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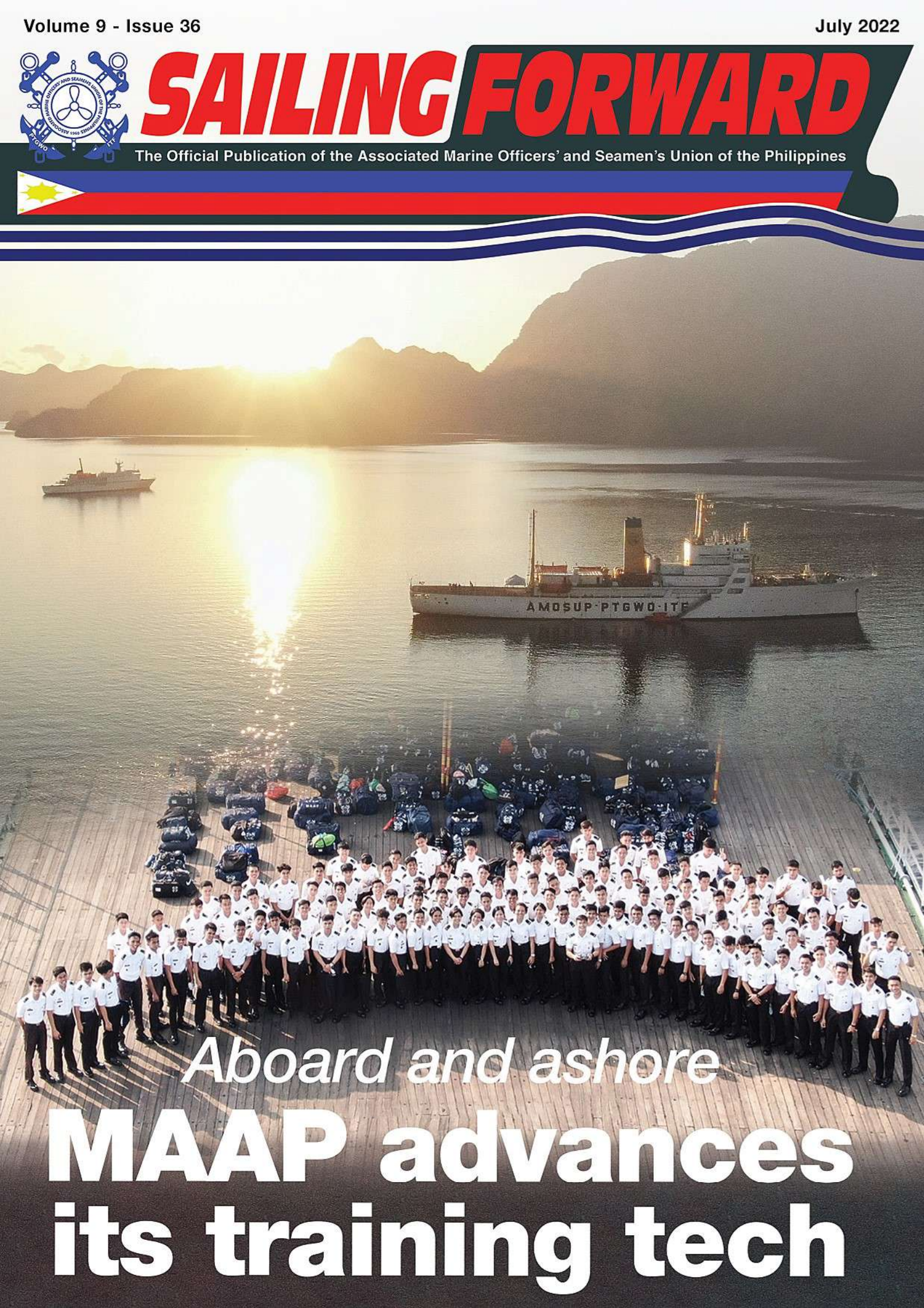
SAILING FORWARD

The Official Publication of the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines



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MAAP Profile

Geographic destiny has given the Filipino the innate talent to ba 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.

From the President

We are proud to inform you of the technological developments taking place at our education and training institution, the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP).

