AMOSUP-MAAP’s pride:
PH first female chief engineer,
Nina Sue M Da Silva p14
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MARITIME MUSEUM & SPORTS COMPLEX

SPORTS COMPLEX

MUSEO

MARINO

814 J. Nakpil corner P. Hidalgo Lim Streets, Malate, Manila
Telephone: +632 353 8180 E-Mail: museomarino@yahoo.com
We are proud to see one of our very own MAAP alumni gracing the cover of this issue. As the first Filipina chief engineer to have served on board merchant ships overseas, Nira has shown that the maritime profession is no longer the preserve of the opposite sex. Men have their places of work on ships, so as women do now.

Scaling the engine rooms of various types of vessels like containerships and bulk carriers that are men’s former domain, Nina’s working achievement even comes on a par with those of her male counterpart in the marine engineering profession. Her years of experience which honed her technical and leadership skills until she reached her position were tough, though. Yet, she can serve as an inspiration among young women who want to pursue a career at sea.

Women seafarers remain rare in the industry as they comprise only 2% of the maritime workforce, mainly serving on cruise ships and ferries. And their low number makes women subject to discrimination and harassment. But it can only be a matter of time when the gender issue is no longer a big fuss in shipping as more women start to fill various positions on board.

Our alumna’s experience attests to an exciting and rewarding career for women in the maritime sector. AMOSUP’s collective agreements jointly with foreign unions have seen a number of women crewmembers starting to move up over the years. And as an apparent support to the shipping industry’s call to provide more opportunities for women, the Union has encouraged MAAP to increase the admission of female cadets each year.

On other matters, this issue also highlights a number of activities related to our ‘maiasakit’ agenda for our seafarers and their dependants in various service branches of the Union as we celebrate our 55th anniversary this year. Over the last several months, we have almost completed performing the following themes, to wit: Malasakit para sa pamilya at the Seamen’s Village in Dasmarinas in Cavite, Malasakit sa Pagasasama in Iloilo, Malasakit Para sa Kabuhayan in Davao, Malasakit Para sa Kabataan at MAAP in Mariveles, Bataan and Malasakit sa Kalikasan in Cebu City.

This queue of activities not only forms as a host of symbolic gestures, but as part of our initiatives in providing care and attention to our members and to the core values of significance to all of us in the union. From marriage renewal vows to family bond and from livelihood undertaking to caring for Mother Earth, our seafaring members have been delighted to note that there is a Union taking care of them and their families.

Happy Sailing Forward!

Dr. Conrado F. Oca

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AMOSUP celebrates Day of the Seafarer

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The inclusion of the module is a groundbreaking development in cadet training as part of a global drive to build knowledge on sexually transmitted diseases in major crew supply countries.

HIV/AIDS: Myths and Facts

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) have been shrouded in myths and misconceptions. In some cases, these mistaken ideas have prompted the very behaviors that cause more people to become HIV-positive.

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Nina Sue M Da Silva, the first female chief engineer of the Philippines
Photo: Joanne Lynn Jayme
Make up: Carmela Lacson

Sailing Forward
AMOSUP Celebrates
Day of the SEAFARER

Geared up to honour the unsung heroes of shipping, the Union marks the occasion with its own form of entertainment to enjoy the event.

It’s party time once again for Filipino mariners who celebrated a day especially marked as their own: the ‘Day of the Seafarer.’

AMOSUP, which joins the IMO in celebrating the occasion every 25th of June, held a mini-concert for members. Hundreds of union members had enjoyed the performance of the all-female entertainment group ‘Allure’ at the Union’s Convention Hall in Intramuros, Manila.

AMOSUP president, Dr. Conrado F. Ora said: “We’ve traditionally celebrated this special day to thank our seafarers for the vital role they play in operating the ships that bring goods and commodities to our shores.

It’s one of our own ways to appreciate their valuable contributions because without them the world economy will ground to a halt.”

The programme was opened by a stand-up comedian who began entertaining the seafaring crowd.

Duterte politics

Food and drinks were served prior to the show. The show was also graced by the arrival of Davao mayor and potential presidential aspirant Rodrigo Duterte, who spoke about what he did to his
“It’s one of our own ways to appreciate their valuable contributions because without them the world economy will ground to a halt.”

hometown to become the most peaceful cities on earth. Filipino seafarers listened to Duterte’s politics whose reasoning goes like this: Fight corruption and ensure peace and order at all cost to hasten economic development.

To the roaring applause from the audience, Duterte presented his type of leadership that is anchored on vigilant justice. He avoided any declaration though of any presidential ambitions and intentions. Saying he is unqualified to become one, he seems to be waiting for the political groundswell to announce his run for the presidency in 2016.
AMOSUP members and employees were visibly receptive to Duterte’s discourse as he was mobbed for photo opportunities after his almost two-hour appearance.

The programme’s finale gave way to a raffle draw in which lucky union members won valuable prizes such as TV sets and cell phones, which capped this day’s event.

Career at sea

The IMO this year geared up for the ‘Day of the Seafarer’ to celebrate the unsung heroes of shipping across the globe, with the theme: A Career at Sea. It aims to help the predicted shortage of seafarers in the future by promoting and highlighting the positive benefits of choosing a career at sea.

In particular, the campaign has focused on encouraging young people to consider seafaring and other maritime professions when making choices concerning their careers or their further education.

The IMO said the campaign also showed that seafaring is a “viable...

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The IMO this year geared up for the ‘Day of the Seafarer’ to celebrate the unsung heroes of shipping across the globe on IMO’s new “Photo Wall”, a webpage which invites people to upload photos of their time at sea.

The result has become a visually exciting page of montaged photos from around the globe (including seascapes, “selfies”, scenes of life on deck/in port etc...).

As in previous years, it highly encouraged the use of social media.
AMOSUP got shortlisted by the International Seafarers’ Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) Awards 2015 in one of its categories: the Dierk Lindemann Welfare Personality of the Year (for Organisations).

