Capt. Maria Kristina Javellana

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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 Officer’s 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 Mariners Management Association of Japan, the Norwegian Seafarer’s 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.
The exponential rise in HIV infection in the Philippines, as the Department of Health confirmed, magnifies our seafarers’ vulnerability to this ailment given the unique environment on board ships that call on various ports. Our Filipino seafarers are at risk for many health hazards that include HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

It is about time that we join hands and swiftly act on this issue as an increasing percentage of those diagnosed with HIV comes from the ranks of the maritime industry.

For this reason the International Transport Workers’ Federation, the Joint Manning Group and AMOSUP took the initiative to support this wonderful and timely advocacy.

The change of mindset has to begin from us so that affected seafarers will be given an equal opportunity to serve the maritime industry. As social partners, it is good to have a unified voice in addressing the concerns and facing the challenges together with our seafarers who are suffering from this condition.

Happy Sailing Forward!

Dr Conrado F Oca
POEA revises rules governing placement of seafarers on oceangoing ships

Crew managers oppose some provisions in new POEA rules

Ventis-OSM JV: Strength, expertise shared in LNG ships’ crew management

HIV-positive seafarers to get help from Seamen’s Hospital

HIV/AIDS information for seafarers in wellbeing app

SOS reaches out to former members for unclaimed provident fund

Cruise seminar draws more participants

Dep’t of Family and Community Medicine: Gatekeeper of Union’s healthcare system

Felix Oca leads PAMI for second term

MAAP turns over senior cadets tp their respective ships

Making fleet safer prompts PH class to rebrand, expand

Quote in Action
Marinerong Pilipino joins PBA D-League

18 Turning the tide of HIV/AIDS infection in maritime sector
The launch of Positibong Marino Philippines aspires to ensure that ‘not one more’ seafarer will be afflicted of the ailment.

20 PH first female shipmaster takes the helm overseas
Capt Maria Kristina Javellana has reached the peak of her career in command of her first vessel. Andy Dalisay traces how the lady captain climbed her way up to the top of her specialty ship.
Photos from topmost clockwise: Seafarers join ‘hands on deck’ game; Mocha Girls perform one of their dance numbers; with AMOSUP members; Singer/actress Andrea Torres and Denise Barbacena join the celebration.
AMOSUP’s “Day of the Seafarer” celebration last June 2017 took a new twist and flavour. This time it blended with the participation of a team from the sports world many Filipinos are crazy about: basketball. Also, a couple of singer/actress from a local TV network and an all-female entertainment group graced the occasion with their performance numbers.

The presence of the 16-man Marinerong Pilipino Skippers basketball team, which now represents and brings prominence for the seafaring profession in the continuing PBA Developmental League (D-League), also scored the day’s programme and celebration to be cheerier and celebratory.

Maritime industry collaboration
Formed as a collaboration of sports enthusiasts in the maritime industry, the Marinero team also aims to lift the seafarers’ spirit and create camaraderie in the marine profession when they root and cheer for their own team in the league. The Skippers made its game debut in the D-League last May.

AMOSUP president Dr Conrado F Oca said the squad represents the maritime industry’s advocacies of building teamwork and unity in the first ever sector exemplification of a profession in the tournament. He has endorsed the Marinerong Pilipino as the seafaring industry’s official team in the PBA D-League.

Led by Coach Koy Banal and his brother Joel Banal, who are both veterans in the UAAP/NCAA and PBA coaching stints respectively, the Skippers joined AMOSUP officers and hundreds of union members in celebrating the Day of the Seafarer last 22 June. The union went ahead in advance of the 25th June celebration the International Maritime Organisation had designated.

The squad’s presence added flavour to the usual entertainment numbers as Coach Koy introduced each member of the team’s lineup which the crowd warmly received.

Entertainment
During the celebration, singer/actress Ms Denise Barbacena and Ms Andrea Torres performed their song numbers. But the hot all-female group Mocha Girls who rendered their much awaited performance, drew more excitement from the audience.

Programme host and ‘Yan Ang Marino’ co-anchor on PTV-4 Mariciel ‘Mare’ Yao also made the seafarers enjoy the celebration in emceeing the show with her repartees vented to the pasaway or disobedient members of the seafaring crowd. Such wordplays from Ms Yao, who is also a radio programme anchor, always elicited uproars or salvo of laughter from the audience.

AMOSUP endorses Marinerong Pilipino Skippers as the seafaring industry’s official basketball team in PBA Developmental League

‘Day of the Seafarer’ marks revelry with showbiz, sports personalities

Sailing Forward
Even Marinerong Pilipino coach Koy Banal and his team members didn’t fail to evade the witty banters and teases whilst he and the team promised that they would do “our best for our seafarers” to make it to the finals.

More cheers and glees filled AMOSUP’s celebration on the Day of the Seafarer as vacationing crews in attendance took away prizes in cash and in kind from games and raffle draws that interposed in-between portions of the programme.

IMO maritime ambassador George Hoyt also came to join the celebration. He lauded the industry’s move of establishing a team for the country’s most popular sports, saying that it would be a source of inspiration for Filipino seafarers.

Mr Hoyt, who used to play the ballgame as a forward in his younger years, also echoed the importance of teamwork in seafaring in his message to the Filipino mariners.

The theme for the 2017 Day of the Seafarer is “Seafarers Matter”. It has aimed to engage ports and seafarers centres to demonstrate how much seafarers matter to them, showcasing best practices in seafarer support and welfare.

Coach Koy Banal: ‘We represent all Filipino seafarers’

It’s now the team that may not only be playing for the sake of the squad, but for a bigger sector it represents in the ballgame.

Veteran coach Koy Banal, who returned to coaching last May by handling the Marinerong Pilipino Skippers in the PBA Developmental League (D-League), has never been so excited as this time in the business of training and coaching a team.

“We’re representing all the Filipino seafarers. Isipin mo kung gaano kadami yun, meron pang nanonood at nagchi-cheer” (Imagine how many are they including those watching and cheering for us), says Koy on the impact of the Skippers during a game.

The Marinero squad is one of the seven new groups that joined the D-League this year, completing the 11 participating teams of the 2017 PBA Foundation Cup.

Though they did not open the tryouts for the team, Koy said he generally knew the players when he had approached each of them.
them. “So from day one during the practice, I already established the system. Nagtanggal lang ng konti, (We just removed a few) that’s why we did not find it hard because I knew all the players.

The composition of the team was already there,” he explained in reference to the way they picked the Marinero lineup.

When it comes to the initial performance of the team, Koy said: “We’re getting better over the last few games,” stressing that forming a team is not an easy one.

“It’s not an overnight thing (to be established successfully). It takes time to form a winning team.” He says the key ingredient here is the chemistry, “since our players came from different schools and teams, they also have different backgrounds and personality.”

“We lost in the first game due to lack of chemistry and cohesiveness, not only in the offensive but more on defence. I and Coach Joel are defensive coaches. We’ve been in this situation so many times, and I believe we can turn things around,” he continued.

Coaches Koy and Joel have done a lot of battles in the UAAP and the PBA respectively.

Koy started as an assistant volunteer coach of his elder brother at the Mapua Institute of Technology many tournaments ago. “Then when I had my own team we separated. As we grew professionally, our trainings and other perspectives of the game got wider. But now, we’ve joined together in combined forces for the (Marinero) team.”
The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) has revised its rules and regulations governing the recruitment and employment of seafarers on oceangoing ships.