As one of the first adopters of new simulation-based training tools, MAAP's new delivery from its Norwegian tech contractor comes with a range of maritime simulators, which further augments our training equipment to a new level. Not just ashore but at sea as well, where the academy's training ships get similar digital insight, enabling our cadets to take a leading role with first-hand experience on vessel-to-cloud data infrastructure. This means they can capture and have the ability to analyse vessel data over time.

The academy's massive upgrades in technological resources and infrastructure follows our instructor-cadets' experiences during the pandemic when we had taken drastic responses to address greater challenges such as the shift to virtual learning. As most of the world lifted many of the health protocols, we also resumed and shared with you some highlights of the first commencement rites we held publicly after more than two and a half years post-pandemic. You will also learn in this issue how the academy and the cadets weathered the storms of the public health crisis just to continue their mission of accomplishing quality maritime education.

Furthermore, we made follow-throughs in our coverage on the problem of ambulance chasing that is threatening the seafaring industry. As the manning sector tackled a series of ambulance chasing cases, you'll get to know a list of measures our industry leaders have proposed and taken up against mishandled crew claims.

In our celebration of the Day of the Seafarer this year, we marked the occasion with the launch of a mental health training along with a night of food, fun and entertainment for union members. We also feature our activities on the International Day for Women in Maritime where we put the spotlight on Gender Sensitivity and ILO C190.

Another good news is that some Port States had finally granted unions' request for seafarers' shore leave. Still at port, we hail a recent court decision mandating shipowners, managers and charterers to honour a job clause in the CBA that prevents seafarers from being assigned lashing work where professional dock workers are available. You may recall that maritime unions had campaigned for this, hence it's an important victory for seafarer's safety.

Safety of crews is of heightened concern especially among bulk cargo shipowners and operators as they've reminded us in their fleet casualty report submission to the IMO. Due to rising cases, you can find out what and how the greatest contributors are to loss of life in bulker ship crewing over the last 10 to 15 years.

Likewise, enclosed space and lifeboat drill incidents on board are twin areas of safety awareness that you need to be aware of. Judging by the inadequate reporting of serious and fatal accidents on these types of incidents, the industry has been warned to be more heedful.

We also share with you in this issue our latest meeting and strengthened collaboration with our fellow ITF-affiliates in the Philippine National Coordinating Committee.

Last, but not least, we pay tribute to our fallen comrade, Brother Butch Lamug, who served AMOSUP and ITF with great love, fortitude and dignity. We honor his noble service to champion the interest of Filipino seafarers, as well as transport workers across the Asia Pacific region. His life's work and legacy will live on and will never be forgotten.

Keep on Sailing Forward!

Dr Conrado F Oca

Sailing Forward is an in-house publication of the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP)

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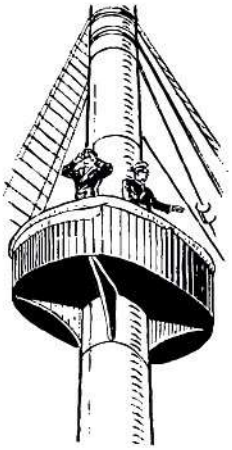
Members of MAAP's Versileas Class of 2023 on-board the academy's training ship *Kapitan Felix Oca* (Image: Kamaya Point)

From the Crow's Nest



A new breed of 'super' ship manager is emerging

The image of the third-party ship management sector is changing, writes Edward Ion, managing director at Navigate Response (Asia)

Strange as it may seem today, the idea that a shipowner would ask a third party to manage their vessels was an anathema just four decades ago. In many parts of the world, shipowners viewed the management of their vessels almost as a family duty – and in many cases it was just that.

The concept of using a third-party manager is relatively new and only gained traction in the 1970s.

Because it is still considered a novel idea by some, it is estimated that only around 20% of the global merchant fleet is currently "out-sourced" to third party ship managers.

Until recently the main or even only attraction of handing vessels over to third party managers was because they could do it "more cheaply". And the most successful managers in the early days could do exactly that. But thanks to ever more stringent regulation and the fact that shipping has become a much more transparent business with an incessant public and media gaze, the managers had to develop their strategies and change their "sales pitch" to owners under increasing pressure to "do the right thing".

