the seafarers as his audience became one of the early platforms of The Mayor’s views for his national agenda of governance as he cited a number of those successes he had enforced in Davao.

It makes us proud that the next Philippine president, by any indication, might now give maritime and the seafarers the importance they need among many issues confronting the government. By placing us at the ringside of his campaign was, indeed, an encouraging sign. And there is a lot of them to look forward to working in partnership between the new administration and the seafaring industry. They are issues needed to be fixed by state agencies concerned.

We look forward to work in partnership with the new administration. To begin with, AMOSUP has helped the government through MARINA with its devolution process, by providing them the necessary facilities such as office space and computers for the benefits of the seafarers. One of which is placing the MARINA STCWO extension office in Cebu located at the AMOSUP Cebu Seamen’s Hospital.

The Union has always assisted its social partners to the extent possible, especially the government, when there is a need to augment their facilities and equipment. We have also provided the necessary facilities for the implementation of a marine licensure system as well as a similar facility in Manila for the processing and issuance of COC (Certificate of Competency) to seafarers for the government agency. We also wish MARINA to devolve its other important functions, like the officers’ licensure process (not only in Cebu but in other regions as well), so that many seafarers residing in the provinces need not travel to Manila.

In behalf of our officers and members, AMOSUP congratulates and extends our best wishes to incoming President Rodrigo Duterte and Vice President Leni Robredo.

Happy Sailing Forward!

Dr. Conrado F. Oca

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PRESIDENT-ELECT
RODRIGO DUTERTE

Sailing Forward
AMOSUP aids MARINA in devolving regional function

The devolution process begins with the political will of MARINA’s leadership as it becomes necessary to make it a success.

The AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital in Cebu recently inaugurated a STCW extension office that the Union has donated to the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA).

As in the past, AMOSUP has provided the necessary facilities for the implementation of a marine licensure system as well as a similar facility in Manila for the processing and issuance of COC (Certificate of Competency) to seafarers for MARINA.

The timely processing of COC by the maritime administration is very important to seafarers, the officers and ratings serving on board oceangoing ships. The revalidated document will show that they completed the necessary training and competence to take on specific functions prescribed by the STCW 2010 Manila Amendments.

“We are hopeful that MARINA will continue well with the devolution process not only in the premiere city of Cebu, but in other cities and regions as well,” said AMOSUP president’s assistant Mr. Jose Raul Lamug, who represented President Conrado F. Oca during the office inauguration last April.

“We also encourage MARINA to devolve other important functions, like the officers’ licensure process, so that many seafarers need not travel to Manila to benefit from its modernisation programme,” said Mr. Lamug.

AMOSUP has always assisted its social partners to the extent possible, especially the government, when there is a need to augment their facilities and equipment. Apart from the working station located at the Sailor’s Home, AMOSUP also provided personal computers and laptops.
“This is an ideal example of the many ways constructive partnership and collaboration lead to better service to the maritime public.”

The devolution process is expected to succeed with the political will of MARINA’s leadership through its administrator Dr Maximo Mejia Jr, already behind this course of action.

Mr Lamug said the trust and confidence Dr Mejia has given the personnel of the Regional Office in Cebu is indeed a bright new step to bring closer to seafarers the necessary services desired from MARINA. Administrators Mejia deserves to be commended for this decisive act.

On the part of the maritime agency, Dr Mejia said: “This is an ideal example of the many ways constructive partnership and collaboration lead to better service to the maritime public. The seafarers themselves, through AMOSUP, have partnered with government by providing MARINA with computer hardware units and free space for the Cebu STCW Extension Office.”

The ANGKLA PartyList, through its seat in the House of Representatives, has provided MARINA with both the legal framework and three regional office buildings necessary to ensure an efficient STCW administration. Seafarers in the region will no longer have to make special trips to Manila only for the issuance of their CoCs. (Certificates of Competency).

Apart from Dr. Oca, Dr Mejia also thanked Cong. Jess Manalo of ANGKLA for their constructive engagement and unwavering support to MARINA. Dr Mejia stressed that the devolution of STCW functions to Cebu will be followed eventually by devolution to other regions such as Mindanao and Western Visayas.

“A strong and efficient STCW administration is not built overnight, but with the kind of support that the seafaring sector is receiving from both AMOSUP’s Dr. Oca and ANGKLA’s Cong. Manalo,” Dr Mejia told attendees of the office inauguration last 26 April, adding that he is “confident that the coming years will see the Philippines with a certification system that is without equal in the world.”

The STCW extension office inauguration was attended by Dr. Mejia, STCW Executive Director Capt. Herminio Estaniel, STCW Deputy Deputy Executive Director Atty. Jabez Dacanay, Deputy Administrator for Regional Concerns Ch. Engr. Alfredo Haboc, and Cebu Regional Director Engr. Nanette Dinopol. Representing AMOSUP were Mr Lamug and Dr. Teody Alcantara, Medical Director of the Seaman’s Hospital.
Cruise launches recruit thousands of crew members

With newbuilding deliveries this year, cruise lines highlight the need for more hotel-side staff that include licensed and unlicensed crews.

Thousands of new jobs have been sought for placements on board cruise ships with the launch of several newbuildings this year.

Royal Caribbean Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Regent Seven Seas, TUI Cruises, and Celebrity Cruises are some of the companies with deliveries this year, and have announced crew positions to fill new berths on its ships. Royal Caribbean is setting up its own recruitment base and training facilities in the Philippines in anticipation of hiring increase in the country.

Seabourn Encore and AIDAprima – all started operations this year – cruiselines highlighted its need for hotel-side staff by the hundreds that include licensed and unlicensed crews from Masters down to wipers. The Vista alone, Carnival’s largest in the fleet and first in its new Vista class that was launched in May, expects to have 1,400 positions.

Seabourn Encore touched water for the first time last March, officially launching the vessel. After the ceremony, the 40,350-tonne ship was floated to the outfitting dock to undergo final construction prior to its delivery in December this year. The 604-passenger cruise vessel has a crew of 450.

Photo: http://www.schiffsjournal.de/aidaprima-bau-verzögert-sich-weiter-juengernacht-erneut-verschoben/
LARGEST cruise ship
Royal Caribbean celebrated last 15 May the delivery of Harmony of the Seas, which at 227,000 gross tonnes is the largest cruise ship ever constructed. The ship was delivered following 32 months of construction at the STX France shipyard in Saint Nazaire, France. Costing more than a $1 billion, Harmony of the Seas is the 25th ship in the Royal Caribbean fleet and third Oasis-class ship. The ship has capacity to carry 5,479 guests in 2,747 staterooms, and is home to 2,100 crew. (Photo: Reuters/Stephane Mahe)

The 124,100-tonne, 3,300-passenger AIDAprima is AIDA Cruises' largest ship and is operated under the Costa Crociere division of the Carnival group. The vessel sailed for Europe on 14 March 2016 from Nagasaki, Japan following its handover by Mitsubishi HI to AIDA Cruises.

At the same time, Royal Caribbean launched its megaships Oasis of the Seas and Harmony of the Seas. To be inaugurated in June 2016 after its launch last March, the Ovation has been designed for the cruise market in China. The 167,000-tonne Ovation has a crew of 1,500.

The Harmony, on the other hand, is set to take the world's largest, with Royal Caribbean recently announced to tap more Filipino for its hotel and catering staff as it began its own office in Manila last May 2016. The company expects to have Filipino workers for an even bigger share of its global workforce.

At present the company employs 11,000 Filipinos of the 65,000 workforce in its fleet. It has seven deliveries by 2020 (five for RCCL and NCL Holdings, five, also into 2020 (three for Norwegian, two for Regent Seven Seas Cruises), according to industry sources.

By 2020, Royal Carribean expects Filipino employees to reach 30,000 or about 30% of its employees. Its chairman and CEO Richard Fain told a recent briefing in Manila that the local office, through a joint venture with Philippine Transmarine Carriers, forms part of the US-based cruise line's strategy to address the increased demand for talents, and at the same time building employee engagement and improving employee experience.

The company owns and operates more than 40 cruise vessels. Royal Carribean believes the new recruitment process may also be done in other countries. It will streamline its recruitment system in the Mall of Asia area where its offices are located and intend to build visibility and stronger marketing for its service brand.

“By 2020, Royal Carribean expects Filipino employees to reach 30,000 or about 30% of its employees.”

5,500 passengers and crew complement of 2,394. The 230,000-tonne vessel, together with still unnamed sister ship for delivery in 2018, exceeds in size even her old Oasis-class sisters Oasis of the Seas and Allure of the Seas.
It’s not you they want... it’s your money

The ITF is constantly discovering and being made aware of recruitment scams, and tries to protect potential victims by publicising them. The scammers have great jobs to offer, delivered direct to your email, but warns ITF press and editorial manager Sam Dawson, if you accept, they will take you for everything you own.