It has laid down a number of changes in the new rules with respect to manning agency’s licensing, recruitment of seafarers, recruitment violations and disciplinary actions, assistance to workers, among others, including qualifications in choosing presidential awards for the top performing manning agencies. The latest discussion the POEA carried out over a two-day orientation enabled ship managers and manning agents to be apprised of the new rules since the last revisions in 2003.

Apart from addressing employers or manning agents concerns under the revised rules, provisions affecting the seafarers have been mandated. To address employers and seafarers concerns on the changes, the government agency issued a guide in the form of “question and answer”.

To a question for the manning agency, for instance: “The required capitalisation for a private entity to qualify for a grant of a POEA licence? And how does this affect existing licence holders?”

Answers are: “Sole proprietor and partnership shall have a minimum capitalisation of PhP5 million and a minimum paid up capital of PhP5 million in case of a corporation. Those with existing licences shall, within four years from effect hereof, increase their paid up capital, as the case may be, to PhP5 million at the rate of PhP750,000 every year, according to the new rules.

**Seafarers’ part**

The POEA also lists down some of the queries and answers seafarers, for their part, may put forward about the new rules. These are as follows:

**Question:** What are the costs chargeable to the seafarers?

**Answer:** Documentation costs of all statutory requirements such as, but not limited to, passport, seafarer’s identification record book (SIRB), NBI/police, barangay clearance, seafarer’s registration certificate, and birth certificate are to be shouldered by the seafarer.
Question: What are grounds for the disciplinary action against seafarers?

Answer:
A. Pre-employment offenses:
1. Submitting, furnishing or using false information or documents or any form of misrepresentation for the purpose of job application or employment.
2. Unjustified refusal to join ship after all employment and travel documents have been duly approved by the appropriate government agencies.

B. Offenses during employment:
1. Smuggling or violation of any customs rules of the Philippines and of foreign ports such as taxable item, possession or use of prohibited drugs and other contraband, gunrunning or possession of explosives and the like, abetting or conniving with others to commit smuggling, misdeclaration of or failing to declare articles leading to their seizure and fine to the ship, misdeclaration of or failing to declare articles leading to their seizure but the ship is also not implicated. Others are possession of pornographic materials or child pornography materials leading to their confiscation and fine to the ship, and any other violation which implicates and does not implicate the ship.
2. Desertion: a) Desertion or attempting to desert b) Advising, assisting or persuading another to desert.
3. Abandoning or leaving one's post or duty without being properly relieved.
4. Leaving the ship without permission from responsible officers during or outside working hours.
5. Entrusting to others assigned duties without authority of department head.
6. Sleeping on post while on duty.
7. Insubordination: a) Any act of disobedience to lawful orders of a superior officer, b) Attempting to assault a superior officer, c) Assaulting a superior officer/other persons on business with the ship with or d) without the use of deadly weapon, e) Behaving with disrespect towards a superior officer, f) Insulting a superior officer by words or deed. g) Inciting another to commit insubordination.
8. Drunkenness: a) Drunk while on duty, b) Creating trouble on board due to intoxication c) Failure to perform assigned jobs due to intoxication.
9. Creating trouble outside the ship's premises that would unjustly implicate the ship.
10. Gambling: a) That results in fighting or any incident as to upset the harmonious relationship on board the ship b) Any other form of gambling that is not purely recreational.
11. Violation of company policies and regulations for: a) Pilferage or theft of ship's store or cargo. b) Pilferage of ship's property, of crew or passengers or other persons with business of the ship. c) Embezzlement of company funds. d) Unauthorised disposal of company ship's properties for personal gain. e) Any act of dishonesty with intention to defraud the company. f) Gross negligence and failure to observe proper storage and cargo handling procedures resulting in delay of ships and/or damage to cargo. g) Failure to observe and comply with the regulation of non-baggage shipment and acceptance of parcels on board. h) Failure to observe regulations on expiration of shore liberty. i) Being

It has laid down a number of changes in the new rules with respect to manning agency’s licensing, recruitment of seafarers, recruitment violations and disciplinary actions, assistance to workers, among others.
left behind by the ship in a foreign port without justifiable reason. j) Disorderly conduct and/or disrespect towards passengers or other persons. k) Immorality so as to cast aspersion on the good name of the ship and the company. l) Inflicting harm or injury to others.
12. Incompetence and inefficiency of a seafarer.
13. Inciting mutiny or malicious destruction of ship’s property or any activity that will hamper the efficient operation of the ship.
14. Concerted action to breach approved contracts.
15. Any activity that tends to destroy the harmonious relationship of the company.
16. Grave abuse of authority: a) (With the use of deadly weapon) resulting in harm or injury to subordinate. b) (Without the use of deadly weapon) resulting in harm or injury to subordinate. c) Any other case of abuse of authority.
17. For gross misbehaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline.
18. Gross negligence resulting in damage, loss spoilage or deterioration of the ship’s stocks and property.
19. Connivance with or coddling of a stowaway.
20. Willfully making a false statement, report, certification or document for personal gain or with intent to mislead or defraud the company or the authorities.
21. Any other case as to cast aspersion on the good name of the company and the ship. 22. Violation to observe safety and environmental rules.
23. Failure to observe the drug and alcohol policy of the company.
24. Embezzlement of monies and/or properties of a fellow worker entrusted for delivery to kin or relative in the Philippines.
25. Failure to refund the cost of his/her repatriation advanced by the principal/employer or licensed manning agency where termination of employment was due to his/her own fault as determined by a labour arbiter.

Question: **What are the grounds for the issuance of Order of preventive suspension?**

Answer: For a seafarer: a) When the evidence of guilt is strong; and b) The charge involves a serious offense.

Question: **What are the conditions for the grant of clemency to a seafarer?**

Answer: The Administration may, upon motion, grant clemency to a seafarer who is penalized with a penalty of disqualification from participation in the overseas employment programme, provided, that any of the following conditions exists: a) The respondent is a first time offender; b) The offense committed does not involve a serious offense or crime involving moral turpitude, misrepresentation or theft; c) The respondent should have served at least 75 percent of the period of penalty imposed; and d) The case has been settled/resolved with the offended party.
Crew managers and manning agents are opposing a number of provisions the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) has required in its revised rules governing the recruitment and placement of seafarers on oceangoing ships.

Most of these provisions were “copied verbatim from the newly approved Land-based rules which are clearly not applicable to the Sea-based sector because of the unique and peculiar employment practices on board a ship,” according to the Joint Manning Group (JMG).

Some of these rules include the contents on disciplinary action against principal/employer, the escrow deposit and additional deposits, and the provision on role of principal representatives.

Disabled replacement

In case of suspension of the principal or employer due to a single violation, JMG says, the manning agency won’t be able to replace and deploy shipboard personnel timely, pointing out that this will “result in the vessels incurring large losses and liabilities to the ship charterers.”

In the sea-based sector, seafarers’ employment contract range from six to nine months as against a land-based employment of at least two years. “Generally, our employers or principals maintain a number of ships employing numerous seafarers,” JMG said in a position paper submitted to DOLE Secretary Silvestre Bello III, who is also the chair of the POEA.

Under the revised rules, a principal/employer can be penalised by permanent disqualification for a single one-time, first offence.

“This will affect the rest of the ships and its seafarers as these crew get rotated on board different vessels by the same principal or employer,” JMG said.

They are now worried that the inability of the manning agent to replace the crew at inappropriate time and place due to a suspension of the principal from single violation may cripple the movement of their whole fleet.