More recent events such as Covid-19 and the invasion of Ukraine have also accelerated the change in the business models of many managers. The pandemic has thrown much light on how different managers deal with their principals' ships and crews.

Working with ship managers large and small, the team at Navigate Response has dealt with a wide range of issues good and bad over the past two years.

The crewing crisis in which seafarers have been trapped on vessels for months and sometime years on end has placed enormous stress on managers and their owner principals. But we see discernible change among the management community as many have risen to the challenge of the crewing crisis. It has been an opportunity for

many managers to show owners that they are far more than just cost-effective machines caring only for the bottom line.

For all the consolidation and M&A activity shipping has seen, the business remains dominated by small to medium sized family-owned companies. We see that it is these companies which are coming to rely on professional management companies increasingly as the stress of events like the pandemic take their toll.

These "super managers" can cater for the needs of owners on a global basis. Not only is the technological delivery of systems and process superior but the range of expertise available in the bigger managers is now greater than ever before.

For managers, the 'race to the bottom' in fee terms may be about to end as more owners first realise then come to appreciate that having a top manager at your side during moments of stress is an invaluable asset. While horror stories about managers and their crewing agents abandoning crews still proliferate during these times, a more accurate picture of the third-party market today is one of managers going the extra mile to help crews and their families.

Not only are crew safety and wellbeing now significant differentiators between managers, the range of wide expertise now available among managers is often a critical factor in an owner's decision on whether to use a third-party manager or not.

As the small to medium sized owner grapples with the often-perplexing demands thrown up by the decarbonisation movement, the leading managers are now acting in an advisory role assisting owners navigate across regulatory and legal hurdles. This feature of ship management service provision will become more prominent as the perception shifts from 'doing it more cheaply' to 'adding real value to your business' takes hold in the ship management sector and shipowners will benefit from that. SF

Edward Ion is a managing director at Navigate Response and Helix PR (Singapore). He is an experienced managing partner with a demonstrated history of working in the public relations and communications industry.

> **The crewing crisis in which seafarers have been trapped on vessels for months and sometime years on end has placed enormous stress on managers and their owner principals**

UPCYCLING FOR ART ON BOARD. Making models has always been a maritime tradition, whether it is the famous ship in a bottle, a larger scale display in a shipping company's office or the 3D finite element tradecraft of naval architects. Synergy Marine Group says it is delighted that one of their colleagues, Roel Cosgafa Alo, has allied several skills to direct upcycling in creating art from broken pallet materials. Here he is during downtime, and later with a priceless smile rightly showing pride in his finished work. This has also inspired his shipmates, several of whom are now following his lead, and the contagious positivity has hugely contributed to onboard morale. (Image: Synergy Marine Group) SF

Crewing leaders tackle ambulance chasing

The industry lays down a list of measures combatting the manning scourge, Andy Dalisay reports

The Philippines' crewing sector took up a series of advices and resolves in its fight against ambulance chasing that threatens to wipe out the country's $6 billion manning industry.

Ambulance chasing refers to an attorney's practice of soliciting business from accident victims or their families to contact them or the victim's family members for consent to represent him or her in a lawsuit. Through ambulance chasers the mishandling of crew claims has cost the crewing industry an estimated PhP1.7 billion as of 2019.

At the forum on this problem, manning industry leaders voiced out for the first time how it became the biggest threat to Philippine seafaring. Dubbed *'Karapatan Sama-samang Ingatan,'* the round-table discussion was held through the initiative of a convenors group led by AMOSUP, International Seafarers Welfare Assistance Network (ISWAN) and the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) last 24th May 2022.

The list of measures the industry wishes to pursue to combat ambulance chasing includes strengthening the union's grievance machinery, carrying out a comprehensive study on ambulance chasing cases, developing a comprehensive framework to educate stakeholders and legislation.