Have you been offered a well-paid job on a cruise liner recently, out of the blue, no experience required?

If you have, it’s a scam. And if you fall for it, ruthless fraudsters will extort every cent you own – and any you can borrow.

Scamming is low cost and low risk, as scammers rarely get prosecuted in their home countries. As fast as we can expose a false “company”, the criminals behind it just change the name.

These criminals are now targeting cruise crews, especially in the onboard hospitality trades. They use different names, fake locations and new methods.

The latest tactic is to directly email offers of cruise jobs, usually using the name of a genuine company.

Previous warnings about advance fee scams mean that now criminals won’t mention any kind of change up-front. Instead, they wait until they’ve reeled you in before they suddenly ask for the inevitable “one-off” fee – an unexpected passport charge, a registration fee to the visa processing office, and administrative payment.

Pay it and they’ve got you. Other demands will come, always with a warning that if you don’t make one last contribution you will lose what you’ve already paid.

So, always be skeptical of companies claiming to be based at a reputable address in the UK, USA or Australia (they won’t be) of supposed job offers or what appear to be shipping or recruitment company websites; and of fake jobs on real but free-to-use, websites (never post your CV on these; some fraudsters run a nice sideline in identity theft).

Always remember that anyone guaranteeing a job onboard but requiring payment is a scammer, since the Maritime Labour Convention states that seafarers should not pay any agency fees to obtain employment. This goes for all positions, whether in the deck or engine or the hotel or catering departments.

Trust your gut instinct. If a job offer looks too good to be true – then it usually is. So ignore it. (Reprinted from Seafarers Bulletin)

Six common signs of a scam

- Any request for money at any time, no matter what’s for
- Any request for your bank details - they’ll empty your account
- Any request to provide photocopies of personal documents such as a passport or qualifications
- Telephone numbers beginning 70: It’s an international redirect number disguised to look as though it’s in Britain. Drop 247024021763 into Google to see how many scams it has appeared in
- Email addresses where the company domain is different from the country the office is located in
- Recently set-up websites that look like those of reputable companies. Find the real ones, look for warnings on it and contact the real headquarters if you’re in any doubt

Where to go for advice

Run the company name through Google, adding the word “scam”, then “fraud”, then “warning”.

News of the latest scams
www.itfseafarers.org/maritime_news.cfm

List of known scams
(but remember they constantly change their names)
www.cruiseslinesjobs.com/cruise-ships-job-scam

Warning signs to look out for
www.scam-job-emails.tk
www.scammers-and-scam-websites.tk
www.fraudwatchers.org

Suspicious telephone numbers
www.scammerstelephonenumber.blogspot.co.uk

ITF look up a ship app
www.itfseafarers.org/seafarer-apps.cfm
Gov’t seeks seafarers help on HIV AIDS prevention

Ms Mary Joy Morin of the DOH says the department’s services are already in place and provides free antiretroviral drugs, which is a lifelong therapy.

The government through the Department of Health (DOH) has appealed to the seafaring sector for help in its information drive against HIV infections.

The assistance DOH needs is in the area of strengthening partnership with the private sector and in coming up with strategies for participation in the programme such as counselling and testing that demand increase for HIV service.

Whilst DOH cannot compel every seafarer to submit for testing, it follows several principles in the system. These are written informed consent, confidentiality in counselling prior to testing, correct results prior to releasing the test to the person who took the test, and there should be connection or linkage to care.

Ms Mary Joy Morin of the DOH reminds that early detection is the key to survival, since “there is no other way for us to know our HIV status except submitting for HIV testing.” She said that even if we have the services for HIV testing available in the country, those suspected positive come to DOH with various infections. The most common of which is TB.

Some have pneumonia who die with that illness without being tested or after being tested, said Morin, who is the project associate for treatment, care and support of the National AIDS and STI Prevention at the DOH. DOH sought the assistance of the maritime sector, particularly the seafarers, during a recent sponsored forum by AMOSUP and Joint Manning Group at the AMOSUP Convention Hall.

After HIV counselling and testing, once diagnosed with HIV, DOH can proceed with available treatment for those tested positive. DOH services are already in place and provides free antiretroviral drugs, which is a lifelong therapy.

Morin said PhilHealth has outpatient HIV and AIDS treatment package amounting to PhP30,000 per patient per year. It is said that the package is the “most effective intervention that the department has arrived with to sustain the antiretroviral treatment of the patient.” DOH also provides...
psychosocial support for people living with HIV. Peer support, counselors and working groups have also been offered.

Fear of disclosure

There are individual consequences such as fear of disclosure—to whom will they disclose their HIV status: Will they go to the Captain, will they go to the wife or to the husband. There might also be discrimination at work, and within the family as well as displacement. For example, in the Middle East, OFWs will no longer be accepted if one is infected with HIV as well as syphilis and hepatitis.

There’s also social isolation, which sometimes hinders them from accessing the services.

There is ignorance and knowledge. DOH addresses them by educating this population. There is the traditional way of communicating to them, but now with the onset of technology, it also reaches them through social media. “We engage our peer educators to reach out to them at the community level, and we have education campaign, and encourage the government units to intensify their peer education programs because our young males who have sex with males would rather listen to a peer educator than to their parents. We believe that peer education is a very crucial intervention,” according to Ms Morin.

Once the department reaches out to them and provides them with education, the most crucial step is to bring them to a facility where they can go for HIV testing. Once they are tested, DOH also provides them prevention commodities such as condoms and lubricants. Once they are tested and found to be HIV positive, treatment services come in. Treatment is also a way of preventing HIV transmission. It has to lower the amount of virus in the body and this can lower the transmission. That’s why treatment is very important.

The key priority populations of the program is addressing both adults and adolescent populations, the MSM (male who have sex with male), the sex workers, now the emerging population of transgender women who also have anal sex with another man. “Sometimes their risk becomes complicated because there are not just MSM, they are not just transgender who have sex with another partner but there are also sex workers and they can also be persons who inject drugs and share syringes and needles which is actually happening now,” explains Ms Morin.

For OFWs, DOH also includes pregnant women and TB patients in high HIV risk areas. NCR is a high HIV risk area, all 17 local government units of NCR has high burden of HIV. “If we talk about the general population we are able to maintain HIV to less than 1% but when we talk about MSM population, it is now a concentrated epidemic.”

Concentrated epidemic means it has already reached more than 5% of the MSM population and it is in Manila, Quezon City, and in other local government units of NCR as well as in Cebu and Davao. Why DOH needs to prioritize this population? First, it recognises the vulnerability of OFWs including seafarers. When they are vulnerable, Ms Morin said they tend to engage in risky behaviors.
“Once they are tested, DOH also provides them prevention commodities such as condoms and lubricants. Once they are tested and found to be HIV positive, treatment services come in.”

Free private labs, clinics

The seafaring community may find themselves in this set up where HIV testing and counseling are provided. OFW clinics, private laboratories, partner lab and clinics that provide testing play a very important role, because it provides a linkage to care. Ms Morin says this can be strengthened because recently DOH received a female outgoing OFW who was diagnosed with HIV and was not given proper counseling but an information on how to go to DOH.

The message was go to DOH but as to where in DOH, who to approach, there was no information. She was also referred to a treatment hub in Region 3 because she’s from there, and now she got tested her CD4 (white blood cell that fights infections) and about to start in antiretroviral drugs. But how many outgoing OFWs were given that kind of information, and even if they were, how many of them actually went to DOH for further counseling, and how many of them accessed HIV care services including antiretroviral drugs. It is one of the major gaps when it comes to providing information among the seafaring community as well.

From the HIV testing and counseling facilities DOH also offers STI services as undiagnosed and untreated STI increase the risk of more HIV. That’s why it has to be provided in that same facility which calls one-stop shop.

Once they are diagnosed, they are linked to treatment hubs and other satellite treatment facilities. The community based organisations and other private sectors are also into this referral network. All it needs to do is to have HIV counseling and testing services available and once you have a diagnosed case, link them to DOH treatment hubs.

DOH thought that the role of the public sector including the maritime industry is stipulated in the AIDS medium term plan version 5, and health sector plan. It has a country plan on how it can address HIV. It has the health sector plan that is not just the DOH but everyone, every agency and organisation that provides health services. “And this is what is stipulated: we need to establish HIV and AIDS program in the workplace.”