AMOSUP VP Capt Felix I Rebuttes (pictured, left, representing President Dr Conrado F Oca) received the certificate from IMO secretary general Koji Sekimizu and ISWAN executive director Roger Harris during a ceremony highlighting the Day of the Seafarer at the IMO headquarters in London on 25 June.

ISWAN welfare awards, which are now in its fifth year, acknowledges those who go out of their way to promote the dignity and wellbeing of seafarers all over the world – hoping to inspire others to make greater efforts to make seafarers’ lives better. The awarding ceremony follows the IMC’s 95th session of the Maritime Safety Committee, which Capt Rebuttes was also in attendance representing AMOSUP.
Maritime academies
to conduct HIV training

The inclusion of the module is a groundbreaking development in cadet training as part of a global drive to build knowledge on sexually transmitted diseases in major crew supply countries.

Philippine maritime schools have agreed to implement the ITF’s HIV module for seafarers as part of an effort to educate their cadets about the sexually transmitted disease.

AMOSUP and ITF, which recently met members of Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions (PAMI), also listened to a number of suggestions to enforce the module in their curriculums. They include measures that range from monitoring the effectiveness of the HIV training to retaining afflicted students in schools.

The unions expect the developments to have 80 percent of all marine cadets graduating from the Philippines will have received in-depth training in HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

“We are trying to find ways and means to spread awareness on HIV, focusing on education and letting our students learn the importance of prevention,” said VAdm Eduardo Ma H Santos (AFP, ret), AMOSUP EVP who facilitated the meeting last 02 July.

A proposal has been forwarded to include the module as a separate subject in the school curriculum. “If the institution finds that there’s a
need to offer it as a required course, CHED is open to support the course as a requirement," according to a participant.

It means that before they graduate and go on board ship, all cadets will now have extensive information on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, as well as their right, should they become positive.

PAMl participants see the module as already containing important topics that will be dealt with pertaining to prevention. One significant aspect needed is how to maintain the student in the academy if he or she has already HIV/AIDS. "At the same time we do not have to deny enrolment for students who have HIV/AIDS, but they should be properly informed."

The inclusion of the ITF module on the prevention of HIV/AIDS will be a groundbreaking development in maritime cadet training in the Asia Pacific region, as part of the federation’s global drive to build knowledge in all the major seafarer supply countries.

The ITF said recent survey has confirmed other studies that seafarers have lower levels of knowledge about HIV transmissions and risk factors. "The seafarer inhabits a unique world on board ship but is still shaped by his or her society and connected with the outside world."

It said that "seafarers are highly mobile, predominantly male, workers of sexually active age, who are away from home for long periods and who frequent port areas where there are often many sex workers. These working conditions encourage high-risk behaviour and may make it harder for seafarers to access information about HIV prevention, medical and related services."

(continued to page 13)
What it's like to live with HIV/AIDS: Myths and Facts

Having HIV Means You Have AIDS

Myth. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that destroys the body’s CD4 immune cells, which help fight disease. With the right medications, you can have HIV for years or decades without HIV progressing to AIDS. AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is diagnosed when you have HIV as well as certain opportunistic infections or your CD4 cell count drops below 200.

It's Difficult to Get HIV From Casual Contact

Fact. You can't catch or spread HIV from hugging someone, using the same towel, or sharing the same glass. It's very rare to get HIV from a blood transfusion -- the U.S. blood supply is carefully tested. However, you can spread the disease from having unprotected sex, sharing needles, or getting a tattoo from unsterilized equipment.

You Have Just a Few Years to Live

Myth. The truth is that many people live for decades with HIV or AIDS and have a normal or near normal life span. You can help prevent HIV from progressing to AIDS by seeing your doctor regularly and following your doctor's guidance.

You'll Know You Have HIV Because of Your Symptoms

Myth. Some people don't show any signs of HIV for years after being infected. Many can have some symptoms within 10 days to a few weeks after infection. These first symptoms are similar to the flu or mononucleosis and may include fever, fatigue, rash, and sore throat. They usually disappear after a few weeks and you may not have symptoms again for several years. The only way to tell you have HIV is to get tested.

HIV Can Be Cured

Myth. At this time, there is no cure for HIV in most cases, but treatment can keep virus levels low and help maintain your immune system. Some drugs interfere with proteins HIV needs to copy itself; others block the virus from entering or inserting its genetic material into your immune cells. Your doctor will consider your general health, the health of your immune system, and the amount of virus in your body to decide when to start treatment.

Anyone Can Get HIV

Fact. About 50,000 people in the U.S. get HIV each year, and 15,500 people with AIDS die each year. Anyone can get HIV -- men, women, and children, people who are gay or straight. Men who have sex with men make up about 29,000 new HIV infections each year. Women account for over 8,000 new infections. African-Americans continue to experience the most severe burden of HIV, compared with other races and ethnicities.

Sex Is Safe When Both Partners Have HIV

Myth. Just because you and your partner both have HIV, doesn't mean you should forget about protection when having sex. Using a condom or other latex barrier can help protect you from other sexually transmitted diseases as well as other strains of HIV, which may be resistant to anti-HIV medication. Even if you are being treated and feel well you can still infect others.

You Can Have a Baby if You Are HIV-Positive

Fact. Infected mothers can indeed pass HIV to their babies during pregnancy or delivery. However, you can lower the risk by working with your doctor and getting the appropriate care and medication. Pregnant women with HIV can take medications to treat their infection and to help protect their babies against the virus.

You Can't Avoid Other HIV-Related Infections

Myth. Due to weakened immune systems, people with HIV can be vulnerable to infections like pneumocystis pneumonia, tuberculosis, candidiasis, cytomegalovirus, and toxoplasmosis. The best way to reduce the risk is to take your HIV medications. Some infections can be prevented with drugs. You can lessen exposure to some germs by avoiding undercooked meat, litter boxes, and water that may be contaminated.