10-year forecast

If the trend continues, shipowners have "fearlessly forecasted that Filipino seafarers can disappear from the market in the next 10 years despite previously enjoying the privilege of being the seafarers of choice", according to Atty Iris Baguilat, founding member and trustee of the Association of Licensed Manning Agents (ALMA). She apparently based the forecast on the "relentless litigiousness fueled by ambulance chasers who prowl post-medical clinics, airports and streets to find potential seafarer claimants."

Atty Baguilat laments "how seafarers have been winning overwhelmingly at the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) level." She alleges that they have been "reduced to negotiations" regardless of the validity of the claim. Due to existing law, she argues, the shipowner pays the award decided by the NCMB immediately upon release of the decision even if a party appeals the NCMB decision.

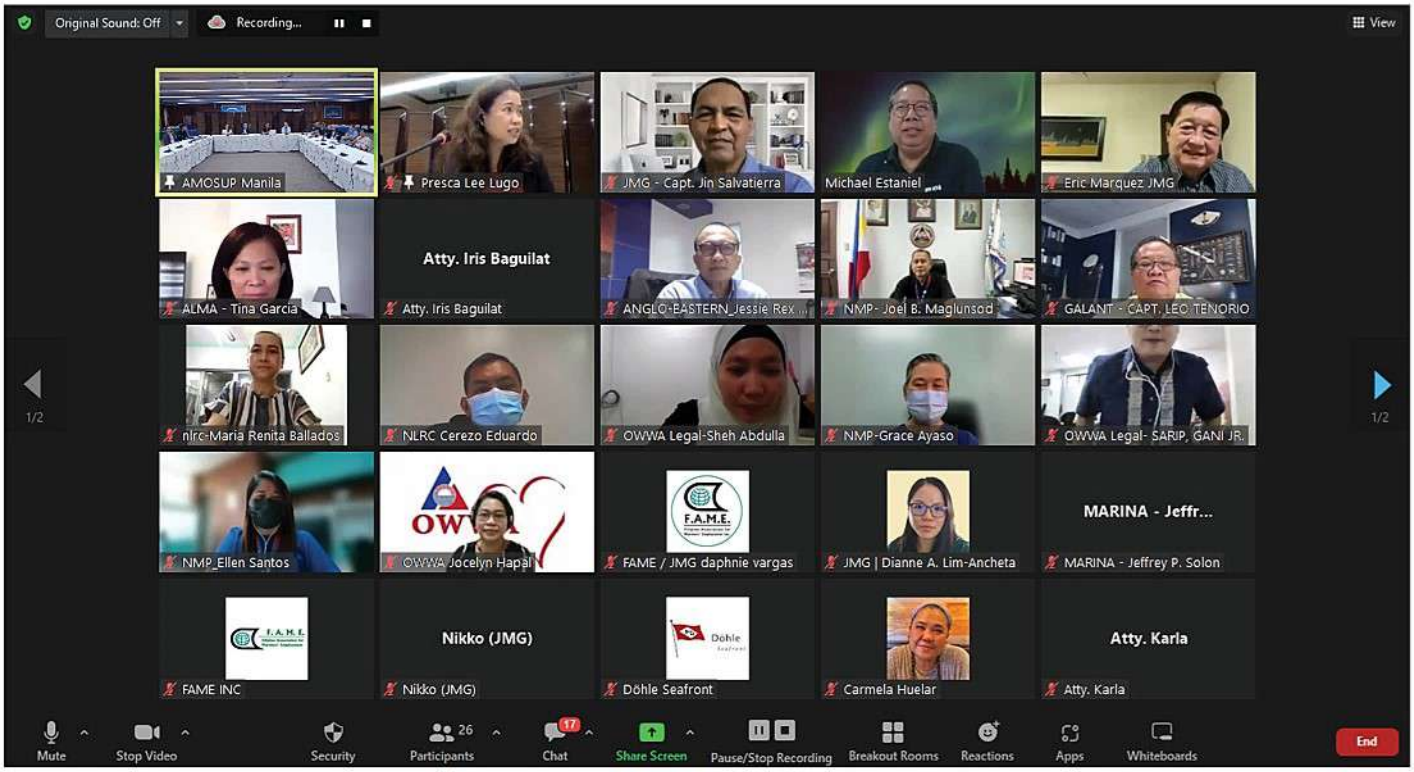
Filipino seafarers once consisted more than a quarter of the global crew on board ships overseas. "You can just imagine we were the manning capital of the world" [with 30% of the manpower