There can be a possibility of the crew staying beyond their contracts or vessel having incomplete minimum manning complement, which JMG explains, a violation of the MLC 2006 and Flag State requirements.

The POEA legal department noted this issue and other provisions being protested by JMG during an orientation about the revised rules last May. The recent overhaul in the POEA recruitment rules follows 13 years since previous changes in 2003.
JMG now recommends its own changes to the penalties. These are: 1) increased monetary fines for first two offenses, 2) suspension on deployment of involved ships for third offense, and 3) cancellation of Principal accreditation should only be considered on extreme/serious offenses when the seafarers’ safety and welfare are placed at risk.

The industry strongly believes the financial requirement may cause employers to seek or shift their seafarers’ source to other countries such as China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Vietnam and Eastern Europe.

Moreover, MLC 2006 already requires shipowners to provide financial guarantee to protect the seafarer in case of bankruptcy, abandonment and piracy attacks. The management sector (which is supported by the Union), suggests that the rules include a provision that will allow the governing board to study the establishment of a contingency fund to protect the seafarer from the employer’s financial obligation.

On the shipowner’s representative’s role, the crew managers have requested for a clear set of guidelines under a Governing Board memo circular on the role of the foreign principal rep in the manning operation. They also request for the grant of privilege to licensed sea-based manning agents to deploy technical and marine superintendents abroad without the need for land-based licence. This can encourage foreign owners’ further employment for Filipino seafarers.
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<th>Monthly Savings (PhP)</th>
<th>Savings in 20 years (PhP)</th>
<th>Total savings with 4% Dividend Rate (PhP)</th>
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The dividend rate is based on previous years’ dividends. Actual dividends will be based on the yearly income of the Fund.

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Sample Computation of MP2 Savings:

**Monthly Remittance:**

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<th>Monthly Savings (PhP)</th>
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<th>Total Dividends Earned @ 4.5% (PhP)</th>
<th>Total Accumulated Savings in 5 Years (PhP)</th>
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**One-time Remittance:**

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The dividend rate is based on previous years’ dividends. Actual dividends will be based on the yearly income of the Fund.

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Sa Pag-IBIG, ang pinaghirapan may katuparan
The joint venture is considered as a ‘strategic manning partnership agreement’ that intends to put all ‘K’ Line LNG vessels under one roof.

The recent partnership between two crew managers in the Philippines will surely benefit Filipino seafarers who intend to pursue a career in the LNG shipping sector. Ventis Maritime Corp and OSM Crew Management joint venture accord to provide Filipino crew to “K” Line’s LNG fleet is a “win-win” situation for the seafarers and the shipowner, according to Ms Mailyn Borillo, president of OSM Maritime Services in Manila.

Apart from having more jobs for Filipino seafarers, shipowner also gains from this venture as the strength of “K” Line or Ventis in combination with OSM further boosts their merged expertise and service quality particularly for the LNG fleet, she says. Prior to the agreement OSM has been serving the manpower source of “K” Line LNG UK, whilst Ventis has been the exclusive manning agent in Manila of the Tokyo-based owner’s fleet in all types of vessels.

Ventis and OSM’s endeavour, which is considered as a “strategic manning partnership agreement” intends to put all “K” Line LNG vessels under one manning company, which is now called “K” LNG Maritime Services.

Initially, the partnership involves 10 ships – eight carriers originally manned by OSM and two from Ventis, according to Capt Wilfred Garcia. The merger expects seven new ship deliveries between this year and 2018. Within the next four years the number of “K” Line Group LNG vessels is expected to grow to about 20.

The two companies have maintained their own system of training and recruitment of officers and crew for manpower pool. “Crew source is not a problem as “K” Line is in partnership with schools through our scholarship programme or sponsorship of marine cadets as future ship officers. With this system, we develop our own officers and train the cadets on board K Line ships,” Capt Garcia points out.

When the two companies signed the ‘Strategic Manning Partnership agreement’, the managing director of “K” Line LNG Shipping (UK) Yuzuru Goto, said: “We believe this to be an excellent partnership, from a supplier with a genuine maritime heritage, understanding of industry operations and aspirations, and understanding of our corporate values and organisational culture. This gives us complete peace of mind for future compliance, dependability and, importantly for “K” Line’s, safe and environmentally responsible operations.”

For OSM, the Norwegian crew manager maintains its own training academy in Manila, apart from sourcing cadets from the scholarship programme being granted by the Norwegian Shipowners’ Association at select schools. The academy has been one of OSM’s vital assets in the development of its shipboard manpower programme in Manila, says Ms Borillo.

“We will use the normal recruitment process in vetting for the LNG crew, which is hiring the experienced one and get newly trained set of officers as well,” she stressed, citing that in those aspects where the two companies may have possessed in common in developing officers and crew.

“This development cements the strategic manning relationship between our organisations and signifies the high quality of OSM Crew Management to be selected as global manning partner and JV partner for K Line,” the company said in a statement.

OSM hails the joint venture agreement to provide crew to “K” Line’s LNG fleet as a significant milestone in the relationship between the two companies. The expansion of the partnership that the JV agreement represents shows OSM position in the growing LNG market, the company said during the accord signing. Today, OSM have a total of more than 1,000 LNG crew in the crew pool and more than 650 on board.
Seafarers can now easily access up-to-date information and guidance about HIV/AIDS on their mobile devices, thanks to a new wellbeing app launched by the ITF this week.

The free app (http://www.itfseafarers.org/seafarer-apps.cfm) is available for both Android and iOS devices. It provides the basic facts on HIV/AIDS – how it is transmitted, what the symptoms are, how you can prevent being infected and what treatment is available.

It also gives examples of workers who have challenged the stigma around the disease, and sets out what international and national rights a HIV-positive worker has.

Additionally, it separates the facts from the fiction about the disease, with 12 ‘myth busters’. For example, many people believe that a person with HIV can no longer work. The app explains that this is false – that an HIV positive person is as qualified as anyone else for any type of employment. Being infected with the virus does not alter one’s capacity to function as well as everyone else.

ITF maritime co-ordinator Jacqueline Smith said: “Seafarers – like many transport workers – are particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. We hope this app will help them understand more about the disease and be able to find information quickly and easily, whether they’re at sea, in port or at home. We want to help seafarers keep themselves and their families safe.”

Other wellbeing issues will be added to the app in due course. Download the free ITF wellbeing app now. (http://www.itfseafarers.org/seafarer-apps.cfm)

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HIV-positive seafarers to get help from Seamen’s Hospital

The newly launched group dedicated to advance employment rights of HIV-positive seafarers has established links with AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital for available medical and knowledge support.

Positibong Marino Philippines (PMPI), which held its first organisational meeting last May, also found in Seamen’s Hospital Director Dr Alejandro Ortigas the motivation for HIV-positive
seafarers to continue leading a normal life in the midst of their health condition.

“If there’s a HIV positive seafarer, let’s move on as to what we can offer to keep their health well and other requirements we can provide,” said Dr Ortigas. He has helped address some issues posed by the group during a brief attendance to the PMPI meeting at the AMOSUP Convention Hall.

PMP is the first non-government organisation that has been formally registered as a self-help and support group for HIV-positive seafarers. With the backing of ITF, affiliate unions and the Joint Manning Group, the NGO will work to defend the rights of HIV-positive seafarers who find it difficult to get employment because of their health status.