You Can't Get Lifesaving Drugs Without Insurance

Myth. There are government programs, nonprofit groups, and some pharmaceutical companies that may help cover the cost of HIV/AIDS drugs. Be aware: These drug “cocktails” can vary in cost a year. Talk to your local HIV/AIDS service organization to learn about financial help. (Information culled from WebMD, a leading provider of health information services)

http://www.webmd.com/hiv-aids/staying-healthy-10/slideshow-hiv-myths-facts
The planned implementation of the programme follows a successful pilot with the AMOSUP-managed Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, which launched the module early this year.

PAMI members will work with AMOSUP and ITF, who will provide technical support in incorporating a comprehensive HIV/AIDS and STI module in their curriculums. PAMI, which represents 80 of the country’s marine academies, expects the module to be introduced in all the academies.

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**TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

To help seafarers comply with the certification requirements (Revalidation of COP for Basic Safety Training) under the 2010 STCW Amendments that will be fully enforced starting 1 January 2017, the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), through the AMOSUP Seamen’s Training Center (ASTC) will conduct the one-day BT updating and two-day Refresher Training at its facilities in Baranggay Alas-Asin, Mariveles, Bataan starting 10 August 2015 up to the end of October 2015 with the following Terms and Conditions:

For AMOSUP Member

- MAAP will provide free transportation from Manila Yatch Club (Beside Philippine Navy Headquarters, Roxas Boulevard) using the MAAP Ferry for the one hour and 45 minutes travel to MAAP
- Free cost of Facilitators’ and Assessors’ Fee
- Free cost of Lodging

Costs:
- Board for 3 Days - PhP 630.00
- Consumables - PhP 545.00
- COP Fee and Documentary Stamps (PhP 225.00 each for the refresher and updating course) - PhP 450.00
- Total: PhP 1,625.00 per student

For Non-AMOSUP Member

An additional fee of PhP 1,100 per student to cover the cost of lodging for Three (3) Days, Facilitator and Assessor Fee and maintenance cost of equipment.

Interested seafarers can call up to the following numbers for reservation (First come-First serve Basis) and Scheduling:

MAAP Satellite Office, Intramuros - 527-2110 (Ms. Anna or Ms. Miriam)
MAAP ASTC - 784-9100 Local 4041/4042 (Ms. Amira or Ms. Gina)

Requirements:
- Valid Medical Certificate for at least Six (6) Months
- Latest BT COP
- SIRB indicating at least 12 Months seagoing requirements for the last 60 Months

Avoid the rush! Be compliant to ensure continuous employment. Avail of this generous program offered by AMOSUP! Call us now!
C/E Nina Sue Da Silva: Beating the odds of a sea career

Chief Eng’r Nina Sue Da Silva recounts some of her rare experiences on board and the pursuit of an alternative job after a career at sea. Andy Dalisay writes

She’s dubbed as the first Filipino female marine engineer to have served on board merchant ships overseas. Yet with such rarity, Nina Sue M. Da Silva never escaped to have been discriminated and sexually harassed or bullied as many women seafarers have suffered in pursuing a career in the male-dominated profession.

Nina boarded her first vessel as an apprentice mate after completing her BS in Marine Engineering in 2003 at the AMOSUP-managed Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), where the union sponsored her course. But despite her education and training, she had a hard time finding an employer as shipping companies would not want to employ female cadets on their ships, albeit endorsed by the academy.

She spent almost six months applying to different manning agencies to have her accommodated on one of their ships. Nina says more than 120 agencies landed in her list of companies that she had applied to and was rejected from. Finally on the 124th company as she counted, a ship management firm took her as a cadet engineer in one of their managed ships, a Japanese-owned 105,000dwt bulk carrier.

Breakthrough on board

That was the first time this company in Japan took in a female engine cadet in the international trade, she says. Though, the Japanese shipping firm had been employing women crew only within Japan’s coastal trade. And Nina felt so happy and excited that she would be finally sailing on her first job.
She recalls that former AMOSUP president Capt Greg S Oca also expressed surprise and congratulated her. “Capt Oca had asked me as to how did I convince the Japanese principal despite the bias by the owner against employing women. I told Capt Oca: ‘I just answered all the questions the shipowner asked me’. She was the only one who passed among four female candidates who underwent interviews before a panel of 10 shipowners.

Nina seemed not a stranger to hurdling discrimination for her maritime career. In fact when she entered the academy, the lady cadet was asked to shift from her choice of BS in Marine Engineering to Marine Transportation because the sponsoring company preferred women officers only for deck or navigation, not engineering.

Determined to stick to her chosen course in the academy, Nina refused to change her decision. “So I didn’t have a company as a sponsor for my marine engineering course, but AMOSUP supported me until I graduated,” stresses Nina. A Dean’s Lister in the top 10, she was one of the four female cadets who graduated in their batch of 127 marine cadets at MAAP in July 2003.

Nina worked in her first job well, and got promoted to 4th Engineer after a month on board. She further levelled up as a Superintendent for a ship being built by the same company’s own shipyard in Japan. However, she did not stay long in her land-based job as she opted to sail again with another ship under a new company.

Jealousy and other unforgettable incidents

On board the ship, Nina says cooperating with other officers and crew sometimes even makes harder than performing the actual work. “I have to make sure that I treat them equally to avoid misinterpreting any actions I make both with Filipino and mixed nationality crews.”

More often the only woman, she says Filipinos onboard are sometimes more jealous than their foreign counterpart as Nina observed after
being offered even with small things. “At break time for instance, you need to be careful in accepting a glass of soft drink when offered by the first guy as it might be interpreted that you preferred him to be your boyfriend over my next colleague who incidentally offers similar drink,” explains Nina.

More so at work where she wouldn’t want to get any help if she can do the job by herself. “I really show them that I am capable (of my job). I know it’s a man’s world, but I always show them that I can do the same thing that men normally do,” she insists.

Nina considers her experience with a former colleague, her Russian chief engineer who nearly punched her, as one of the challenging encounters she has yet experienced on board. She was then a 2nd Engineer and on duty when an incident occurred as their ship was manoeuvring. While attending to the main engine as the duty engineer, she was also being pressed to do another task for the maintenance side. Since she questioned the new task, her manager made his way to bullying her instead of acknowledging the task at hand.