“We also have to strengthen HIV/AIDS prevention programs to most at risk population. We also need to intensify HIV/STI education not just through PDOS or Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar. You might know something creative because we cannot just rely on PDOS because there were several evaluations done regarding the effectiveness of PDOS about HIV.”

It is said that PDOS is not getting effective or not enough as they hardly listen because they were thinking of other things. “We need to promote voluntary HIV counseling and testing. If money is their concern because in private labs and clinics HIV testing is not free, please give them the information that HIV testing is free in social hygiene clinics. It is for free because we support it if that is their concern. And there has to be immediate care once they are diagnosed,” said Ms Morin.
HIV AIDS workshops equip trainers to train cadets against sexually transmitted infections

BY KATRINA ISABELLE V GALLEBO, RN

The AMOSUP-ITF seminar in Davao also notes the high incidence of HIV in the city, prompting health authorities to raise the red flag against the disease.

Davao City is a city in bloom. Indeed, its economic status has surged to the top as the continuous influx of investors in the city became the major agents of progress. Considered as one of the most dangerous cities in the 1990s, Davao has now become one of the most peaceful cities in the world and has since attracted many tourists from various parts of the globe.

But with such growth and development is the disturbing reality that HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) and other sexually transmitted diseases shrouding the city like wildfire. Davao City has an HIV prevalence rate that is higher than the 3.5 national average thereby forcing the Department of Health (DoH) to raise a red flag against the disease.

HIV AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases have become today’s cancers of the society. They consume our budget allocation for health, their remedies remain a big mystery up to this day and they swallow the infected person into the pit of his or her grave.

AMOSUP has wanted to aggressively contribute and get involved in the national HIV prevention program, which is why they have requested the International Transport Worker’s Federation (ITF) to carry out a Training of Trainers (TOT) against HIV AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Conducted in Davao City, the TOT has the key vision of equipping the trainer’s mind and helping them to organise training program for cadets of all members of the Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions (PAMI). The qualified trainers will conduct these trainings until the Commission on Higher Education finalises the module on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) as a compulsory module for all schools.

According to Dr. Syed Asif Altaf, ITF’s global HIV and wellness program coordinator, TOT will help the ITF to replicate similar program in other maritime nations. The ITF plans to extend this initiative to Ukraine, Chile and Panama. He said that the ITF aims to ensure that global seafarers are healthy and safe from HIV.

The recent seminar materialised with the backing of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) president VAdm Eduardo R. Santos (AFP, ret) and Ms Marilyn L Medina, PhD, who spearheaded the event entitled “Training of Trainers on Basic STI, HIV and AIDS Education Module.”

Representatives from MAAP, Magsaysay Maritime, AMOSUP Seamen’s Manila, AMOSUP Seamen’s Cebu, AMOSUP Seamen’s Iloilo, AMOSUP Seamen’s Davao and Davao Merchant Marine Academy (DMMA) attended the seminar held at Ritz Hotel, Davao City last May 11-15, 2016.

According to Mr. Celestino Ramirez of the DOH, one of the main goals of the seminar is to help trainers to polish the transition from being a service provider to assuming a teacher’s role. He added that at first, his team had minor hesitations on whether their training concept would be taken seriously by the participants, but it was evident that they have gained the conviction of the majority of the participants.

Dr. Richard John C. Pecson, the medical director of Gig Oca Robles Seamen’s Hospital (GORSH), said the training was well-timed and that education regarding the disease plays an
important role especially for the trainers who would educate the cadets and AMOSUP personnel. He emphasised the need for people to adhere with safe sexual lifestyle to prevent them from contracting any of the STI especially now that Davao City ranks fourth in the Philippines with the highest number of HIV cases. “It is a growing concern not only for Davao City but for the whole world as well,” he added.

Dr. Susan Rubiato, a family medicine consultant from GORSH, applauded the event and remarked that the training truly made a difference. She said: “Our group, the community of educators on HIV and AIDS, had vowed to commit ourselves in unfolding the genuineness of life for the protection and safety of the seafarers, their loved ones, and the whole community. Let this be a new beginning of partnership.”

“Our group, the community of educators on HIV and AIDS, had vowed to commit ourselves in unfolding the genuineness of life for the protection and safety of the seafarers, their loved ones, and the whole community. Let this be a new beginning of partnership.”

She stressed that everyone is accountable, “so let us educate, engage and empower people to save lives. Let us be part of the fulfilment and realisation of this advocacy because change is coming.”

HIV is leisurely sweeping the generation x and y. The clock is ticking, the responsibility of spreading the information with emphasis on the prevention of HIV transmission starts now. As our seafarers are sailing and experiencing the waves of life, they are rest assured that we can be of help to them and to the people they left behind.
Restored AMOSUP building receives returning employees

Clustering the service departments provides more comfort and easier for Union members in processing and servicing their needs.

Some of AMOSUP service departments including the executive offices have settled back to their main office building following restoration of the Union's headquarters in Intramuros.

Restoration of AMOSUP Seamen's Centre Building – especially the third and fourth floor levels – had required temporary relocation of some of the Union's service offices to the adjacent Sailor's Home Annex in 2014.

The departments include legal services, administration, billing and old age sections.

Renovation of the two-floor areas lasted for almost a year which was finished last March 2016.

These various services to union members are now clustered into more accessible areas. The Union's idea of clustering the departments provides more comfort and makes it easier for members in the processing and servicing their needs within the organisation.

It's the same old place, but the 734.15-sq m facility is now equipped with modern office working environment.

The renovation of the building floors gave way to spacious offices and function areas more than before in accommodating both union members and guests.

AMOSUP wants to make sure that members can approach union staff for their needs relative to servicing their requirements such as benefits and welfare.

The Union also plans to improve its Provident Fund Offices and Records Section at the ground floor of the Seamen's Centre as they temporarily resettled to Sailor's Home Annex last 23rd May.
New OWWA law strengthens welfare assistance to OFW

RA 10801 enhances the current reintegration programme of government for displaced overseas Filipino workers who opt to return home.

The new welfare administration for overseas contract workers may have strengthened state support to seafarers and land-based employees with the signing of the Congress-approved OWWA bill into law.

President Benigno S Aquino signed Republic Act No 10801 entitled ‘An Act Governing the Operations and Administration of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA)’ last 10 May 2016. The OWWA law defines the functions of the agency, its board of trustees and secretariat and the uses of its trust fund.

The agency’s principal task is to develop and implement welfare programmes and services for overseas Filipino workers (OFW) and to administer the trust fund contributed by them. It is also mandated to protect the interest and welfare of OFW, provide prompt response to emergency or crisis situations overseas workers may face, and finance projects for OFW and their families.

“The law strengthens the mandate of OWWA in addressing the needs and concerns of OFW, their families and the overseas labour sector,” said the chairman of the Senate labour committee Senator Edgardo “Sonny” Angara in a statement. Under the law, OWWA is now under a national attached agency of the Department of Labour and Employment, and would receive government funding instead of relying solely from the contributions of its OFW members.

The new law also mandates greater representation of OFW in the OWWA Board of Trustees by increasing the number of representatives from the OFW sector from the present three to five (two from land-based, two from sea-based and one from the women sector) while representatives from the government will be reduced from seven to six. For a more effective financial management, the membership contributions of land-based and sea-based members will be accounted for in two separate books of accounts.

The more than 2.4 million OFW would have a say on where OWWA funds would be used and what programmes and services should be given priority, said Angara. RA 10801 enhances the current reintegration programme of the government for displaced OFW who opt to return home.

The reintegration programme includes granting of loans and other financial support, training on financial literacy, entrepreneurial development, techni-skills, business counseling as well as job referrals for both local and overseas employment. The new law also seeks to ensure transparency in the utilisation and management of the OWWA fund, and mandates OWWA to maintain an interactive website to collect OFW feedback, comments, suggestions and complaints on existing programs and services.

As one of the core programmes of OWWA, the reintegration will be funded with not less than 10 percent of the total collections from OFW every year. OFW are required to contribute $25 to the OWWA trust fund every two years. They will be issued an OWWA membership identification card.

Among the benefits OWWA members are entitled to are those for death (P100,000 for natural death and P200,000 for accidental death), disability (P100,000), burial (P20,000) health care, education and training.
PH eyes ship reg

A review of the country’s overseas shipping industry reveals the need to adopt a new policy to improve the performance of the sector.

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) is proposing the promotion and expansion of the Philippine Ship Registry as part of an effort to arrest the decline of the country’s registered-fleet trading overseas.

A proposed executive order for the expansion will “result in the employment of more Filipino seafarers and improve foreign exchange earnings and savings of the country. It will also enhance trade and improve investment climate, including stimulation of shipbuilding and ship repair industry and other ancillary services such as ship-management, manning, banking and legal consultancies,” the MARINA said.