Dr Ortigas said the Hospital can provide a designated area that could shield them from their normal treatment at the service areas of the medical facility. PMP’s clinical tie-up with Seamen’s Hospital, which has branches in Cebu, Iloilo and Davao, also aims to educate seafarers by carrying out lectures and counselling activities.

PMPI chairperson Jebsen Gamido presided over the meeting. He has been HIV positive for seven years now, having got the virus before sailing for the first time as a deck cadet.

Over the years, Gamido faced so many challenges to getting employment on board ship. “That’s why I am committed to build this network in the Philippines to provide mental and legal support to all HIV-positive seafarers, irrespective of their nationality,” he said.

PMPI wants to challenge the stigma and discrimination around HIV/AIDS and fight for their rights, especially in the Philippines, where employment discrimination based on HIV status is prohibited by law. Some 80 to 100 seafarers have been positively tested for HIV that the PMP has identified. Gamido said about 20 percent of them work on board.

Turning the tide of HIV/AIDS infection in maritime sector

The launch of Positibong Marino Philippines aspires to ensure that ‘not one more’ seafarer will be afflicted of the ailment

It envisions a world without HIV/AIDS infected seafarers and a maritime industry free from stigma and discrimination of HIV-positive seafarers.

With the formal launch of Positibong Marino Philippines Inc (PMP), the Manila-based NGO wants to empower merchant seafarers worldwide in knowing their rights and to inspire others to do the same and create positive change towards HIV.

PMP empowers displaced seafarers with HIV/AIDS in upholding normal, productive life through continuous employment on board merchant ships or other maritime related endeavours by establishing a strong network, according to the group.

Launched at the AMOSUP Convention Hall last 31 May, the new organisation has been supported by stakeholders in the maritime industry such as the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), the Joint Manning Group (JMG) and AMOSUP.

Openness and acceptance
It also aims to serve as a venue of openness and acceptance of Filipino seafarers with HIV/AIDS and their families with the participation of the maritime labour and shipping industry stakeholders in raising the awareness and understanding of the ailment and other sexually transmitted diseases.

As a network of HIV-positive seafarers it will coordinate and partner with other organisations to assist Filipino seafarers in attaining proper care and management services of HIV/AIDS.

PMPI was founded by Jebsen Gamido, a licenced marine deck officer, HIV advocate and a trained trainer. His close colleagues
who experienced discrimination and stigma for employment on merchant ships have joined Jebsen in establishing the organisation.

Mr Gamido says PMPI is an empowered, collaborative support group endeavouring support to promote a coordinated and unified response and initiatives on advocacy, education and information, resource mobilization, support services among PLHIV (people living with HIV) seafarers, their affected families and the maritime industry.

“We will unify stakeholders to overcome injustices caused by exclusion of people using HIV status as standard that leads to discrimination for employment,” he says as one of the NGO’s missions.

PMPI’s core values all bound to be optimistic that can lead to “positive results, positive relationship, positive reaction, positive reinforcement and positive rejoicing,” according to the organisation’s head.

The PMPI was formed when Mr Gamido met in 2015 with ITF and AMOSUP, which supported the cause and vision of a network of HIV-positive seafarers to fight for their rights. It was registered at the SEC and exponentially grew, spearheading a change in the behaviour of the maritime industry towards HIV.

Change of mindset

“It is about time that we join hands and swiftly act on this issue as an increasing percentage of those diagnosed with the HIV ailment come from the ranks of the maritime industry,” said AMOSUP president Dr Conrado F Oca.

He said the “change of mindset must begin from us so that affected seafarers would be given an equal opportunity to serve the maritime industry,” in reference to the discrimination that has been suffered by HIV-positive seafarers in finding jobs.

“As social partners, it is good to have a unified voice in addressing the attendant concerns and face the challenges together with our seafarers suffering from the ailment,” Dr Oca said.

Stakeholders in the maritime sector and entities in HIV prevention advocacy graced the occasion with their congratulatory message in support for the PMPI launch and advocacies. They include Eduardo Manese of the JMG and Magsaysay Maritime chairman, Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific president Eduardo Ma R Santos, ITF HIV/AIDS coordinator Dr Asif Altaf, the AIDS Society of the Philippines, Pinoy Plus Association, Department of Labour and Employment and UNICEF. With the launch of the PMPI, stakeholders now push for an aspiration that not one more individual among seafarers will be afflicted by the disease.

PMPI services and activities

- Carry out advocacy for HIV prevention.
- Communication for behaviour change in ports at sea.
- Establishing a wellness centre.
- Developing an HIV module and training in maritime colleges.
- Improving quality of PDOS (pre-departure orientation seminar HIV module.
- Facilitating HIV peer education on board ships.
- Carry out knowledge, attitude, behaviour and practices survey to form the basis of sustainability plan on HIV prevention in the maritime sector.
Capt Maria Kristina Javellana has reached the peak of her career in command of her first vessel. Andy Dalisay traces how the lady captain climbed her way up to the top of her specialty ship.

She’s been the first female ship captain in the Philippines to take the helm of a merchant ship overseas. Yet as a woman shipmaster, Capt Maria Kristina Javellana has preferred to manage not just the conventional type of vessels – say, a container, dry bulk or ferry – but the more complex type: oil/chemical tanker.

As it is uncommon for a woman ship officer and rarely in men’s territory, this lady shipmaster has picked the specialised carrier as her “specialty ship” since she boarded her first vessel. “It’s been my choice ever since, because tankers have high level of safety requirements,” Maria says.

Since started sailing as a cadet in 2006 Maria has worked on oil/chem tankers that vary in sizes, from small, medium and large capacity tonnage. Compared with other type of carriers, she notes: “It’s a challenging job for those who really want to work on board a merchant ship. Because that’s where the action is.”

“We carry all sorts of chemicals from class one to the ordinary product. There are times you have to carry 30 different chemicals in one ship and you have to keep an eye on them such as the stowage, segregation, compatibility, etc,” she explains.

A tanker affair

Maria, 32, began to assume her role at the apex of her career in May this year when she embarked as a Captain of the 20,601 DWT Chembulk Gibraltar, a tanker home-ported and managed in Singapore. The Gibraltar is her second vessel to work on under her present company, V Ships-POMI. She commenced service under its US-based shipowner last September 2016 in a Chief Officer role on board the 24,404 DWT tanker Chembulk Savannah.

She seemed to have fallen in love with tankers. Maria says the affair began when she was handpicked from the training ship Kapitan Felix Oca (KFO) as a cadet and evidently moved up to work at the Norwegian tanker operator Stolt Nielsen. Stolt used to charter KFO to familiarise the cadets for their roles before deployment to the company’s ships overseas.

A product of the AMOSUP-run Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) Class of 2005, Maria initially spent the ironwork for her competency certificate on board KFO since she had no sponsored foreign shipping company. She finished the four-year course in BS Marine Transportation.

One day whilst the KFO was dropping anchor in Manila, Stolt owners’ representative Mr Bjarne Eide, who was on board observing the training ship operation, noticed how this cadet swiftly threw a mooring line. Apparently impressed how the midshipmen executed the task, Mr Eide asked the then KFO chief officer Jorge Dela Cruz, for the cadet and if Stolt could pluck the trainee for Stolt’s cadetship programme. Surprised greeted the owner’s rep upon knowing that they were recruiting a woman for their ship.
Stolt at the time had not tried to deploy yet a female cadet on their ships, which consisted mostly of oil/chem tankers. Eventually, management gave in to the idea of accommodating Maria as its first woman cadet. “They took me in as their ‘project alpha’ for an experiment of sort by the company,” says Maria.