“He wanted me to go back and forth between decks, performing the role of a maintenance and duty engineer,” she points out. As per company’s SMS (Safety Management System), she says, the duty engineer of maintenance work. So she refused the command. Then after the next alarm, signalling her for the other task in question, she hastily ran down and confronted the bullying boss. The confrontation not only resulted in heated argument, but the 6ft-4 Russian physically held and lifted her up like a kid, threatening to punch her.

But she was quick to counter, exclaiming: “OK hit me, and I will make sure that this will be the end of your career.” Nina swore that she utterly knew her rights, insisting to the mugger that he would be arrested at the next port. She says her superior’s face blushed as if bothered, and motioned to put her down. She reported the incident to

“I really show them that I am capable (of my job). I know it’s a man’s world, but I always show them that I can do the same thing that men normally do,”
their British Captain. She didn’t know what sanction the master gave though, but the offender apologised and they went along well after the scuffle.

Nina can’t also forget her encounter with another colleague who mistook her for getting into some promiscuous activity onboard. To her surprise, she was approached by a co-worker, a Danish ship officer, asking for a “paid one-night stand for sex,” she articulates.

The incident, she says, stemmed from a fellow female crewmember that had a reputation of having a number of sexual encounters with other shipmates. “And they thought all female crews are like that,” she says, adding that she had been pestered for sex, prompting her to approach the ship master to stop such a nuisance.

Not a career choice

Marine engineering was not Nina’s original choice of a career, but law. But since her parents could not afford to send her to college, Nina asserts, she had to scout for a scholarship grant that would fund her way to a degree course after finishing secondary school at the University of San Carlos-Girls High School in Cebu City.
She found MAAP and took the entrance examination in AMOSUP Seamen’s Hospital Cebu. She passed the exam. “In the academy, I learned to love my course that became my stepping stone for my career,” admits Nina, who obtained her chief engineer ticket from the MARINA Marine Engineering Board in April this year.

Not about to immediately go back to work on board, the 33-year old mother of two – a three-year old boy and a one-year old girl -- prefers to take care of her young ones for now. And while on vacation, Nina has opted to head the Marine Engineering Department at the University of the Visayas for two semesters.

At present, she also works as a consultant and review instructor to Cebu Gems Innovation and Career Development Center as well as training instructor and assessor to New Simulator of the Philippines training centre for seafarers in her hometown Cebu City. Nina conducts management level courses and basic safety courses. When on vacation, she makes sure that she can find an alternative shore-based job so that she can prepare herself for a new career once she stops sailing. Nina believes that one never stops learning in her profession.

The Chief Engineer says she has rounded up the different services for seafarers in terms of career progression: from crewing to training and from review centre to academe. Nina has also worked as a crewing manager and as an in-house training instructor in a couple of manning agencies. But she prefers to teach in training and review schools, as it refreshes her knowledge because she can read more books and become more productive when sharing them with the trainees.

However, Nina claims she is not closing her door to seafaring as she wants to work again in other types of ships she has not boarded yet, such as tankers and in the offshore vessels. “At least when I stop sailing I could say that I have experienced working in all those vessels.”

Nina also now represents Philippine young seafarers in the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) for the Young Seafarers in the Philippines. She attended the ITF Young Transport Workers Committee Conference in the United States last 14-17 July, in which she spoke about the Filipino youth and women empowerment in maritime as the foundation and future of the international shipping industry.

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A Reward for ~

EXCEPTIONAL BRAVERY

In the midst of treacherous sea condition, gale force winds and total darkness and after three challenging hours, Vicente T Somera rescued the hypothermic yachtsman who had sustained life-threatening falls.

A Filipino Able Seaman and Union member recently won commendation from the IMO for his role in the rescue of a yachtsman who suffered life-threatening falls on a treacherous sea conditions in Australia last year.

Vicente T Somera, an AB of the containership Lars Maersk, received the 2015 "Exceptional Bravery at Sea" Award the IMO bestowed in recognition of the meritorious service he had rendered.

The IMO Council endorsed the decision of a panel of judges for the Filipino crewman’s participation in rescuing a sailor who was nearly killed while attempting to repair an oil leak from the yacht Enya II while approximately 110 kms north of Lord Howe Island in 03 September 2014.

In the midst of "treacherous sea condition, gale force winds and total darkness and after three challenging hours," Somera was said to have rescued the "hypothermic sailor who had sustained life-threatening falls," according to an IMO report.

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In the midst of "treacherous sea condition, gale force winds and total darkness and after three challenging hours," Somera was said to have rescued the "hypothermic sailor who had sustained life-threatening falls," according to an IMO report.

The Danish-flagged Lars Maersk, which was in the area, responded and offered assistance to the stricken yacht. AMSA said the weather on scene was extreme, with 6-9m waves and 70kms per hour winds.

As the Lars Maersk was attempting to manoeuvre alongside, the yachtsman decided that he would swim the remaining distance to the ship and jumped into the ocean just before night fall. He was unable to swim...
to the ship and instead found himself adrift in the ocean,” according to AMSA.

A Royal Australian Air Force crew used night vision goggles to assist the Lars Maersk in locating the yachtsman in the extreme weather conditions. The ship recovered the yachtsman three to four hours later.

During the rescue, the AMSA report said, “Somera went down the ship’s gangway during hazardous conditions in order to pull the exhausted yachtsman out of the sea. Then using his body as a shield, Somera protected the yachtsman from the elements before assisting him to climb the vessel’s gangway.

The sailing boat had sustained damage to the main sail and boom resulting in the vessel becoming impossible to handle in extremely dangerous sea conditions. In addition, the yachtsman was unable to stem the flow of diesel fuel that was leaking heavily inside the yacht, making the deck slippery and unstable.

In recognition of the effort of the MV Lars Maersk, the AMSA Board nominated Able Seaman Vicente Somera, a Lars Maersk crew member, for the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery.

Somera, who hails from Aroroy, Masbate, worked on board the 63,150dwt ship from 30 April to September 2014.