The ship registry’s current bareboat chartering scheme requires a company to pay the equivalent of 4.5% withholding tax. Under the proposed executive order the tax requirement will be replaced by the registration fee with an annual tonnage dues.

As an alternative to corporation tax, tonnage tax is calculated not on the profit or loss of a company in a given year, but by applying a notional annual income on registered tonnage. This means that the tax burden is known in advance and is neutral to the performance of the company.

Fleet performance

The Flag State has in place the necessary mechanisms to uphold the integrity of the Philippine flag, according to MARINA.

The agency said the provisions on labour agreement and strict monitoring of compliance of all ships flying the Philippine flag with all relevant national and international laws and regulations were integrated in the proposed executive order.

MARINA added that other features of the executive order include: Owned ships can be registered under the Philippine flag if it is managed by a shipmanagement company incorporated under Philippine laws and duly accredited with MARINA, provided such foreign ships are engaged only in foreign trade.

Crewing complement will be completely with Filipino seafarers. Apart from the required labour agreements, safety and security of the ships, companies can avail of income tax incentives.

A thorough study and review of the overseas shipping industry has revealed the need to adopt a new policy to improve the performance of the country’s overseas shipping sector.

The Philippines ranked 27th in terms of gross tonnage of the world merchant shipping registered by country, with 4.4 million GT as of December 2014, according to IHS-Fairplay/IMO.

The number of Philippine-registered ships trading overseas has been continuously declining from 467 ships in 1988 to 167 ships in 2003 and 120 in 2016. MARINA attributed the decline to several factors such as huge capital requirement in ship acquisition, strict nationality requirement (60:40% Filipino-foreign participation), higher fees, low carriage of Philippine trade (inbound/outbound) by Philippine-registered ships, and political instability, among others.

MARINA envisaged that the expansion of the Philippine Ship Registry can be achieved when there is a significant number of ships and tonnage under the Register and if the following points are given due course:

- Legal and policy regime;
- Marketing strategy;
- Optimal use of electronic commerce;
- Consideration of practices being implemented by other flag states;
- 24/7 administrative support; and
- Consideration of reasons for the deletion of ships from the Registry.

Legal and policy regime

MARINA said the legal and policy regime in the registration of ships is a collection of laws, rules and regulations being implemented by MARINA. More specifically it is governed by the Tariff and Customs Code, Presidential Decree No 474, Executive Order 125 and its amendment. PD 1521 (Ship Mortgage Law) also affects ship registration in the Philippines when it comes to hierarchy of priority of claims and liens.

Republic Act 7471 as amended by RA 9301 provides that a Philippine shipping enterprise means a citizen or an association or corporation organised under the laws of the Philippines, at least 60% of the capital of which is owned by citizen of the Philippines and engaged exclusively in Philippine overseas shipping.

Memo circulars numbers 181 and 182, which govern the accreditation of shipping companies and registration of ships in international voyages, also require the 60:40 equity requirement.

It has three types of shipowning structures that always come in place. One is Filipino shipowning with allowable foreign equity of a maximum 40%. Second is through the bareboat charter scheme under PD 760, as amended, which can be availed of by Philippine nationals, and thirdly, foreign ownership of vessels for registration in the Philippine Registry.

As most of the ships under the Register are under bareboat charter arrangement, this means that they have to follow the
istory expansion

“The Flag State has in place the necessary mechanisms to uphold the integrity of the Philippine flag”
requirements under PD 760, as amended.

MARINA stressed that its legal regime provides integrity to the Philippine Registry through the rules and regulations the agency enforces that resulted in the white listing of the Philippine flag in the major Port State Control regimes in the world.

Marketing

MARINA proposed that the Philippine Registry should be promoted to impress upon its integrity and reputation with the adoption of strict adherence to internationally accepted standards of safety, security, crew welfare and environmental consideration.

The use of e-commerce law is also another ingredient that can be used towards the expansion of the Registry, it said. MARINA plans to coordinate to make full use of e-commerce with the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Science and Technology-National Computer Centre to firmly establish digital signatures in the issuance of registration certificates.

Response to queries

As an organisation, MARINA noted that it is now geared itself with appropriate measures to give immediate response to queries transmitted by Port State control authorities regarding documentation on board Philippine-registered ships docked in foreign ports. It should be available to provide immediate assistance to Philippine ships detained by ITF and port authorities.

While the agency has a 24/7 administrative arrangement to serve the need of PH ships abroad, it is limited to a specific application such as issuance of class authorisation and dispensation permit.

MARINA now wants to expand the coverage of the 24/7 concept such as those being attacked by pirates or if ships are found deficient by PSC authorities. The organisation must be able to exert effect statutory control over the registered fleet, it added.

PH set up London maritime attache

The Philippines has established a maritime attache in London, United Kingdom with the appointment of a senior division manager from the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) as its contact person.

The appointment of former MARINA Overseas Shipping director Arsenio F Lingad II to the London post is in line with the agency’s plan to promote and expand the Philippine Ship Register to shipowners worldwide.

MARINA also plans to set up its next ship registry offices in Brussels and Tokyo and four other major cities overseas in 2017. The London Attache, the Philippines first overseas post dedicated to maritime affairs, was set up in the Philippine Embassy in the UK capital in October last year.

The maritime attaches can act as MARINA offices to perform statutory services of Philippine-registered ships within the vicinity and representation of seafarers when needed.

Advisory to owners

Simultaneous with the London development, the Manila office has issued advisory to shipowners of the “revised procedure for urgent requests or filing of reports involving Philippine-registered ships during weekends, non-working days and after office hours.”

The advisory covers the following applications, requests and reports received involving all Philippine-registered ships plying international waters:

1) Dispensation permit in case of death or injury to the crew on board; extension of servicing of lifeboat/liferaft, emergency drydocking and other similar and analogous circumstances;

2) Letter of authorisation to Recognised Organisation (RO) under the following circumstances:
   a) If there is an accident during the voyage of the Philippine-registered overseas ships;
   b) Detention of Philippine-registered ships by other Port State Control authorities;
   c) Malfunction of the ship’s equipment including, but not limited to, defective gyro compass, alarm monitoring system, radio equipment or oil water incinerator;
   d) Damaged life raft or lifeboat;
   e) Other deficiencies that may occur during the ship’s voyage;
   f) Similar and analogous circumstances

3) Incident reports with regard to Philippine-registered ships.

Filing of request/report via email including, but not limited to: name of the concerned shipping, name of ship, reason/s for the request, duration, name of RO, itinerary of the ship and other relevant information necessary to the request.
MARINA buckles down to save overseas fleet

Despite the benefits from bareboat chartering such as jobs for Filipino seafarers and taxes for the government, Philippine-flagged vessels have dwindled over the last several years caught in the midst of vanishing Philippine-flagged ships trading overseas, the country’s maritime administration has pondered on the ship registry it wants to promote as the alternative registry.

It wants to attract shipowners back and arrest the continuing ship deletions in its Register. To do this the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) recently buckled down to work on further measures aimed to save the declining Philippine-flagged fleet.

The fall of the fleet has worried the administration. “It’s very alarming,” according to MARINA administrator Dr Maximo Mejia Jr, in reference to the situation the Ship Registry is now in. Ships trading under the Philippine flag have fallen from 467 in 1998 to 167 in 2003 and 117 at present.

Seminar-workshop

As part of the measures, MARINA carried out a three-day seminar and workshop on international ship registries and brought in an expert to assist workshop participants. Mostly MARINA senior managers, the participants had to choose a registry and conceptualise ideas on how to attract foreign shipowners to register their ships under the Philippine flag.

Prof Proshantoo Mukherjee, the resource expert, gave an introductory and refresher course on the theory and practice of ship registration system. Dr Mukherjee is a professor emeritus at World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden and in Dalian University. His area of expertise is maritime law and policy.

Prof Mukherjee discussed the different kinds of registration system that includes open, closed, secondary, hybrid and bareboat registry. He said that it must be recognised that the open registry phenomenon – whether characterised by hybrid or secondary or by any other appellation – is here to stay. “The system allows new sovereign state to participate in global shipping, even if they lack the financial resources of technical expertise or the capital to acquire ships,” he said.

The Philippines ship registration system currently takes advantage of the bareboat charter registry. Despite the benefits from bareboat chartering such as generating more jobs for Filipino seafarers and taxes from charters for the government, registered vessels have dwindled over the last several years.

MARINA says the decline of ships can be attributed to several factors such as huge capital requirement in ship acquisition, strict nationality requirement (60.40 ratio in Filipino-foreign participation), higher fees, low carriage of Philippine trade (inbound/outbound) by Philippine registered ships, and political instability.