She recalls how the crewing and training managers warned of all the dangers and risks to life and limb working on a cargo ship for a woman like her. She also had been reminded of bullying and harassment or sexual violence on board before she went into a new cadet overseas. But the future ship master responded courageously, contending that “all the hazards are part of the seafarer’s job, but that bullying and sexual harassment could be avoided.”

Maria admits that sexual harassment sometimes can be unavoidable at sea. But she seems to have learned her lessons well from mentors and colleagues. She says “shipmates may show good things on you, but the intention can be something else. Others may treat you not as favourable as they are but the intention is clean.”

Maria believes female seafarers become vulnerable to sexual harassment when they let their actions get opened to misinterpretation – how they build or establish their professional relationship on board. Female officers normally get intimidated when they’re new on the job especially when sailing with different nationalities, Maria points out. Based on her experience, she explains that there is a particular nationality who would really refuse a command coming from a female superior. “Sometimes there are those who would make things hard for you, looking after your moves if you really knew the job. They will test you if what you say is as good as in practice. You have to exert effort twice than expected just to prove if you know your job well.” Eventually Maria gained the respect of peers in the business, groping the rope to the top of a career over the last 10 years at Stolt Tankers. And her ascent to the career ladder certainly made a number of firsts in the manning industry.

**No gender issue**

At V Ships, it’s also the first time the company in Manila hired a woman ship master. The agency had female engine officers before, but she says nobody went up to the role of a female Chief Engineer or Master. However, she notes that the management made clear that gender was not an issue when she joined to work in their ships.

“Before I stepped in to V Ships as a Captain, it was a long month of discussion even from the board of directors whether they would put in place a female master,” she relates, saying: “It can’t be denied that the wealth of experience I got could be a big factor.”

Nobody influenced Maria to take up a career in shipping. She was lured into a maritime transport course when MAAP invited applicants from her secondary school at the Dona Monserrat Lopez High in Silay City to take the academy’s entrance examinations. Maria says she got inspired to pursue the course when she saw
the cadets smartly performing the martial drill and the prospect of scholarship offer during a video presentation.

She has worked on many ships since leaving the academy. However, the woman at the helm still has to find her life’s partner. Though Maria insists she had into a previous relationship, she had chosen to pursue a career over relationship. “In our case, mahirap talagang pagsabayan ang pagbabarko at bumuo ng bagong pamiliya lalo na kung babae ka.” (It’s difficult to have a career working on board ship and build your own family at the same time, especially for a woman).

She says “it will be unfair to my future partner if I can’t perform my role (as a wife or mother) when you’re always out at sea. Hindi sila puedeng magsabay talaga.” (They really don’t go along well). Maria plans to stay in command over the next few years. But once she retires from sailing, she says she wants “to establish my own business, and of course my own family at the same time.”

**“Sometimes there are those who would make things hard for you, looking after your moves if you really knew the job.”**

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**Q and A with Maria Kristina Javellana**

The first Filipina to be in command of a merchant ship joins Sailing Forward for an interview to share some of her views and experiences as a shipmaster

**Sailing Forward (SF):** How does it feel to be in command as a Master of an oil/chemical tanker for the first time?

**Maria Kristina Javellana (MKJ):** Finally! It’s exciting and at the same time very challenging. Although it seems the expectation is very high. First command will always be the most memorable one. All eyes are on you, especially that you are not just only dealing with a single department but rather you are now leading and managing your people, vessel and representing the company as well.

**SF:** Do you get intimidated as a female ship officer as you’ve assumed your highest post on board?

**MKJ:** No, because I disregard gender issues in the performance of my job. I always think of how I can be able to deliver my job as a Master and
not just as a female. The responsibility is very high, expectations are endless, work load is increasing. These are the factors that I get intimidated by in the beginning because in this position I consider myself zero (rated). I’m just starting. I still need to gain more experience and hone my knowledge and skills for this position. The first post is very exciting and also very overwhelming with mixed emotions.

**SF:** What is your most challenging experience as an officer on board a ship?

**MKJ:** Every contract on board is very challenging, because you always have to prove your worth not just as a female seafarer but rather being in that role. The most challenging is for a woman to succeed in this kind of industry. In the beginning, fellow Filipinos on board were very supportive and helpful in my role, perhaps because I am a woman. But come to think of it – I always think twice whether to accept them – you kind a feel sort of tweak each time you accept their help. Consequently you will have to continue proving yourself even if you’ve already gone up some notches in management position on board. That means you will always have to prove yourself. Sometimes, when your reputation is at stake somebody will come out to test your abilities on board.

**SF:** Have you experienced harassment at work (i.e. sexual advances, verbal or physical), and what did you do?

**MKJ:** Yes, you can’t avoid harassment or sexual advances onboard especially for us (women) since we are not famous in this kind of industry. Sexual advances, whether verbal or sort of physical will always occur in confined environment like the cargo ship and I have experienced that as well. I just came out strong to ward it off and was able to put on the boundaries. Since then I learned to carry myself in a way people will respect me not just as a woman but as a valuable part of the team on board.

**SF:** Was seafaring your future dream job?

**MKJ:** Initially I wanted to become an astronaut (seriously) but then of course at that time my family could not afford it. And I thought what course shall I take to become one (laughing). It might cost millions. When MAAP came to our (secondary) school to invite graduating seniors for the academy’s entrance examination and to be a future officer, that’s when I realised seafaring could be best suited for my personality, then I push for my goal to be in command of a ship.

**SF:** What is your most memorable experience on board a ship, and why?

**MKJ:** I always consider each of my contract as memorable one, because there are always new challenges which I’ve encountered. More surprises. Met different people and experienced different cultures. There were times I have experienced our ship being chased by the pirates. The vessel stopped in the middle of Indian Ocean due to engine breakdown. Also I had chances to see beautiful places around the world. We went to Safari Park in South Africa when I was a cadet, had a time to swim to wonderful beaches and most especially to eat local food and drinks!

**SF:** Do you think shipowners should give equal opportunity to women for shipboard employment?

**MKJ:** Yes, because gender should not be an issue when it comes to employment as long as one can deliver and perform the job. There are shipowners already giving equal opportunity to women for shipboard employment, and I do believe that for us (women seafarers) should encourage to have more shipowners like them. We’ve continuously proved our worth in this industry and that our gender should never be used as an excuse in any form for equal opportunity.
SOS reaches out to former members for unclaimed provident fund

The Singapore Organisation of Seamen sends out payout notice to seafarers for their unexpended contributions

Good news to all Filipino seafarers who had worked on board ships covered by collective agreement (CBA) with the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) from 2000 to 2012.

SOS, the island state-based maritime trade union, has announced the disbursement of its retirement scheme, which is the SOS Seafarer’s Provident Fund (SPF). It now urges members to come forward and inquire for their balances that can be withdrawn from the Fund.

The SOS SPF was a retirement savings scheme set up by the SOS in 2000 to enhance the welfare of seafaring members. It also aimed to encourage continuous employment and loyalty of seafarers.

However, the retirement scheme was terminated and discontinued in June 2012. It has set up an administration to govern the distribution of the SPF.

Since 2013 the fund manager, Seacare Thrift Private Ltd (STPL), had begun disbursing the SOS SPF monies back to members, according to SOS, which represents Singaporean ratings working on board ships covered by the Union’s CBA.