In February 2015, he signed a new contract with the same company Maersk-Filipinas Crewing on board the sister boxship Grete Maersk.

Apart from Somera, the IMO also gave Certificates of Commendation this year to other individuals from UK, US and Georgia who performed similar “exceptional bravery” in recognition of meritorious services they had rendered.
The global shipping industry, represented by a wide cross section of international shipowners’ associations and seafarers’ unions, has collectively updated the industry’s Guidelines on Large Scale Rescue Operations at Sea.

This is in response to the continuing crisis in the Mediterranean, in which merchant ships and their civilian crews have so far assisted in the rescue of over 50,000 people. But the Guidelines are also applicable to other regions where ships may have to assist with rescue operations involving large numbers of migrants or refugees, including South East Asia.

The new guidelines update those originally produced by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) at the end of 2014, but now take account of the considerable recent experience gained by shipping companies and their crews.

The Guidelines are now supported by a wide range of maritime industry organisations, including the European Community Shipowners’ Associations, the Asian Shipowners’ Forum, the International Transport Workers’ Federation, the European Transport Workers’ Federation, Intercargo, Intertanko, IPTA, and InterManager.

An important aspect of the revised Guidelines is the additional attention given to ensuring that rescued people are looked after safely once they have been embarked on board commercial ships, whilst also ensuring the safety, security and welfare of the seafarers undertaking such rescue operations, which often involve a significant degree of risk.

The guidance has also been expanded to include multi-lingual notices that might be utilised by ships when people from Africa and the Middle East are rescued.

The authors of the document are clear in emphasising that the guidance should not in any way be regarded as ‘best management practices’ (such as those which the industry has developed to address the threat of Somali piracy). Ship operators should be free to use them or not as is deemed appropriate in the context of their operations and existing company procedures.

The shipping organisations also make it clear that the revision of the Guidelines does not in any way suggest that shipping companies or their crews are reconciled to the continuing failure of governments to provide adequate state-backed rescue resources, as required by international law.

ICS Secretary General, Peter Hinchliffe, commented: “The fact that these industry Guidelines, which are recognised by bodies such as IMO and UNHCR, are sadly necessary does not mean that the continuing reliance on merchant ships to perform a role which is the proper responsibility of governments is either acceptable or sustainable. The industry will continue to press for governments to do more to meet their obligations during this crisis and will make no apology for doing so.”
As you are aware the ITF and its affiliated unions work together to fight for the rights and standards for all seafarers from around the world. To support seafarers the ITF has a global network of inspectors who are on the spot to go on board and deal with any problems that seafarers may have. For those areas of the world where we do not have inspectors available the Maritime Operations team (MOPs), based in the ITF office in London, will deal with the seafarers problems.

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

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

Contact details are:

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

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

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

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

The ITF Inspectors, MOPs team and the ITF Helpline are all here to help protect seafarers’ rights and standards worldwide, please feel free to contact them whenever you need to.
Union’s Malasakit agenda revs into action
As part of its 55th anniversary this year, AMOSUP lines up a series of activities nationwide.

AMOSUP recently put into action a series of its Malasakit (Care) service programme to members and dependants in various parts of the country.

Some of these initiatives include its Malasakit Para sa Pamilya that is a fun activity for seafarers’ families at the Union’s Seamen’s Village in Dasmarias, Cavite, ‘Malasakit Para sa Pagsasama or Care for married couples in Iloilo, and the Malasakit Para sa Kabuhayan or Care for livelihood in Davao.
At the Seamen’s Village, where the family affair was first rolled out, seafarers’ wives and children joined various fun games that created an opportunity for bonding among the many families living at the AMOSUP sailor’s town. Winning family members who participated in the respective games received prizes.

Seafarer families came together for lunch the union served after the morning events. It was followed by a programme hosted by Apple David and Marescet Yao of Stimula Productions. Winners of the morning’s games were awarded during the show.

The music band Bloomfield also entertained the seafarers and their families who gamely joined in the band’s song numbers.
Malasakit sa pagsasama

In Iloilo, “malasakit sa pagsasama” was the theme of the union-sponsored occasion, celebrating renewal of wedding vow of seafarers and their spouse who reaffirmed their commitment with each other.

The physical presence between husband and wife is an important aspect of raising a family. It has become one of the tests in life seafarers face due to long separation from each other.

So during the ceremony, 12 couples courageously showed up to prove that there is such thing as “forever” by repeating their exchange of “I do’s” and their vows of a lifetime commitment with each other. The occasion is also part of AMOSUP’s 55th anniversary celebration this year.

One of the couples, Mr and Mrs Valencia, became emotional while exchanging their promises with each other: “Akala ko wala ng forever, meron pala,” said Mrs Valencia, stressing that “all I can say is that I am very grateful for my husband that God gave him to me.”

The pair marked their 19th anniversary last 15th May. And because of AMOSUP, Mr Valencia said, they were able to renew their marriage vows, “hoping it will continue forever.”

AMOSUP president Dr Conrado F Oca and officials of Seamen’s Hospital Iloilo, the ceremony’s venue, joined the newly “re-married” couples, in their sweet moments as they shared their wedding cakes. They also enjoyed their “sweet dance” as Dr and Mrs Oca joined them on the dance floor.

In Davao, the Union’s Activity Centre became the focus of attraction for members and dependants who are into various livelihood programmes and those interested to put up their own.

Dr Oca, who graced the celebration, encouraged members to learn more and apply the knowledge being shared by a lecturer and facilitator to learn various trades or entrepreneurship that they could engage in. Apart from the AMOSUP president, Seamen’s Hospital Cebu medical director Teodocio Alcantara and Davao medical director Dr Richard Pecson attended the activity.

The livelihood courses are various types of entrepreneurial pursuits members could start up for a minimal amount of capital.

Ms Alou Lacsamana, a veteran instructor of livelihood courses, gave lectures and facilitated samples of various types of entrepreneurial pursuits members could start up for a minimal amount of capital.