Source: Maritime Industry Authority

Number of Filipino Seafarers Deployed - Overseas

Classification	Number of Deployed Overseas Filipino Seafarers					Total
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Deck Officers	49,673	54,954	27,108	41,791	14,962	**188,488**
Deck Ratings	110,003	125,412	66,618	98,928	35,346	**436,307**
Engine Room Officers	43,278	47,953	23,272	36,261	12,976	**163,740**
Engine Room Ratings	44,703	50,736	26,805	40,826	14,161	**177,231**
General Purpose Ratings	3,318	3,221	1,017	1,575	487	**9,618**
GRAND TOTAL	**250,975**	**282,276**	**144,820**	**219,381**	**77,932**	

• Data generated as of 13 June 2022 14:43 from Department of Migrant Workers



supply], notes Captain Reynaldo Casareo, one of the directors of the Filipino Association for Mariners' Employment (FAME).

"But now we are down to only 14% of the supply," he stresses, citing figures presented by industry colleagues. Captain Casareo, however, praises the effort led by AMOSUP in fighting for the dismantling of ambulance chasing.

Strengthening grievance machinery

He suggests that AMOSUP should strengthen its grievance machinery by educating union members concerning their wishes if they want to file a complaint. A case can be prevented, insists Captain Casareo, "because the union has the expertise when it comes to matters dealing with CBA" (collective bargaining agreement).

The Cargo Safeway president, whose company lost several Filipino-crewed vessels to other nationals due to a host of ambulance chasing cases, had his sympathy to union members who lost their jobs as much as to the company having lost the managed fleet.

This scourge of the crewing industry, which is now waging a "damage control", needs a comprehensive study that would provide policies and strategies addressing the ambulance chasing phenomenon, proposes Captain Gaudencio Morales, the president of FAME. He says it is a "phenomenon which must be seen as a threat to the rights of seafarers and to the integrity and viability of the local manning agencies."

Whilst ambulance chasing is a controversial issue besetting the maritime sector, Captain Morales argues, "no in-depth scientific study has ever been undertaken on the matter". He cites even RA Number 10706, 'An act protecting seafarers against ambulance chasing and imposition of excessive fees, and providing penalties' was formulated without the benefit of a scientific study.

Push for Escrow Bill

Legislation gets another point of interest from industry leaders. Ericson Marquez, spokesperson at the Joint Manning Group (JMG), says the pending law on Escrow Bill in Congress is part of a total solution the industry has been pushing for a long time now. As it had been stalled, he thinks it could be "prejudicial to the interest of the seafarers" that no politician could have been interested to sponsor the bill.

However, Marquez says "the industry believes the escrow law is necessary so that the 'goose that lays the golden egg' will not be pushed to the wall." Just like in any court of law, he asserts: "We believe that if there's an appeal [on a decision] the shipowner should put a bond that can be deposited until the appeal process is fully completed by the parties. The


Atty Iris Baguilat

shipowner can be put on escrow to have a guarantee whatever is the amount of claim by the seafarer until the judgment is given.

He's hoping the whole industry will have a change of heart as far as this process is concerned. The proposed Escrow Bill Act, which the Angkla Partylist forwarded in 2015, has yet to make any progress in the legislative mill.

Captain Morales, the FAME president, suggests case studies must be backed by facts such as "what happened after the award is given by the court." Claimants still have to return a total of PhP1.7 billion to their employers/ shipowners following a series of reversals of their cases at the NCMB and NLRC by the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

If the NCMB or NLRC rendered a "quality decision in the first place, then the number of reversals at the appellate courts should not be this significant," argues Atty Baguilat of ALMA. It is widely known in the seafaring industry, she points out, "the seafarers' inability to return the award is mainly because they did not receive the full award."

Did it benefit the seafarers or did it only benefit the lawyers? The claim that seafarers are taken disadvantaged of by their lawyers, according to Captain Morales, "is not supported by scientific evidence, only by anecdotal proofs." He stresses that results of the case studies can be the basis of plans and framework to undertake in educating the seafarers.