There has been recommendations to Congress to pass the ship mortgage law and improve the Philippine registry system – not only in the process but also the requirements and procedures – as part of strategies for the overseas shipping sector.
“The strongest point of the country is its crew supply – with well trained and competent seafarers, as well as good administration, infrastructure and fiscal issues, which are the things that will attract shipowners”

In the recent seminar and workshop, participants broke into four groups to discuss and present the assigned registry system given to each group. These are the open registry system, closed, secondary, and hybrid registry.

Choice of hybrid

In the spectrum of ship registries, Dr Mejia noted that if the open registry is considered to be in the “far left”, the closed registry is on the “far right”, saying that “everyone was gravitating towards the left of centre.” The groups’ brainstorming and presentations ended on a consensus in favour of adopting the hybrid registry system.

Even Prof Mukherjee had taken to recommend the hybrid type and he had no issues on each report the groups made. He added that he would go through with the draft bill on the proposed bill called “An Act to Provide for the Philippine Ship Registry, Establish a System for Conferment of Nationality of Ships and the Acquisition, Transfer and Disposition of Ownership Thereof, the Recording and Recognition of Maritime Liens and Mortgages upon Ships; and an Admiralty Court for Enforcement of Maritime Claims Against Ships.”

Prof Mukherjee told workshop participants that the Philippines should look on prevailing factors for the registry such as its abundant seafarers and taxation regime. He said the strongest point of the country is its crew supply - with well trained and competent seafarers, as well as good administration, infrastructure and fiscal issues, which are the things that will attract shipowners.

He pointed out that there is a political dimension in whatever policy the country to formulate in the business in international sphere. In the European Union, for instance, substandard ships with substandard registries are also present. “It doesn’t follow that the registry of a developing country must be substandard. That is an absolute fallacy,” stressed Prof Mukherjee.

He said that substandard ships are also present in the registries of the developed world, whether the vessel sinks or catches fire, saying, each time a disaster occurs, a new protocol, circular amendment or even a convention comes in.

He suggested that an aspiring flag state needs to be realistic as the ship registry is a part of the whole process in national policy formulation.

“Those administrations which only see themselves as regulators will keep losing ships. Time will come, there will be nothing more to regulate, there won’t be any ships. What the industry needs is to facilitate the growth of ships.”
Overseas operators press for passing of mortgage law, fiscal incentives

The Filipino Shipowners’ Association prepares twin legislative measures that are responsive to their wish to acquire new ships and more jobs to seafarers.

Filipino shipowners in the overseas shipping sector have deemed the obsolete mortgage law and lack of fiscal incentives in ship acquisition as the twin hindrances that contributed to the continuing decline of Philippine-registered fleet.

The last several years have seen overseas operators led by the Filipino Shipowners’ Association (FSA) pressing Congress to enact a ship mortgage law that is necessary in availing of foreign financing to acquire new ships. This law will also replace the outdated Presidential Decree No 1521, otherwise known as the Ship Mortgage Act of 1978.

The old law has discouraged ship financiers from extending loans to Filipino shipowners, thus hampering the much needed foreign financing. This is because the Marcos decree was “inadequate and unclear especially on maritime liens. It also lacked an effective mechanism, by which financial creditors can enforce to effect the arrest of the ship to enforce their mortgage liens,” the FSA said in a position paper.

Moreover, considering the international character of shipping, it is mandatory that the provisions of a ship mortgage law conform to the internationally recognised modern practices, otherwise foreign financing will continue to deny the much needed foreign financing that Filipino shipowners require to replace or increase their fleet.

Delineated and defined

FSA has drafted a proposed bill that it wants to pass into law. The proposed bill on mortgage is properly enumerated, delineated and defined the preference of maritime liens to enable ship financiers to assess favourably ship mortgages in the Philippines to ensure repayment of their loan. Additionally, the proposed legislation deals with maritime liens separately from ship mortgages and limited the number of claims secured by maritime liens to a minimum.

Under the House Bill, there are only four proposed maritime liens, namely:

1) Legal costs incurred in the
common interest of the creditors, due and charges to which the ship is subject, the taxes relevant to the navigation as well as the expenses for the ship’s custody and maintenance as from the ship’s arrival to the last port;

2) Claims arising from the contract of employment of Master and crew;

3) Expenses and awards arising from maritime assistance and salvage; and

4) Indemnities due to ships, passengers or cargo by reason of maritime incident.

The procedure in the enforcement of the claims of lien holders and the mortgagee are also clearly defined and delineated, thus the priority between claims is as follows, to wit:

a) maritime liens
b) mortgages registered in accordance with the proposed bill;
c) rights of retention; and
d) other mortgages.

It also allows the enforcement of a foreign mortgage in the Philippines and the subsequent arrest of the ship as a result thereof. It also allows the mortgagee to assume management of the ship in certain instances.

To catalyse the expansion of the Philippine overseas shipping, FSA stressed the urgent legislation to enact a new Ship Mortgage Law that will be “responsive to the financial needs of Filipino shipowners in their desire to build or acquire new vessels.”

The overseas shipping sector has struggled to be recognised as one of the key contributors in pushing the Philippines to its economic development. And despite efforts to push the industry forward, overseas shipping was relegated to the sidelines.

Filipino overseas shipping operators agree that attracting investments for the sector is a capital intensive endeavour. It takes more than the grant of tax incentives for the sector as in the experience of Asian neighbours such as Singapore and Hongkong.

Put tax incentives back

How can the Philippines therefore lure foreign shipowners and investors into the country?

A package of incentives has been identified to do this. Republic Act No 7471, as amended by RA 9301, addresses the first component, like tax incentives. The repeal of the provision of RA 7471, as amended by RA 9301, at a time when the income tax provision has been implemented, had hit at the very core of the principle of providing predictable policies in shipping.

FSA said retaining the incentives granted under RA 7471, which was withdrawn by RA 9301, will increase the tonnage of the Philippine overseas shipping fleet. This means more flag registration fees, ship safety related fees and tax payments on charter hire directly paid to government. Add to this the employment created
“With an expected increase of Philippine overseas fleet, the country will be able to draw attention to the fact that it is indeed a maritime hub in a growing East Asian region.”

FSA pointed out that the withdrawal of incentives under the Overseas Shipping Development Act sent a wrongful signal to the foreign shipowners and maritime investors on the country’s investment policies and may even result in the continued delisting of ships under the Philippine Registry. From 170 in 2010, Philippine-registered ships went down to a fleet of 118 in December 2015. It also meant the loss of gainful employment for Filipino crew, loss of government revenues in terms of administrative fees and taxes on charter hire paid by foreign shipowners, all of which have been collected by the government.

Putting back the incentives under RA 7471, as amended by 9301, FSA added, “will set the targeted economic rewards for government in terms of taxes to be collected and additional round of revenues that can be generated by an invigorated overseas shipping industry.”
HOW TO JOIN:

- Remit the required upgraded Pag-IBIG I savings (at least Php600.00 per month).
- Visit www.pagibigfund.gov.ph
- Click the “Pag-IBIG Expanded Raffle Promo” banner/icon.
- Read the raffle promo mechanics and click the “I want to join now” button.
- Enter Pag-IBIG Membership Identification (MID) Number and required information.
  
  **Note:** The MID Number should be the same with the Pag-IBIG MID Number used in the remittance of upgraded Pag-IBIG I savings.

- Click the ‘Verify’ button.

  **Note:** In case the Pag-IBIG member does not have complete membership information with the Fund, he/she will be redirected by the system to the Pag-IBIG online membership registration system and is required to complete his/her records. After completing the membership information, go back to the raffle promo registration web page.

- Fill in the required information and then click the “Submit” button. A prompt message shall appear informing the member that he/she has successfully registered in the raffle promo. An email confirmation from Pag-IBIG Fund will be sent to the member.

- Online registration/joining to the raffle promo shall be done ONLY ONCE.

**Promo period:** May 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017

**Preliminary Draw:** December 21, 2016

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BIMCO/ICS says, however, the report estimates a current surplus of about 119,000 ratings (15.8%), with demand only having increased by about one percent since 2010. Retaining qualified seafarers and increasing the number of years which they serve at sea). But the report indicates that, unless training levels are increased significantly, the growth in demand for seafarers could generate a serious shortage in the total supply of officers.

However, the report estimates there is a current surplus of about 119,000 ratings (15.8%), with demand only having increased by about one percent since 2010. Sources of officers, followed closely by Ukraine and India. BIMCO CEO, Angus Frew, said: “BIMCO and ICS have once again collaborated closely to produce valuable in-depth analysis of maritime manpower trends. The industry can put this report to good use by ensuring we can continue to operate the world merchant fleet with sufficient numbers of qualified and competent seafarers.”