Seafarers’ wives were advised to learn and take advantage of the livelihood programmes to lessen the burden of financial dependence on the breadwinner in the family.

The marine profession is not a life-long career. Time will come when the hard work on board ship will take its toll on the mariner’s tired physical strength. And before that time comes, seafarers’ families are being encouraged to recognise the importance of saving to fund their future such as providing their own houses and education for their children.
Boystown youth meet MAAP cadets

A youngsters’ tour at the country’s leading marine academy inspires some of the boys to be ship officers in future

As part of its 55th year celebration, AMOSUP recently welcomed a group of youngsters from a social welfare institution when they visited the Union-run Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP). The visit was intended to inspire the youth that a bright future still awaits them.

Twenty lucky youngsters from Boystown Manila took part in a tour of the MAAP campus in Mariveles, Bataan as part of AMOSUP’s Malasakit Para sa Kabataan programme, which is one of the themes of the anniversary celebration.

Manila Boystown Complex is a social welfare division of the city government that shelters and helps street children and runaway teens. It also offers free education up to high school. The welfare institution looks for the boys’ sponsors that could fund their studies into college. Boystown also assists them to find jobs.

The boys arrived at the academy after a three-hour bus trip from Manila. Together with the “Yan Ang Marino” team, which accompanied them on the trip, MAAP’s Commander Gerio Echico and the cadets welcomed their guests. The marine cadets served the boys as their “kuya” or elder brothers for the day.

The cadets got acquainted with the Boystown residents as if they had known the boys for a long time, as they shared and exchanged stories. The youth also watched a silent drill performed by the cadets.

MAAP president Mr. Eduardo Mar Santos (AFP, ret) introduced them about what MAAP is all about and why it is a world class maritime school. And the youngsters set their eyes on the academy’s high-tech equipment and facilities in their MAAP tour.

AMOSUP president Dr. Conrad F. Oca said he hoped that the Union was able to inspire the youngsters even in a small way during the visit.

MAAP cadets entertained their guests with a performance of musical talents in a “battle of the bands”. The cadets showed their best playing the instruments as the boys enjoyed the performance of their elders.

MAAP VP Felix Oca also delivered a message to the group of youngsters. He advised them to study well, “so that you could also take the entrance exam in MAAP for your college education and become world class mariners in the future.”

The youngsters saw the life of their kuya while studying in MAAP and what it’s like to be a future seafarer.

After the celebration, they were asked about what they learned on the day-long stay in the academy.
Three of those interviewed seem to have formed at the time a dream or a plan, a plan that they will go back to the academy - not as guests anymore – but as cadets.

One could see the inspiration the boys got from their encounters with AMOSUP, MAAP and the cadets that had been formed in the faces of the Boysstown residents after the tour. It’s a motivation that reflects a burning desire for someone to pursue one’s dream to become a ship officer and lead a bright future.

The youngsters saw the life of their kuya while studying in MAAP and what it’s like to be a future seafarer.
Thanks to the sea for all its blessings

In Cebu, AMOSUP let thousands of fish fingerlings to find their way into the sea as part of its malasakit sa kalikasan or care for the marine environment.

It is not just a habitat for various marine species, the sea also provides beauty to mother nature. Aside from the fact that it provides food to its people and jobs to thousands of our seafarers, the sea also serves as the main passage for ships to bring the precious cargoes to different parts of the world.
To thank the ocean for all the blessings it gives to the seafarers, AMOSUP recently did its part to preserve the marine environment and maintain its splendour: by releasing fish fingerlings to the sea.

AMOSUP Cebu, in co-operation with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Region 7), has let 5,500 fingerlings to find their way into the ocean. The activity also formed part of the Union’s 55th anniversary celebration this year.

President Conrado F Oca, who led the symbolic gesture, also released his own share of the tiny creatures.

The Union recognises the importance of taking care of the sea and its marine life. “It is one of the reasons why we continue to exist on earth. And it is important that we show our concern about the environment,” he said. AMOSUP, does not only show it cares for its members, but with the Mother Earth as well.

Apart from the activity at sea, the action at the shore went smoothly as well with the tree planting ceremony. The AMOSUP Cebu compound was the venue of the activity that was also led by Dr Oca and Seamen’s Hospital Cebu medical director Dr Teody Alcantara.

AMOSUP officers and Cebuano seafarers also participated in the ceremonial tree planting to impart the Union’s concern to Mother Earth in that part of the Visayas. After the day’s activity the Union thanked the seafarers from Cebu for their participation in the celebration.

Together with their families, seafarers joined in the celebration held at the Seamen’s Hospital Cebu. The Union also showed the welfare programmes that AMOSUP is doing for its members.

Everyone came for the dinner, while acoustic singer Jimmy Bondoc joined in to entertain the seafarers as they gamely sang some of their favourite songs.
ITF Seafarers' Trust announces welfare vehicle effectiveness survey

The ITF Seafarers' Trust - which often pays for vehicles for seafarers' welfare bodies and missions - has announced it will be surveying their uses and effectiveness so as to use its grants as effectively as possible. The Trust will be partnering in the programme with the International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA) and the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA).

One of the Seafarers' Trust's main areas of funding is that of providing seafarers' centres/ships visitors with the means of transporting themselves and seafarers to and from ships by granting service providers funds to purchase appropriate vehicles. The Trust has provided over GBP 2.5 million for this purpose over the last 34 years.

To make grant giving in this area more fair and equitable to the service providers, the Seafarers' Trust announces that it will partner with ICMA and NAMMA for a short program of data-gathering on current usage and needs of vehicles in ports around the world. ICMA and NAMMA are both international associations that represent the great majority of seafarers' centres around the world.

The data to be collected focuses on the number of seafarers served, the current state of vehicles being used for seafarer welfare purposes, the distance from ship to services, the mileage per year. Once the information is collected, the organisations that the Seafarers' Trust determines are likely to get a vehicle grant will be contacted and invited to apply for a vehicle grant. Neither ICMA nor NAMMA will be involved in the granting decisions, only in gathering data and sharing information about the program.