A co-affiliate of AMOSUP under the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), SOS wants to reach out to its former union members in the Philippines who had sailed on board ships from 2000 to 2012 covered by SOS CBA.

AMOSUP has nothing to do with the disbursement of the fund. The Philippine union only provides assistance to SOS in sending out information to former SOS members for their unclaimed contributions.

“AMOSUP would like to assist its affiliate union – the SOS – to reach out to seafarers or former seafarers who have been members of the SPF, particularly those who have sailed on board the ships covered by SOS CBA from 2000 to 2012,” AMOSUP said.

They may forward all inquiries on the SPF to the following email address: thrift@seacare.com.sg or the website: www.ispf.org.sg. SOS says the deadline for submission of claims and requirements is on 31 August 2019.
Cruise seminar draws more participants

This year’s workshop generated one of the largest in attendance of seafarers from different cruise lines.

The annual Cruise Seminar in the Philippines has continued to attract more participants due to variety of issues being highlighted in the workshop. Apart from its goal to educate cruise staff on board ships covered by AMOSUP’s collective agreements, the seminar also provides opportunity for relaxation and bonding among crew partakers and their respective family members during dinner.

The week-long seminar further enriches participants with relevant knowledge on seafarer’s rights and other issues affecting crewmembers on cruises.
Now on its seventh year, the week-long seminar further enriches participants with relevant knowledge on seafarer’s rights and other issues affecting crewmembers on cruises. This year’s workshop was held at the Movenpick Hotel Mactan Island in Lapu-lapu City, Cebu last 28 February-05 March 2017.

The Norwegian Seafarers’ Union (NSU) in co-operation with the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) and together with other ITF-affiliated unions such as AMOSUP, FIT-CISL amd VER. DI organise the workshop yearly. The recent forum tackled general cruise industry information, the IMO/ILO’s role in the industry, trade union awareness and information about the role of different unions, CBA training, grievance handling on board and at home, HIV/AIDS and the transport industry.

The seminar drew 90 participants for the basic workshop and 40 in the advance workshop. The Norwegian Cruise Line’s “mini-seminar” has been one of the highlights, which was attended by some 30 crewmembers. This year’s seminar generated one of the largest in attendance of seafarers from different cruise lines. Germany’s maritime union VER.DI also made their representations in the workshop.

NSU, ITF, FIT-CISL, VER.DI and AMOSUP along with renowned speakers from other organisations delivered interactive lectures. It also carried out an in-hosuse voluntary HIV test among cruise personnel. Over half of the participants this year chose to take HIV test to raise awareness of the importance regarding HIV status of the seafarers. The participants also took part in community outreach programme where they visited a children’s centre not far from the seminar venue.

The event also lined up nightly themed dinner and other activities to promote camaraderie among participants and their respective families. Everyone enjoyed the activities and the beautiful music from a local band that capped each night’s action, which proved to be a great time for leisure after each hard day’s work.

Overall, the Cruise Seminar 2017 was a huge success. It provided the participants with remarkable knowledge, experience and informations that they can apply in their succeeding embarkations.
The Department of Family and Community Medicine at AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital in Manila and Cebu have been providing great value to the delivery of health and medical services to seafarers and their dependants. Caring for Overseas Filipino Workers such as the seafarers including members of their family comprised the holistic, patient centred approach in the practise of health management that is important to the sector.

Without addressing the psycho-social issues affecting their health, it will be difficult to solve the fragmented, disease-based healthcare programme that most medical facilities are implementing. In this regard, the Department is embarking on several endeavours in helping AMOSUP achieve its mission to provide quality services to union members and their families. These are training, service program and research.

The Department looks forward to spearheading activities in the Maritime Occupational Health and Safety Fellowship Program in the advancement of research in the country as it starts collaborating with a reputable academic institution for this development.

Apart from the department’s effort in servicing members and dependants in the Seamen’s Hospital, it also renders service projects geared towards health and wellness at the AMOSUP Seamen’s Village in Dasmarinas City, Cavite. This project called Wellness and Vitality for every Seafarer’s Family (WAVES) also aims to prevent diseases through healthy lifestyle and adherence to a happy family life.
Another recent contribution of the department is the establishment of the AMOSUP MedKonek Telehealth system, which aims to recommend medical management to on-board seafarers through the use of telecommunication and digital technology 24/7 basis. Over six months of its implementation in 2016 when it was implemented, the Telehealth service was able to provide medical help to approximately 30 consults monthly and prevented life-threatening complications to most of the consults on board.

Frontline specialty

Family medicine is a specialty that is unfamiliar to many patients in our country but is well recognised as a frontline specialty of medicine in the western world, especially in the United Kingdom. The family medicine practitioner is a trained physician to competently manage a wide array of medical conditions not limited by age group, gender, and locality.

As such it is considered as the gatekeeper of many healthcare systems around the world. Other countries utilize family medicine as the cornerstone of

### SH family doctors carry out Operation Tuli’ at Seamen’s Village

Doctors from the Department of Family and Community Medicine carried out their “Operation Tuli” (Circumcision) at the Seamen’s Village in Dasmarinas City last 20 May.

The medical mission was organised through the village homeowners’ association, which took charge of the registration of participants, and Seamen’s Hospital Manila, which graciously provided the needed materials and medications. Dr. Marlene Checa, coordinator for Community Oriented Primary Care, and Dr Leilanie Nicodemus, department chair, led the medical service at the community of the seafarers and their family.

The medical activity served as a contribution of the Seamen’s Hospital’s Family Medicine Department in celebration of the World Family Doctor Day every 19 May.

In 2010, the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) declared each date of the year to highlight the role and contribution of family doctors in health care systems around the world, known as the World Family Doctor Day.

Every year, in celebration of this event and under their WAVES (Wellness and Vitality for every Seafarer’s Family) advocacy, the Department organises a surgical mission (operation tuli) at Seamen’s Village, their adopted community in Dasmarinas, Cavite.
their healthcare, making it the most efficient health system in the world because it achieved the best health indicators with minimal expenditure on health compared to a well-resourced and developed country. With the adaptation of Universal Health Care (UHC) in most countries, family medicine is growing fast especially in the ASEAN region because family medicine is needed to have a strong primary care.

In the Philippines, family medicine took its first breath in the 1960s when a group of 15 general practitioners formed the Philippine Academy of General Practitioners that became the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) in 1972. It is one of the eight recognised by law in the specialty divisions of medicine by the Philippine Medical Association and government agencies.

The family medicine practitioner is a trained physician that competently manage a wide array of medical conditions not limited by age group, gender, and locality.
Residency training program

At AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital Manila, the Department of Community and Family Medicine was created in 2009 under the vision of the late Capt Gregorio Oca to respond to the care of increasing number of patients for the growing hospital. The first step towards this vision was taken by Dr Marlene Checa who became the head of the Outpatient Department of the hospital.

Soon after, the hospital invited Dr Leilanie Nicodemus in November 2009 to create not only the foundation of the Department as a group of physicians to provide the service to the hospital, but also to establish an innovative residency training program in family and community medicine. The innovative approach enabled the existing medical consultants in the hospital to undergo training while maintaining their current practice.

The Department was able to integrate itself in the hospital system by taking an active part as the first contact physician of union members and their family seeking consult at the outpatient department and emergency department during the first year of its existence. This has been extended to other major services in the hospital such as in Surgery, Pediatrics and Medicine as well.