ICS Secretary General, Peter Hinchliffe commented: “Without continuing efforts to promote careers at sea and improve levels of recruitment and retention, the report suggests it cannot be guaranteed that there will be an abundant supply of seafarers in the future.”

A summary of the key figures in the report can be downloaded free of charge from home pages of the BIMCO and ICS websites. (BIMCO/ICS)
Fatty liver study carried out among seafarers

The Asia Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL), through its conferences, provides the venue for knowledge and latest developments in the treatment and management of liver disease by experts worldwide. Alfonso Syoei R Yoshida, a graduate of residency training for Family and Community Medicine at AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital, recently obtained the rare opportunity to present his research at the APASL 25th Conference held in Tokyo last 20-24 February 2016. Yoshida shares his research experience and findings having seafarers as subjects.

I chose the topic “Profile of the Patients Diagnosed with Fatty Liver Disease at Seamen’s Hospital” where I have carried out research on patients diagnosed with the disease. Whilst attending out-patient’s consultation since my residency admission at the Seamen’s Hospital, I encountered many seafarer-patients who were tested with high presence of liver enzymes particularly that of SGPT (serum glutamic pyruvic transaminase). Normally presence in liver and heart cells, SGPT is released into blood when the liver or heart are damaged. Abdominal ultrasound had found those with fatty liver disease.

Since seafarers are expected to be in their best possible health condition when they renew their contract on board, this could pose a problem for their continued employment. Although benign as they may sound, fatty liver disease itself does have the tendency in leading to the development of liver cirrhosis, of whom 15-20% of those patients may lead to liver cancer.

We should not underestimate the fatal capacity of this condition. Hence questions came in to my mind. How many of the seafarers seen in the OPD are afflicted with elevated liver enzymes? What are the possible reasons of the development of said finding? What are the possible future implications of having such condition?

Although, I will avoid going into the detail of the content of my research, I was able to find out the following as I searched through the charts of the patients seen at OPD of Seamen’s Hospital:

- That stunning 80.4% incidence of fatty liver disease was found among seafarer-patients seen at OPD
- That fatty liver disease was usually found out among seafarers who are in their fourth decade of life
- That fatty liver disease was usually seen among the Bosun, Cooks, and Engineers
- And since most of the international vessels where our Filipino seafarers are employed do have more awareness regarding healthy lifestyle and working environment, it was not a surprise to find out that fatty liver seen among seafarers were not associated with any smoking nor alcoholic beverage intake
- That after following through the charts of the patients with increased liver enzyme or with those with positive ultrasound finding of fatty liver disease, patients either have coexisting hypercholesterolemia and hypertension.

To my surprise, the lectures I have attended that covered the topics of fatty liver disease and NASH (Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis) prior to my presentation and those of internationally recognised speakers and my research did have common points raised.
One of which was age incidence as to its clinically associated complications. This has boosted my confidence in presenting my research to the delegates from various countries.

What made me feel more proud is that, although the fatty liver disease is a much studied topic around the world, I was the only presenter who investigated on seafarer population regarding this condition which made my research unique from the rest of researches done. As I presented my research, I was able to share my findings among several attendees and was able to answer their queries regarding the research. At the same time, I was able to function as the moderator of the presenting block during our time slot which gave me great relief. What was great about the experience were the following:

- Listened and learned first-hand on the latest trends and facts on what is really going on in the field of liver disease;
- Experienced presenting my research in an international convention;
- Experienced such a grand international convention where exchange of ideas and knowledge are the delegates’ common goal.

Since the exchange of ideas was the main purpose of the convention, my notion of research presentation as a fearful one, as presenter is subjected in front of all the criticism and fault findings. However, it was a completely different experience with a cooperative environment, open, accepting with warm constructive ideas that is encouraging for the physicians and investigators in their respective field of study.

Such an experience was an overwhelming one. It was an honour and humbling experience as a physician and investigator which gave the boost to work harder for the better welfare of the patients who will cross the path of my medical career.

COURTESY Call: World Maritime University (WMU) president Dr Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry pays a courtesy call to AMOSUP offices during a visit in Manila. Dr Doumbia-Henry exchanged pleasantries with Union officers last April. She joined WMU as president in the summer of 2015. Prior to joining WMU, she served as the Director of the International Labour Standards Department of the International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland.
MAAP graduates 148 cadets of Class 2016

More than 148 senior cadets at the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) have marched down to receive their diplomas last 28 May.

The 144 graduates of Class 2016 at the AMOSUP-run academy in Mariveles, Bataan included 68 finishers in BS Marine Transportation and 80 in BS Marine Engineering. The Academy’s Centre for Advanced Marine Studies (CAMS) also conferred master’s degree to four candidates in BSMT and one in BSMarE.

Stolt-Nielsen president Ms Jane Sy graced the graduation exercises as the guest-of-honour and speaker. She encouraged the graduates to do their job well, as doing so would “have already done noble service to your country and to your alma mater.”

During her years in the maritime industry, Ms Sy has seen and learnt many things that she says are “eye openers” to her. “I do understand the life of seafarers and the hard work they do onboard,” she said, adding that Filipinos have always been recognised as “competent, hardworking, dedicated and loyal.”

She urged the senior cadets to “build on our good reputation and even improve on it”, saying that they are the “future leaders of the maritime industry and the Philippines’ best ambassadors to the world.” Ms Sy joined the shipping industry in 1998 as global risk manager of Stolt in Houston, Texas.

Ms Sy’s company Stolt-Nielsen is one of the pioneering shipowners that sponsored midshipmen for MAAP, and have continued to do so until today. Stolt-Nielsen and MAAP have been in partnership since the academy was founded in 1996.
To be a good leader

What makes a leader successful is not because he speaks loud and scare the people under him. Stolt-Nielsen Phils president Jane Sy reminds graduates of MAAP Class 2016 that a successful leader is one who is willing to listen and able to accept suggestions and opinions from his teammates.

"When you start your ship assignment, you aspire to be chief mates, masters, chief engineers. And each step requires more training and years of shipboard experience. Sometimes you wonder if you are going to get there. Yes, you will. You just need to be persistent and perseveres.

We all want to be leaders, one way or the other, and there is nothing wrong with it. However, let us not blind ourselves by thinking if we do not make it to the top, we have failed. Not at all. It is better to recognize what we are good at and accept our limitations, than to pursue something beyond our capability and fail.

To be a good leader is not just having the ability to command. Many of us can command. But is it effective? What makes a leader successful is not because he speaks loud and scares the people under him. Quite the opposite. A successful leader is one who is willing to listen and able to accept suggestions and opinions from his teammates. A good leader takes others into account when he makes a decision.

It is clear there is a pecking order onboard the ship to avoid mutiny, but it does not mean there should be no discussions and exchanges of ideas and opinions. We always say two heads are better than one. Sharing ideas and opinions do not need to be mixed with arrogance. One can question the leader without being disrespectful. A question can be raised politely without being insulting. Arrogance and disrespectfulness have no room onboard. It only causes misunderstanding and fragmentation. You are well equipped with the skills and technical knowhow. Have the stamina to stand up and defend your position but also be willing to accept criticism.

"A good leader takes others into account when he makes a decision"

Life at sea means months onboard with the same people. You work together, eat together and live together. Your teammates on board are your support group. You have different personalities joined together, patience and tolerance are the key to survival. Without patience to understand your mates, the community onboard will fall apart and the stress level goes up. This is not the life you want to look forward to. Take the right attitude and accept people as they are without being judgmental.

Some of you may be assigned to ships with mixed nationalities. There will be cultural differences and language barriers. Understanding their culture will make the transition a lot easier. We, Filipinos, have good command of English, which is an advantage. We lived through different times in our history when we were controlled by other countries, such as Spain, Japan, and America. We are used to cultural differences and we are adaptable.

You have been taught and reminded many times that safety onboard cannot be compromised. Safety onboard is the safety of the crew, the cargo, the ship and the environment. The rules and procedures are there for a reason and not so to pass the vetting. You have an obligation to keep the ship safe for the sake of your teammates and most of all, for your own sake. Remember, there are love ones waiting for you at home.

During my years in the maritime industry, I have seen and learned many things that are eye openers to me. I do understand the life of seafarers and the hard work they do onboard."
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.

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.
MAAP to provide crew to Red Cross vessel

The 195-ft Susitna is a catamaran ferry that can load up to 129 passengers, 20 vehicles and has a 35-tonne overall freight capacity. It has a main deck that can serve as a mobile clinic-hospital ship serving some of the most isolated islands.