Kimberly Karlshoei, the Head of the Seafarers' Trust, stated, "We continue to believe that providing seafarers with transport is a high priority for seafarers' welfare, and we want to be proactive in finding where our grants will have the greatest impact. ICMA and NAMMA are well placed to help gather data from all seafarer welfare providers, even those that are not members, we are delighted to partner with both organisations on this project.

The Rev. Richard Kilgour, General Secretary of ICMA, noted the same, "The long-standing and strong relationship between the ITF Seafarers' Trust and ICMA members is a great asset. ICMA supports the gathering information in this way for planning years ahead to target funds fairly and equitably to best effect for vital van replacement. That ICMA has been asked to help with data gathering is another example of how we are partners in this work."

Dr. Jason Zuidema, Executive Director of NAMMA, called attention to this project's importance: "Those seeking excellence in seafarers' welfare know that partnerships are important. Collaborating on this project is not just practical, but it again celebrates the beautiful connection that members in local ports have with the Seafarers' Trust."
OFW savers win prizes in I Dagdag Ipon Raffle Promo

It pays to save more with Pag-IBIG Fund. Eighteen lucky Pag-IBIG Fund members who are working abroad won prizes including $10,000.00 in cash, round-trip tickets, vacation packages, among others, during the grand raffle draw of the second OFW Member Dagdag Ipon Raffle Promo of Pag-IBIG Fund held last January 23, 2015. More than 46,000 OFW members from various countries took part in the raffle promo by saving at least P600 a month.

"One of Pag-IBIG’s principal mandates is to provide an effective savings mechanism for its 14.7 million members. Vice President Jejomar C. Binay, who is the Chairman of the Pag-IBIG Board of Trustees, has directed us to promote financial literacy among our members to help them secure their future. The OFW Member Dagdag Ipon Raffle Promo encourages members working abroad to save higher than the usual P100 per month. The bigger amount they save, the higher their earned dividends will be. This means that upon maturity of their membership with Pag-IBIG, they will receive in lump-sum a big amount that they can then use to defray big-ticket expenses. They may also be qualified for a higher loanable amount if they opt to avail of our housing or short-term loans," said Pag-IBIG President and Chief Executive Officer Atty. Darlene Marie B. Berberabe.

Pag-IBIG issued a total of 229,957 electronic raffle tickets to 46,157 OFW members who registered online for the Raffle Promo Part 2. From these entries, OFW Mark Sarmiento from Dubai won the grand prize of $10,000.00. The other top winners are: Rodnie Sherwin A. Perez and Godofredo O. Tuquero (Round Trip Tickets), both from Dubai; Shalie R. Rabida from Abu Dhabi and Christian B. Ignacio from Saudi Arabia (Vacation Packages). Pag-IBIG also raffled-off four sets of 3D Smart TV, four 16GB iPad Minis, and five Smart Phones.

Last year, twenty four lucky Pag-IBIG OFW members took home airline tickets, vacation packages, and various gadgets during the first and second preliminary draws held on September 19 and November 21, respectively.

All winners were notified via email, phone call, and registered mail. The complete list of winners is posted online in the Pag-IBIG website www.pagibigfund.gov.ph.

The raffle promo which is now on its 3rd year shall continue to run from June 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015.

There are 4.2 million OFW Pag-IBIG members as of June 2015. From January to November last year, 10,000 overseas worker-members availed of the Housing Loan program, while more than 4,400 have enjoyed the benefits of the STL program.

From July 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014,

For complete mechanics, call (+632) 840 1793 . 892 4382 . 894 2195
email us at raffleHELPDESK@pagibigfund.gov.ph or
visit the Pag-IBIG website at www.pagibigfund.com.ph
Pag-IBIG’s OFW member

Baka ikaw na ang susunod na manalo ng

US $10,000
OFW Member DAGDAG IPON Raffle Promo PART 3

Prizes include iPhone 6, MacBook Air, Roundtrip Airline tickets, and US$10,000.00 as the grand prize.
Promo runs from June 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015

How to Join:

| Remit the required minimum Pag-IBIG I membership savings of Php600.00 |
| Visit www.pagibigfund.gov.ph and click the “Filipinos Working Abroad” icon and then click the “Join the Raffle Promo” link. |
| Enter your Pag-IBIG ID No. (MID/POP Temporary Number/Registration Tracking Number) |
| Click the “Verify” button. The system shall then display the member’s Full name and Birth Date. In case the OFW member does not have an updated membership information with the Fund, he/she is required to update his/her records via the Pag-IBIG online membership registration system before joining the raffle promo. |
| Fill out 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 and an email confirmation from Pag-IBIG shall be sent to the member within 24 hours. |
| Online registration to the raffle promo shall be done only once while electronic raffle numbers shall be sent continuously via email for every Php600.00 membership savings remitted. |
MLC two years on: a positive driver for change

The Maritime Labour Convention has improved the lives of those serving at sea, says Intertanko’s marine director Philip Belcher

The Maritime Labour Convention ensures seafarers have the right to a safe workplace, fair terms of employment and decent living conditions.

Two years ago the shipping industry changed with the entry into force of the Maritime Labour Convention. Long meetings and late night negotiations had led to the comprehensive convention aimed at creating a level playing field for employers, mandatory employment standards and ensuring that they were adopted through a regulatory enforcement process which had real teeth.

Now we are two years down the line and we should assess the impact upon the industry. The systems have bedded down and crewing departments have a fuller understanding of what the convention means. Flag States have written and implemented their legislation and produced their guidance notes. Recognised organisations have worked out their role in this new regulatory field and their surveyors know how to audit the soft systems on board. Port State Control has undertaken internal training and are now inspecting.

But have we seen improvements?

The answer has to be a resounding yes. The industry now has a proper level playing field. Of course many owners will significantly improve on the minimum standards of the MLC and it is always good to see an owner creating a true “one company environment” where there is no distinction made between the office and ship staff. Not all companies are able to do that, but by having the MLC in place we bring so many ships and companies up to an acceptable industry standard. In particular we have seen a drive to enhance accommodation standards through the focus upon this important but neglected area.