'P&I is not an insurance'

Educating must also include the case arbiters in labour courts such as the NCMB and NLRC. "There are arbitrators who think P&I (Protection and Indemnity) is an insurance," reveals Jessie Rex Martin, the president at Anglo-Eastern Crew Management Philippines.

"*Ang katwiran nila pagbigyan mo na yung seaman. Insurance naman ang nagbabayad.*" (Their reason is just give it to the seaman. Insurance covers the cost, anyway), Martin says, quoting a labour arbiter in reference to the award. But he clarifies that this is not the case. He further explained, "P&I is a group of people, shipowners who clubbed themselves so they can pool in money to take care of identifiable risks in running a ship such as oil pollution, crew claims, cargo damage, allision and collision. These are the things they cover, and P&I is not an insurance."

P&I, he continues, is "performance based for each member contributing to the pool to cover those risks. "*Kapag marami kang* cases of crew claims for example, *tataas ang magiging* (If you have plenty of) crew claims cases, premium for the next year will be higher."

What does that mean? Martin asks. "Filipinos are getting more expensive for the shipowners. *Ito ang hindi nakikita ng mga nasa industriya dito sa Pilipinas*. (This is what some people in the industry here in the Philippines don't care to look at.) Because they are looking at a very narrow perspective."

He says this perspective is not the same as the shipowners'…"If even the Supreme Court could not implement its ruling, then what kind of laws do we have. [As an owner] why should I come and do business here?" SF


Captain Gaudencio Morales


Captain Reynaldo Casareo

When grievance is supposed to be addressed

Michael Estaniel, a director in the Joint Manning Group, turns to collective agreement on the need for updating certain processes

We should not be distracted by ambulance chasing. We must remember that there are legitimate claims by seafarers. They should not be set aside. They should be given due process, and if the right decision comes along, it should be given to them. So be it.

Ambulance chasing is where they try to bypass what the rules are in the legal agreement in the POEA contract. At this point, we will need to update the procedures and processes related to it. Because it's been a while that way all the claims presented in the International Group (IG) statistics. It will show that there is really a need to update not just the process for claims at the NLRC and voluntary arbitration but it also means that we need to look at the process in the collective agreement.

Certain processes in the CBA have to be updated. For example, there were some suggestions into those in-house clearing for any union member with the union. This way it prevents them from going in taking up the case outside of the union because it is where grievance is supposed to be addressed. This way whatever entitlement is for the seafarer it can be settled already at the very moment. There is no need to go to Single Entry Approach (SEnA) or to the next level.

Restitution is next to be reviewed. It will be highlighted in the IG report that has not been addressed. This is where the Escrow Bill comes in as it is fair to all parties. So whatever decision by the NLRC or NCMB or voluntary arbitrators if it is going to be appealed whatever is entitled to the seafarer as guided by decision – that will be paid. At the same time, we don't have to go into the long process of restitution.

The Manalo Law or ambulance chasing has to be reviewed because it appears to be lack of a bite for the ambulance chasers. They seem not to be able to hold on to the ambulance chaser because the seafarer is afraid to come forward.

Michael J Estaniel

The other item there is if a seafarer has been declared "disabled", I believe his document should already be held in abeyance by MARINA till the final decision is made whether he's found fit or not fit [to work]. This way he does not go and get employed when pending resolution which I think is not right. When he's disabled he can't go back to sea." SF

Ambulance chasing: Threat to seafaring

Case like a seafarer involved in a fistfight on board against another seafarer had been granted a "total and full permanent disability" amounting to PhP7 million to be paid for by the shipowner. Atty Iris Baguilat presents how spurious seafarer claims have been ruled favourably by a labour court

Global shipping stakeholders identify ambulance chasing and the Philippines' mishandling of crew claims as the biggest threats to Philippine seafaring - an industry that remits $6 billion annually into the Philippines. The market share of Filipino crew has shown a steady decline of 50% in a short span of 20 years. In 2000, Filipinos consisted about 28.5 percent or more than a quarter of the global seafarer population onboard ships. However, in 2020, Filipino seafarers are down to only 14 percent. Foreign shipowners and the International Maritime Employers Council (IMEC) have fearlessly forecasted that Filipino seafarers can disappear from the market in the next 10 years despite previously enjoying the privilege of being the seafarer of choice. Over the past 10 years, Filipino seafarers have displayed relentless litigiousness fueled by ambulance chasers who prowl post-medical clinics, airports and streets to find potential seafarer claimants.