The AMOSUP-run Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) has agreed to provide manpower and technical support to the newly acquired vessel of the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) for its humanitarian mission.

PRC’s acquisition of the mv Susitna, a 195-ft military proto-type ship, brings its humanitarian service to new heights with the use of a rapid transport and landing craft for relief supply and medical facility deployment. It will also serve as a rescue vessel and command post for mobile operations in marine disasters and natural calamities.

Apart from providing officers and crew to the ship, the Academy will also recommend a maintenance of the vessel and provide technical assistance for repair, according to a memo of agreement signed between MAAP president VAdm Eduardo Ma Santos (AFP ret) and PRC chairman Richard Gordon.

Under the agreement, MAAP can recommend and select candidates for two sets of crewmen to the vessel so that replacement can be obtained in case of resignations from the ship.

PRC, as the shipowner, will determine as to when and where to deploy the vessel. PRC will only have to provide allowances for the crew during relief or emergency operation. Though it may have the option to hire on a full time basis for the crew that MAAP will provide and be entitled to PRC’s regular employee compensation.

A catamaran ferry

The Susitna, which the PRC purchased for $1.75 million, is a catamaran ferry that has the space to hold up to 129 passengers, 20 vehicles and has a 35-tonne overall freight capacity. It has a main deck that can be lowered to offload equipment and can land on
beaches in as little as four feet of water.

Mr. Gordon said in a statement that PRC really needed a ship with the Philippines being an archipelagic country that is visited by an average of 22 to 26 typhoons a year; an average of 170 maritime accidents also occur every year, apart from being prone to earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions and man-made disasters.

PRC further noted the necessity of a ship during their Typhoon Yolanda experience in Eastern Visayas due to the closure of airports and seaports, which made difficult for the Red Cross to bring relief to the affected areas.

“At the onset of Yolanda, it took us four days to reach affected areas. Hence, the Red Cross and delegates from partner National Societies and IFRC agreed that we need our own ship to effectively perform our humanitarian work in the Philippines and the Asia Pacific Region,” he said.

The ferry is designed for direct beach landings and to operate and land cargo and passengers on unimproved areas and damaged ports and wharfs, stressed Mr. Gordon, saying that “we won’t have to go through what we have experienced during Yolanda again.”

The vessel was built for the U.S. Navy at the Ketchikan Shipyard and was donated to Matanuska-Susitna Borough in Anchorage, Alaska after the Navy was finished with it. Once envisioned for ferry service between Point MacKenzie and Anchorage, the borough is said to have been trying to sell the Susitna for about three years since plans to build a landing terminal outside of Anchorage fell through.
How fortified is PH STCW administration

By Capt. Reynold ‘BURT’ M. Sabay

The Philippines boasts of approximately 400,000 Filipino seafarers on board seagoing ships at any given time. Logically, there must be something like 100,000 on vacation. Therefore, there are about 500,000 Filipino Seafarers that must be certificated under STCW 2010 Manila Amendments. There are about 80,000 enrolled in maritime institutions and 20,000 will complete from STCW 95 to STCW 2010. In simple terms, by 01 January 2017 all seafarers on board seagoing ships must be appropriately certificated under STCW 2010 Manila Amendments.

It might be worthy to seriously note that since STCW 1978, IMO never extended a deadline.

so many fronts, top of the lists are: a single Maritime Administration or the absence of it, and quality management system or lack of it, among others.

In 25 June 2010, IMO member countries came to the Philippines, finalised and passed the STCW 2010 Manila Amendments. The

“academic” requirements this March 2016. These 20,000 are deemed qualified but will have to take multiple STCW Courses before they can actually go on board.

By logical calculation, the Philippines STCW Administration has updated approximately 50,000 Filipino seafarers to the STCW 2010 certification as of March 2016. The deadliness deadline is 01 January 2017, some nine months from today. Compliance should have started in 2012 where each Party have five years transition

The procedures were simple, each Administration shall compare the requirements under STCW 2010 against STCW 95 and require updating where gaps have been identified.

EMSA Challenge

The European Maritime Safety Authority (EMSA) under authority by the European Union (EU) came to the Philippines in 2006 to audit the compliance of the Philippines with the STCW 95. The Philippines’ compliance status was wanting in STCW 2010 Manila amendments started to be implemented in 2012 until its deadliest deadline on 01 January 2017.

Cutting the story short, the Philippines were overtaken by the 2010 Manila Amendments while cramming to comply with the STCW 95. Exactly the reason why Filipino Seafarers were mostly certificated only up to 31 December 2016.

The EMSA Challenge practically diverted the energy and focus of all the maritime experts in the
Philippines STCW Administration towards STCW 95 and unconscious of the sharp teeth of STCW 2010 Manila Amendments about to bite.

This paper is NOT pointing its finger to the EMSA but simply raising awareness to certain issues.

The Issues

- The Philippines Maritime Education and Training (MET) regime refuses to shift from ‘qualification’ to ‘competence’ based MET, the world outside the Philippines shifted already a long long time ago. It is time the Philippines realises that industries all over the world including marine are competence based, NOT qualification based. This is the reason why STCW required Certificate of Competency (COC) in the first place.

- The Philippines STCW Administration is a new agency created by RA 10635 chained to a paralyzing old system. The tape is bloody red, policies unrealistic, procedures ridiculous. How would you explain a Chief Mate applying for revalidation of his STCW 95 COC to STCW 2010 fresh from shipboard assignment was required to take Operational Level Course (OLC)?

- The Administration refuses to tap its more than a dozen Regional Offices! Instead, its central office preferred to work 24/7, a punishing feat beyond reasons, NOT to the personnel of the Administration who works on shifts but to the seafarers who are coming from all over the Philippines! (It was only last April when MARINA inaugurated its regional office in Cebu to begin its STCW extension for CoC issuance, with office and equipment donation from AMOSUP).

- The Philippines STCW Administration boasted of its automated ‘Seafarers Certification System’ (SCS) and ‘National Assessment and Certification System for Seafarers’ (NACSS). These systems have been donated by the Associated Marine Officers and Seamen’s Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), the biggest ITF affiliated union in the world.

- The manning industry in the Philippines is more concerned of the fees of the training, updating and refreshers rather than the costs and consequences of compliance or rather non-compliance. Incentives, rebates, discounts and commissions are making the education and training really cheap. Well, if you pay peanuts you get monkeys as they always say.

How are we going to update, refresh, re-train, re-validate and certify the 350,000 more Filipino Seafarers in the next 9 months? In the Philippine setting and mindset, someone has to push the PANIC BUTTON now!

Sailing Forward 37
### STCW DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS:

Please bring one set photocopy and original documents for verification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>ISSUANCE</th>
<th>REVALIDATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MASTER MARINER</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>CHIEF ENGINEER</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>CHIEF MATE</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>SECOND ENGINEER</strong></td>
<td>- Theoretical / Practical assessment result or PRC Board rating with original receipt&lt;br&gt; - Last issued COC / COE&lt;br&gt; - GOC (for Master and Chief Mate)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of training in ECDIS (generic) (For Master and Chief Mate)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of OIC-updating Course of part B&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of training in MLC&lt;br&gt; - Colored picture passport size white background with shoulder board (4 bars for MM and C/E, 3 bars for C/M and 2/E)</td>
<td>- Last issued COC / COE&lt;br&gt; - GOC (for Master and Chief Mate)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of training in MLC&lt;br&gt; - Colored picture passport size white background with shoulder board (4 bars for MM, and C/E, 3 bars for C/M and 2/E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OIC-NAVIGATIONAL WATCH</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>OIC-ENGINEERING WATCH</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>ELECTRO TECHNICAL OFFICER</strong></td>
<td>- Theoretical / Practical assessment result or PRC Board rating with original receipt&lt;br&gt; - Last issued COC / COE&lt;br&gt; - GOC (for OIC-NW)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of training in ARPA, ECDIS and SSBT with BRM (for OIC-NW)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of training in ERS with ERRM (for OIC-EW)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of OIC-updating Course part A&lt;br&gt; - Colored picture passport size white background with shoulder board (2 bars for OIC-NW/EW)</td>
<td>- GOC (for OIC-NW)&lt;br&gt; - Proof of successful completion of OIC-updating Course part A&lt;br&gt; - Colored picture passport size white background with shoulder board (2 bars for OIC-NW/EW)</td>
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**Common requirements for issuance and revalidation of COC / COE**
- COP of BT, PSCRB, ATFF, MEFA (MECA for M/M and C/M only). PFRB is available
- For seafarer with oil / Chemical vessel experience (BTSC, STOT, ATCT, STCT)
- For seafarer with LNG/LPG vessel experience (BTG, STG, ATGT)
- Approved seagoing service record from the company / manning
- Original and photocopy of SIRB
- Valid medical certificate for seagoing service in PEME form from DOH accredited Clinic/Hospital
- Long brown envelope