Through the years, the effort of the department did not end in providing efficient patient-centered medical care but brought numerous recognitions to the hospital. With the relentless efforts of the trainers, the department gained high grades, not to mention the top-three ranking as fully accredited training hospital under the PAFP on its first year of existence and maintained the high standards for the succeeding yearly accreditations for three consecutive years.

The department has been producing well calibrated resident physicians who have landed within the top 10 positions in the annual in-service examination given by the PAFP, which is an examination given to all resident physicians in their senior years all over the Philippines to gauge the quality of training being implemented. To date, its four-year residency training programme has 24 graduates who are making major contributions in the practice of the primary healthcare in the country.
Eng’r Felix M Oca has been reelected president of the Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions in February 2017. Sailing Forward gets a chance to be with the PAMI president for a ‘Q and A’ tackling key issues that face the organisation and the country’s maritime education and training (MET)

Sailing Forward: How is PAMI as an organisation?

Felix M Oca: PAMI has been very strong since its creation in the 1960s. The membership is increasing and most of the activities are well attended. Our recent general assembly last February was held in Malayan Colleges Laguna in Cabuyao with the DOTr secretary (Arthur Tugade) as our keynote speaker. We just also had a consultative workshop where we submitted to CHED an 11-point position that Congress was asking for shipboard training following the Starlite Atlantic accident where 11 marine cadets died. Our finances are a little bit up. We were able to hire additional staff, replace some of the old (office) equipment. We’ve been working hard to get back the services to the members.

SF: What is your assessment of the state of the country’s maritime education and training (MET)?

FMO: We are always catching up. We may not be on a par with other countries, but we are advancing or even ahead with others in the region. In Indonesia for instance, they are hiring more Filipinos to teach for their maritime higher education institutions (MHEI).

There have been a lot of changes in MHEI in the Philippines. In 2012, CHED came out with a memorandum order that requires schools to shift their curriculum from content-based to outcomes-based education. This comes closer to the competency based.

Outcomes-based is similar to competency (-based) required under the STCW (Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping Convention). There was then a lot of academic passers, but cannot be accepted in the shipping industry. From 2014 when the CHED changed the curriculum many of the schools failed to adopt immediately. You know how it is. The hard thing to do is to accept the change and adapt to change. You always want to follow what is comfortable especially those in their comfort zones.

But little by little many schools are trying to change now. It’s been three years after the first curriculum came out. There’s still some resistance, but slowly it’s diminishing and we’re moving forward as an organisation.

SF: Despite this situation, are we doing good in the field of MET?

FMO: One thing for sure is that the MET institutions are trying hard without the support of government. The major issue is shipboard training. It’s good to produce a lot of graduates, but the question is why produce them if there is no available berth.

Foreign shipping companies can only accommodate some 4,000 to 6,000 a year. The domestic fleet can only have 8,000 yearly. And how many graduates take the certification exams at MARINA? It won’t reach 10,000, I believe for the OIC. But the passing (rate) is good. Most of those who take the certification exam at least have good percentage passing in the MARINA licensure exam, which brings to question whether it’s okay compared with the Professional Regulations Commission’s (before MARINA took over the marine licensure examinations). They (PRC) only had 40% to 50% passers. Now it’s a little bit better. The schools are confident that they are doing it right. The only problem is that we could not graduate many because they do not have shipboard training and take the exam for certification.

SF: What could be the thrust of current PAMI leadership towards quality maritime education?

FMO: If you take a look, one of the major problems is the quality of the faculty as to how they can shift their method of teaching and educate the millennial nowadays. The students before were not the same as now, so faculty development in the teaching process is not anymore the ‘teacher’ but the ‘learner’ themselves. Are they learning? Can they perform what you want them to do once evaluated at the end of the program or course? That’s why the shift to outcomes-based will show you the kind of students you have based on their skills such as research, communication ability, and teamwork in multicultural setting.

PAMI has been working with CHED to develop workshop skills in its curriculum based on the outcomes-based education, and may include faculty development in the future. IMMAJ (International Maritime Management Association of Japan), through PAMI, is also assisting in courses in faculty upgrading courses. They also would like to establish new courses that will change the style of existing faculty to our millennial for effective learning process. I think we need more than five years to change the quality of MHEI.

SF: What are the challenges PAMI members face to achieve the goals of quality MET?
First and foremost is finances. Some schools may not be able to raise their tuition fee because they cater to CDE sector of our society. This sector won’t be able to pay the cost of say, PhP100,000 for a semester. MHEI charges between PhP70,000 to PhP100,000. They need to cope with procurement of equipment, facilities, hire better qualified teachers. Next is the lack of support from government in terms of shipboard training, tax incentives in the procurement of equipment, among others.

The other challenge is this mindset of government that all MHEIs operate just for profit. This bias doesn’t help because many of our members are making an effort to improve their equipment and facilities, improve ratio of teacher-student capacity, sending faculty members for training. And these involve finances.

SF: Is shortening the period of study in BS Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering courses a solution to catch up with availability of ship officers and crew? How and why?

FMO: No. I always ask these to my members. Why is it that our students after three years of education and training are not being accepted (to work)? So it is still (a question of) the quality of education and training? If we want to produce them to become PAMI has been working with CHED to develop workshop skills in its curriculum based on the outcomes-based education, and may include faculty development in the future.
capable of the jobs on board ships, there is the outcomes-based as the first step really. And if the schools can accomplish this we will be able to meet their needs. We can actually deliver what is needed and the surplus can go to the domestic.

And the domestic fleet will do better. Closing the schools is not the solution. The solution is to uplift the condition of the schools based on standards. MARINA should do better too by improving their assessment and monitoring system for the schools.

between MHEI and CHED, but MARINA and MHEI. MARINA does the inspection and monitoring. Unfortunately it’s CHED that receives the lawsuits. By law, the single administration thing is supposed to be an oversight (role) with regards to MHEI.

CHED still runs everything. By means of oversight you monitor CHED not the MHEI. But in the IIR (Implementing Rules and Regulations) they put many things. In my opinion MARINA obtained a lot of responsibilities when they are not ready yet. If you have people that don’t understand MHEI vis-à-vis training centres, which are two different things, you’ll face complaints and lawsuits. And that’s what happened. When it was only CHED it was more controlled, less friction. But when MARINA took over, everything came in shambles. All of the schools are complaining. And cases have been filed against MARINA.

The MHEI that are not performing to standards will be left behind and will be forced to close their (maritime) programs.

SF: How did maritime institutions get affected by MARINA’s “single administration” role over STCW-certification related enforcement?

FMO: Honestly, we need to deal only with one (agency in government). The conflict is not started yet.

FMO: Honestly, we need to deal only with one (agency in government). The conflict is not started yet.

SF: What was PAMI leadership’s reaction to the recent EMSA (European Maritime Safety Agency) audit of maritime schools?

FMO: Well, there were only two schools visited in last EMSA audit – these are the Malayan Colleges Laguna and University of Cebu. They just found out that one of the major issues is that the quality system is not being implemented properly, especially in the monitoring for most schools.

This despite their documents like the CMO (CHED memo order) and MC (memo circular). EMSA just tried to see how MARINA does its job. Maybe there’ll be a shift in what MARINA might look into when they visit the schools in the next round (of audit). And we are insisting for a meeting between MARINA and CHED so that there’ll be same interpretation of things. But that was never done because they don’t want to hear anything from us. However, the MARINA administrator insisted, otherwise they’ll face more lawsuits before the Ombudsman.
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.
Page 38-39 photos from top clockwise:
Graduates of MAAP Class 2017 toss caps in the air; DOLE secretary Silvestre Bello III congratulates one of the graduates; the secretary plants his tree upon arrival at the MAAP campus whilst former secretary Bienvenido Laguesma and MAAP president Eduardo Ma R Santos look on
MAAP turns over senior cadets to their respective ships

A total of 150 midshipmen who obtained their bachelor’s degrees in Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering march the field to receive their diplomas.

The Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) has once again ushered in the turnover of a new batch of its graduates to the world merchant marine fleet following a commencement exercises last 23 May 2017.

A total of 150 senior cadets who obtained their bachelor’s degrees in Marine Transportation and Marine Engineering received the academy’s “quality seal of assurance” for their fresh roles on board merchant ships.

Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE) secretary Silvestre Bello III, the graduation rites guest-of-honour and speaker, said he was “privileged to share the honour of the day with all of you and the grateful Filipino families, whose sons and daughters shall have secured themselves a progressive future through MAAP.”

The MAAP graduates of Class 2017 consisted of 146 men and four women that produced two
finishers with Latin honours of magna cum laude and four cum laude.

The DOLE secretary noted how privileged the cadets are for having assured of employment for each graduate when they embark to assume their new roles on board ships of their sponsored shipping companies.

Some owner’s representatives and crew managers from different foreign shipping companies were present to witness their respective future fleet officers receiving their diplomas.

In many graduation ceremonies, Secretary Bello said, students are excited to graduate but anxious at the same time because they fear the thought of unavailable job offers and end up unemployed. “This academy resolves this problem by ensuring gainful employment for every graduate,” he stressed, saying that the institution also ensures a “viable pool of highly qualified seafarers” for the world fleet.

The growing number of applicants and classes undergoing training in the academy attests to the aspiration of more Filipino youth today to have better lives through maritime education. This is in combination by the fact that the country still possessed the strong advantage of having the main source of marine manpower for the world fleet.

“Indeed, this continuing demand for skilled and competent seafarers proves that MAAP is relevant and responsive to the training needs of maritime professional in the country,” Mr Bello pointed out.

Statistics show that one in every three of the 1.2 million personnel on board vessels of every flag in the world is a Filipino, he continued, citing that some of these personnel are graduates of the institution. “This figure from our Labour Department shows that MAAP is responsive in addressing the mounting demand for highly qualified seafarers.”
The business of maritime safety – which pertains to the welfare of passengers and crew, the ship and its cargo, including the environment – is of paramount importance to the seaborne trade.

To achieve this goal, shipowners and operators are bound to enforce the primary requirements of proper maintenance of their respective fleet. At the end of the day, proper maintenance would result to better profitability.

This is how the country’s first and largest domestic classification society, the Philippine Register of Shipping (PRS), views its game-changing move when it embarked on to re-brand and expand its services to support the goals of safer shipping and increase clients from the growing domestic fleet.

“Safe seas always” has become its response to the changing maritime environment in the Philippines and the call for safer ships. “Since last year, we have renovated our Manila and Cebu offices and moved to strategic locations for our shipping clients in Luzon and the Visayas,” said incumbent PRS president, Mr William Hernandez. Mr Hernandez also chairs the Board of Examiners of the Professional Regulations Commission for Naval Architecture. It also opened an office in General Santos City in Mindanao, which is a major fishing and gateway port to the south of the Philippines.

PRS now has more than 500,000 in gross tonnage of all types of merchant ships trading in the domestic route under its class, from the largest ro-ro passenger ferries and double-hulled tankers, to the most modern container vessels and to the latest passenger ferries with stabilised mono-hull.

QA and tech services

To expand its services the class society has established subsidiary companies, the PRS Quality Assurance (PRS QA), which promotes PRS advocacy in providing reliable and high quality certification services to support the industry’s thrust for continuous improvement and risk management, thus improving any company’s bottom line.

It has also set up the PRS Technical Services (PRS Tech) as a reliable and independent marine consultancy company that offers high quality technical services focused on all types of marine structures like ships, offshore units and ports.

Moreover, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) has enforced the rules on partition and damage stability requirements for Philippine-registered ships. This imposition outlines the requirements of IMO SOLAS provisions that are based on the probabilistic concept, using the probability of survival as measured of ships’ safety in a damaged condition.

Mr Hernandez says the implementation of these rules required powerful analytic tools to assist MARINA in reviewing the expected submissions for approval of ‘probabilistic damage stability’ calculations from shipping companies.

PRS is a non-stock non-profit organisation set up in June 1989 whose genuine intention was to promote safety of life at sea. It is the first and only Filipino classification society at the time, until MARINA deregulated the sector by accrediting other local class.
To date, PRS has evolved into an organisation that provides classification services comparable to International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) standards, but at a more economical scale. “Our team of exclusive surveyors are on constant training to equip them with the knowledge on prevailing SOLAS, MARPOL, STCW and other IMO standards,” according to Mr Hernandez.

PRS also has a technical committee and a classification committee consisting of professionals from the shipyards, shipowners, shipmanagers, and the flag state. Mr Hernandez stressed that there’s a strong push at present to strengthen the maritime safety regime in the Philippines, especially with the re-issuance of a MARINA circular that benchmarks best practices with other maritime nations like Japan and China, which may lead to a similar Philippine government single class as in other countries (i.e. NK, CCS, ABS, LR and others).

**Challenges**

However, PRS says advancing the cause of a safe domestic shipping fleet has its challenges. First is the need to reinforce with shipowners the concern of proper maintenance of their respective vessels. Second is the cutthroat competition that the other domestic classification societies are employing.

Mr Hernandez says “table-top surveys” are being carried out and certificate issued at bargain prices. This means class certificates are being issued without conducting any inspection to determine the actual condition of the vessel.

Vessels at a very dismal condition and considered no longer fit for intended purpose are being given full term certificates without any recommendation or any repairs needed to be done.

Thirdly, the flag state should take a firmer action on promulgating its rules that institutionalise two class entities (one is Philippine Government class and the other is the “single” class for vessels outside the scope of government). This is crucial to prevent the unacceptable business practices that the other domestic classification societies are doing.
“The schools are confident that they are doing it right. The only problem is that we could not graduate many because they do not have shipboard training…”

PAMI president Felix Oca, On the assessment of the state of the country’s maritime education and training

“V Ships-POMI shipmaster Capt Maria Kristina Javellana, On her choice of tanker as a specialty ship as a merchant marine officer over the last many years

“It’s a challenging job for those who really want to work on board a merchant ship.”

OSM Maritime Services president Mailyn Borillo, On the recent partnership between the two crew managers to put the Japanese owner’s LNG fleet under one roof

“We will unify stakeholders to overcome injustices caused by exclusion of people using HIV status as standard that leads to discrimination for employment.”

Dole secretary Silvestre Bello III, On unavailable job offers other new graduates are anxious about, but not for the finishers of Class 2017 at the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific

“Ventis and OSM joint venture accord to provide Filipino crew to “K” Line’s LNG fleet is a ‘win-win’ situation for the seafarers and the shipowner.”

Marinerong Pilipino Skippers Coach Koy Banal, On the formation and initial performance of the team for the PBA Developmental League

“Ventis and OSM joint venture accord to provide Filipino crew to “K” Line’s LNG fleet is a ‘win-win’ situation for the seafarers and the shipowner.”

Pamibong Marino Filipinos founder Jebsen Gamido, On one of the goals in establishing the new NGO

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