Unfortunately, seafarers have been winning overwhelmingly at the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) level where, at times, the hearings do not inquire into the facts and law of the case but are reduced to negotiations on how much the shipowner shall pay regardless of the validity of the claim. Due to existing law, the shipowner pays the award decided by the NCMB immediately upon release of the decision even if a party appeals the NCMB decision.

Most of the time, when the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals overturns or modifies the decisions in favour of the shipowners, the seafarers are unable to restitute the owners of the garnished amounts. Despite a categorical ruling by the appellate courts that judgments unduly awarded to seafarers were wrongfully made and should be returned to the shipowners, the Filipino seafarer claimants are unable to return the awarded amounts.

As of September 2019, the Filipino seafarer claimants were unable to return a total amount of $34,500,000 or about P1,748,891,250 to their employer shipowners. If the NCMB or NLRC rendered a quality decision in the first place, then, the number of reversals at the appellate courts should not be this significant.

Eroding Philippine Seafaring From Global Shipping

It is widely known in the seafaring industry that the seafarers' inability to return the award is mainly because they did not receive the full award in the first place. Many seafarers would eventually grumble that their lawyer receives up to 50 percent of the award and even more. This practice is so widespread that Republic Act 10706, otherwise known as the "Seafarers Protection Act" states: "SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. It shall be the policy of the State to promote and protect every Filipino seafarer desiring to work overseas by securing the best possible terms and conditions of employment. As some unscrupulous individuals have taken advantage of the plight of our seafarers who met an accident, illness, or death in the course of their service by exploiting the compensation system, our seafarers have fallen prey to an unfair scheme where ambulance chasers charge exorbitant fees, with the promise of huge monetary award. Towards this end, such practice shall be declared unlawful."

Unfortunately, RA 10706 was unable to curb the unbridled crew claims which continued to increase in numbers despite the law's passage. More damaging is the persistent

culture of employers "settling cases under duress" to mitigate their losses. Too often, considering that a just case has only a one percent chance of winning, the shipowner employer is forced to settle cases rather than drag itself into litigation which they know they would lose anyway. The total amount settled under duress has not been calculated, however, there are indications that it could be much bigger than the amount of quantifiable damages of P1.749 billion.

Impact Of Unreturned Awards

Aside from the Philippines' striking reduction of market share in global shipping, there are other known consequences to this unbridled crew claims situation in the Philippines, including an increasingly stringent pre-employment medical examinations as well as the lowering of the age limit of the employable crew. Most shipowners now require a very thorough executive medical checks of their seafarers for every ship joining because there are many instances where the NCMB renders the shipowner liable for seafarers' medical conditions that are not even work-related such as pre-existing conditions, congenital conditions or degenerative diseases.

There is a growing number of shipowners who avoid hiring a crew who are 55 years old or older as older age comes with higher risks of medical complications. Arguably, this age limit is more strictly enforced on the highly litigious Filipino seafarer than on any other nationality considering that any flexibility on the part of the employer shipowner could result in unnecessary liability.

Spurious seafarer claims have been ruled favourably by NCMB. For example, a seafarer involved in a fistfight onboard against another seafarer had been granted a "total and full permanent disability" amounting to PhP7 million to be paid for by the shipowner.

A growing number of domestic and international maritime stakeholders have come together to address this issue before the Philippines drives away the shipowner employers. These stakeholders include the ALMA Maritime Group, International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC), Associated Marine Officers and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (Amosup), International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), Maritime Industry Authority (Marina), and United Filipino Seafarers (UFS).