Some ships are being detained for MLC issues, but the detention primarily relates to Solas and Marpol issues. Now, some will argue that this is a demonstration of weakness on the part of the MLC, rather I would suggest strength.

With 66 countries ratifying the MLC and it covering 80% of the world’s
Of course, there is still much to be done to improve the life of the seafarer and incorporate the human element into the shipping industry.

fleet, this shows that the MLC is being implemented, audited and inspected. Further, through the "no more favourable" clause, a ship of a non-ratifying state cannot escape inspection and enforcement. Flag-hopping to avoid the MLC simply cannot occur and a lack of detentions purely on grounds of breaches of the MLC demonstrates general overall compliance.

Seafarers now have the right to a safe and secure workplace, fair terms of employment and decent living conditions. Additionally they have the right to health protection, medical care, welfare measures and social protection. Many will say that this is a pretty low standard, and yes it is when compared to some countries around the world. But it is a massive step forward for many, and not just for seafarers from developing countries. There are a number of developed countries in the world where shore workers do not have such assurances as enjoyed by seafarers, for instance a UK national working on a zero hours contract in London misses out on many of those benefits.

Of course, there is still much to be done to improve the life of the seafarer and incorporate the human element into the shipping industry. From improving teaching standards in maritime schools, so that owners do not need to give additional training to seafarers, to implementing a just culture inside companies, so that the true causes of incidents can be fully analysed, the implementation of the MLC was an important and significant step forward in improving the quality of life at sea and one that the industry rightly applauds.

The result has been an empowering of seafarers to object to commercial pressures, forcing owners to respect the hours of work and it has been a positive driver for responsible management. So, two years after it came into force we should acknowledge the success of this important convention and recognise how it has improved the lives of those serving at sea.

(Reprinted from Lloyd’s List)
AMOSUP to stage singing showdown

Competing seafarers will vie for the title ‘Seakat Ka Marino Idol’ as part of the Union’s 55th anniversary.

Filipino seafarers who have the voice and singing ability will have the chance to show their talent when AMOSUP stages a singing contest this November.

Manning agencies have been invited to send their representative to the competition, dubbed as ‘Seakat Ka Marino Singing Showdown’. Participating seafarers will have to defer signing of their work contract from September to November 2015 while selections from elimination rounds to the finals go on.

During the competition, three contestants per week will advance to the semi-finals that will take place in October.

On the semi-finals, the top 12 will be divided into two groups – the first will compete on the third Friday of the month and the second group on the fourth Friday. After the semis, four seafarers from each group will move into the grand finals that will take place during the 55th anniversary celebration of AMOSUP in November.

Eight competing seafarers will vie for the title ‘Seakat Ka Marino Singing Idol’ to be held at the Mall of Asia Arena on 11 November 2015, the Union’s 55th anniversary. The criteria for judging are the following: voice quality – 40%, stage presence – 25%, audience impact – 25%, diction and quality of words – 10%.

Winners for the competition will receive P5,000 in the elimination round, 10,000 – semi finals and P50,000 in the grand finals, with P30,000 for the first runner up and P15,000 for the second runner up.

MECHANICS

1. INVITED MANNING AGENCIES SHOULD SEND REPRESENTATIVE SEAFARERS (SEAFARERS SHOULD NOT HAVE EXISTING CONTRACT FROM SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 2015) FOR THIS COMPETITION.

2. ELIMINATION ROUND WILL TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAYS OF SEPTEMBER WITH FIVE (5) SEAFARERS PER WEEK WILL BELT THEIR WAY OUT INTO THE NEXT ROUND.

3. THREE (3) CONTESTANTS PER WEEK WILL ADVANCE TO THE SEMIS WHICH WILL TAKES PLACE ON THE MONTH OF OCTOBER.

4. ON THE SEMIFINALS, THE TOP TWELVE (12) WILL BE DIVIDED INTO TWO (2) GROUPS, THE FIRST GROUP WILL COMPETE ON THE THIRD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH AND SECOND GROUP ON THE FOURTH FRIDAY. AFTER THE SEMIS, FOUR (4) SEAFARERS FROM EACH GROUP WILL MOVE INTO THE GRAND FINALS THAT WILL TAKES PLACE DURING THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF AMOSUP.

5. EIGHT (8) COMPETING SEAFARERS WILL VIE FOR THE TITLE “SEAKAT KA MARINO SINGING IDOL”.

6. THE GRAND FINALS WILL BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 11, AMOSUP’S 55TH ANNIVERSARY, AT MALL OF ASIA ARENA.
Welcome Aboard!

Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific - Kamaya Point

Courses Offered:
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MAAP Profile
- Testing Assessment Center of TESDA
- MAAP Profile
- Geographical 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, 1988.
- The Associate Marine Officers and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) was founded by the late Capt. Gregorio S. Oca, Jr., a graduate of the Maritime Academy.
- The board is comprised of representatives from the private sector, the International Transport Workers' Federation, the Japanese Shipowners' Association, and the Norwegian Shipowners' Association.
- With our facilities, we provide semi-fast and practical training environments.
- DWT conducts shipboard training capable of accommodating 180 midshipmen and 9 instructors in 30 air-conditioned cabins and six berths.

Our Curriculum
- MAAP students are all scholars who are entitled to tuition, board and lodging. They receive a comprehensive, up-to-date and well-rounded education that fully complies with the requirements of STCW-95 and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).
- To ensure the highest standards of quality, MAAP adheres to a Quality Assurance System that has been approved by the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PACS). The Academy offers three main programs: Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT), Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMEn), and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMEn - Technical Superintendent). The curricula for these courses were designed with the help of the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. Courses are a total of 132 units, 15 for MAAP, 40 for practicum/shipboard units on board T/S Kapitan Felix Oca and 15 for practicum/shipboard units on board T/S Kapitan Felix Oca and a shipping company sponsorship.

Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific provides comprehensive training for seafarers.