**Additional requirements for expedite processing:**
- Original and Certified True Copy of:<br>  - Letter of request for expedite company<br>  - POEA contract<br>  - Flight Details<br>  - Overseas and Employment Certificate (OEC)

**Reprinting / Re-issuance:**
- Letter Request
- For correction / rectification – Original certificate issued
- In case of loss – Affidavit of Loss

**Certified True Copy:**
- Original and Photocopy of Certificate issued

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<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>ISSUANCE</th>
<th>REVALIDATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOC</strong></td>
<td>- Training certificate for GMDSS / GOC training center&lt;br&gt; - Result of practical examination from assessment center&lt;br&gt; - Result of theoretical examination from NTC</td>
<td>- GOC issued under NTC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Common requirements for GOC issuance and revalidation**
- Approved seagoing service record from the company / manning
- Valid medical certificate for sea going service in PEME form from DOH accredited Clinic/Hospital
- Original and Photocopy of SIRB
- Long brown envelope
<table>
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<tr>
<th>MARINA ID</th>
<th>ISSUANCE</th>
<th>RENEWAL</th>
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| BTOC and BTTLGT | • Certified True Copy of Training Completion and Records of Assessment (TCROA)  
• Enrolment report and training certificate issued | | |
| ATOT, ATCT and ATTLGT | • Photocopy of COP of BTOC / BTTLGT / GTF  
• Seagoing service on board OIL vessel for ATOT | • Seagoing service on board CHEMICAL vessel for ATCT  
• Seagoing service on board in LPG / LNG vessel for ATTLGT | |
| BT, SDSD | • Certified True Copy of Training Completion and Records of Assessment (TCROA)  
• Enrolment report and training certificate issued | | • Basic Training (Updating and Refresher) |
| ATIF | • Certified True Copy of Training Completion and Records of Assessment (TCROA)  
• Enrolment report and training certificate issued | | • Refresher Course |
| PSCR8 | • Approved seagoing service record of not less than six (6) months for the last five (5) years from the company / manning | | |
| PFRB | • Photocopy of COP of PSCR8 | | |
| MEFA | • Certified True Copy of Training Completion and Records of Assessment (TCROA)  
• Enrolment report and training certificate issued | | • No need to revalidate  
(NOTE: NAC Certificate should be Revalidated under MARINA) |
| PFRB | • Photocopy of COP of MEFA | | |
| SSO | • Approved seagoing service record of not less than twelve (12) months for the last five (5) years from the company / manning | | |
| II/4 and III/4 | • COP in Basic Training  
• Registry of Ratings Assessed and Certified (RRAC)  
• Training Certificate in Navigational / Engineering Watchkeeping | | • No need to revalidate  
(NOTE: TESDA Certificate should be Revalidated under MARINA) |
| II/5 and III/5 | • II/4 or III/4 COP issued by MARINA  
• COP in Basic Training  
• Training Certificate in Navigational / Engineering Watchkeeping | | |

**Common requirements for issuance and revalidation of COPs**
- OId COP (for revalidation)
- Certified True Copy of Training Completion and Records of Assessment (TCROA) Enrollment report and training certificate issued
- Approved seagoing service record from the company / manning
- Original and photocopy of SIIRB
- Long brown envelope

**Additional requirements for expedite processing:**
- Original and Certified True Copy of:
  - Letter of request for expedite company
  - POEA contract
  - Flight Details
  - Overseas and Employment Certificate (OEC)

**Reprinting / Re-issuance**
- Letter Request
- For correction / rectification – Original certificate issued
- In case of loss – Affidavit of Loss

**Certified True Copy:**
- Original and Photocopy of Certificate Issued

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*NOTICE TO ALL SEAFARERS:*
The following services are private business of the MARINA Employers Cooperative (MBC) and not in any way connected with the maritime industry Authority (MARINA) as an Agency at Government:
- (1) Renal of Uniform  
- (2) Sale of Documentary Stamps  
- (3) Sale of Office Supplies (e.g. Envelope/Folder)  
- (4) Photocopy Services

These services are **NOT COMPULSARY** and are STRICTLY OPTIONAL to seafarers and other who wish to avail of said services. You are at liberty to source these services from other providers and in doing so will NOT IN ANY WAY AFFECT your transactions / applications with MARINA.

*Sailing Forward 39*
IMarEST partners with MAAP; to launch PH branch

The Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) has joined in a partnership with the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) for the benefit of the academy’s staff and cadets’ professional advancement. The partnership will have IMarEST seeing 45 of MAAP’s academic staff and around 1,500 engineering and deck cadets enrolled as members to support their initial and continuing professional development.

The partnership will support the enhancement, attraction and development of marine professionals in the Philippines—all will gain access to the IMarEST vast online library of technical knowledge, be able to join local events, as well as putting those who are working towards gaining their Certificates of Competency on a path to be able to use these towards a globally recognised professional qualification (such as becoming Chartered).

VADM Eduardo Ma R Santos (AFP, Ret), President of MAAP commented: “Providing all of the very best international support for the development of Filipino seafarers has to be at the heart of what we deliver, and this partnership with the IMarEST provides an added boost, not only to recognise the quality of the academic staff, but to further enhance the skills, knowledge and capability of MAAP cadets.”

MAAP is considered to be a world-class maritime academy and is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities compliant to the requirements of the STCW (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers).

MAAP will also support the launch of a new branch of the IMarEST in the Philippines. Based around Manila, the branch will be set up to cater for the vast number of engineering and deck professionals that are being trained in the region.

David Kelly, Director of Asia Pacific for IMarEST added: “Supporting the professional development of marine professionals is at the very core of what the IMarEST stands for, and this is hugely exciting news both for the IMarEST and for the Philippines. Providing world-leading access to technical content, networks, and delivering this through a local branch in Manila will boost the learning and development of Filipino seafarers. I’m hugely grateful for the support of MAAP, particularly VADM Santos and Dr Angelica Baylon, who have worked tirelessly to support this initiative as an additional development opportunity for the region.”

The IMarEST is an international membership body and learned society for all marine professionals. It is the first Institute to bring together marine engineers, marine scientists and marine technologists into one international multi-disciplinary professional body. It is the largest marine organisation of its kind with a worldwide membership of 17,000 based in 128 countries. Working with the global marine community, the IMarEST promotes the scientific development of marine engineering, science and technology, providing opportunities for the exchange of ideas and practices, and upholding the status, standards and expertise of marine professionals worldwide.
Seafarers – At Sea For All

Post your best photos of experiences and sights at sea. On board, in port or in training. Yourself, your colleagues or the work you have done whilst out at sea. AMOSUP joins the Day of the Seafarer 2016 campaign and inspire everyone with your stories of being #AtSeaForAll
"At the onset of Yolanda, it took us four days to reach affected areas."

Philippine Red Cross chairman Richard Gordon, On PRC’s experience during the strongest typhoon that ever hit land which became difficult to bring relief due to closure of airports and airports.

"We also encourage MARINA to devolve other important functions, like the officers’ licensure process, so that many seafarers need not travel to Manila."

AMOSUP assistant to the president Butch Lamug, On the continuing prospect of the shipping body’s devolving of functions following the inauguration of STCW extension office in Cebu the Union has donated to the Maritime Industry Authority.

"It’s very alarming."

MARINA administrator Dr Maximo Mejia Jr, In reference to the situation the Philippine Ship Registry is now in, with ships have fallen from more than 450 to the present 117 ships trading overseas.

"It is clear there is a pecking order onboard the ship to avoid mutiny, but it does not mean there should be no discussions and exchanges of ideas and opinions."

Stolt-Nielsen Philippines president Jane Sy, On her message to MAAP graduates of Cass 2018 that tackles about a good leader who takes others into account when making a decision.

"It doesn’t follow that the registry of a developing country must be substandard. That is an absolute fallacy."

World Maritime University lecturer Prof Proshanto Mukherjee, On the notion that there are no deficient ships in the registries of European countries.

"Without continuing efforts to promote careers at sea and improve levels of recruitment and retention, the report suggests it cannot be guaranteed that there will be an abundant supply of seafarers in the future."

International Chamber of Shipping secretary general Peter Hinchliffe, On the latest five-year BIMCO/ICS ‘Manpower Report’ which forecasts a serious future shortage in the supply of seafarers.
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SPORTS COMPLEX

MUSEO

MARINO

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