Ultimately, these groups are fighting to retain the jobs of the Filipino crew; after all, over 400,000 people and families are affected plus the countless personnel employed in training centers, travel companies, medical clinics, manning agencies, and all ancillary and auxiliary sectors around seafaring. The government must recognise the problem and should be first to protect the jobs of the Filipinos and safeguard seafaring claims from mishandling.

Atty Iris Baguilat

The questions we need to ask government are:

1. Is there a policy shift of the Philippine government to step down from its position as a premier seafarer supplying country?
2. Considering that the Department of Labor and Employment's primary objective is job generation and a commission under the Department itself has a key objective of forcing settlement by shipowners regardless of liability, thus, rendering Filipino seafarers not competitive. Is it an explicit indication that the Philippine government would rather generate domestic employment rather than overseas employment? If such is a case, what is the locally generated employment prepared by the government for its 400,000 seafarers and the countless persons employed in seafaring ancillary businesses?

If it is not the Philippine government's intended result to render Filipino seafarers not competitive, then, it is time for the government to stop killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. SF

Atty Iris Baguilat is the current president of Döhle Seafront Crewing (Manila), and founding member and trustee of the Association of Licensed Manning Agencies (ALMA) Maritime Group Trustee, Maritime Law Association of the Philippines (Marlaw).

Originally published by The Manila Times on 25th May 2022 https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/05/25/business/maritime/ambulance-chasing-threat-to-seafaring/1844848

‘The final solution’

The industry has been tackling solutions to the problem that resulted in millions of dollars in cost of mishandled crew claims due to ambulance chasing. But according to Joint Manning Group (JMG) spokesman Ericson Marquez, industry players seem to have forgotten the root cause.

In spite of having a standard employment contract (SEC) issued and approved by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and with shipowners and crew managers who sat down with all collective agreements with all maritime unions around in order to resort to fair and reasonable agreements between the two parties, he says “the labour courts are setting aside the gradings [of crew claims] filed in favour or against the agreement of the two parties directly involved in the interpretation of the law,” referring to stipulations in the contractual obligations signed between the employer and the seafarer.

Marquez explains the solution is already in the Magna Carta for Seafarers Bill, which is expected to be passed into law after languishing in the legislative mill for over a decade. Grading a disability is not only an agreement between the two parties but is a part of the law, he stresses.

Marquez appealed to industry leaders during the recent forum: “It’s time to look at this problem on the general good of the seafaring industry. We are protecting the seafarer but we need to protect the source of their employment. Let us not look at the sole interest of the seafarers when discussing this problem. On the other hand, we won’t look at the sole interest of employers in making sure that our seafarers are granted proper disability benefits.”

He sees this step as a solution to show the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) and National Labour Relations Council (NLRC) that “both labour and management are one in telling the labour courts that their decisions are wrong because it is not the intent of the law or the contract” signed by the parties.

“If we get together and sign a document and submit it to both NLRC and NCMB and POEA alongside the Department of Migrant Workers, I think they will listen to both of us, management and union,” suggests Marquez. The JMG spokesman proposes this needs to be a priority rather than finding a solution in the Escrow Bill. “We will not even arrive at escrow if the court will just read the agreement if there is a disability [case], for instance.”

He insists the industry can always go back to the drawing board and find out how they can strengthen the doctor’s advice on the disability grading wherever a particular seafarer’s case falls under. “We are the industry not the government.” Marquez insists, as he wishes this to be the “final solution” for the whole seafaring industry. SF

Ericson Marquez

IKAW NA KAYA ANG SUSUNOD NA MILYONARYO?

Pag-IBIG DAGDAG-IPON RAFFLE PROMO PART 3

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A good, dedicated soldier

A tribute to Jose Raul "Butch" Lamug, writes Andy Dalisay

He came to serve two generations of leaders when he accepted a job in a maritime union and later on headed its mother union's newly-setup regional office in Asia Pacific.

Yet, when Jose Raul V Lamug left for his new post in Singapore in 2018, colleagues and friends in Manila almost never felt his absence – as though he was just attending meetings abroad for AMOSUP.

Each time he came home during the first few months from his new job, Jose Raul or "Butch" to colleagues and friends, would just drop by, sit at his old desk and chat with union officers and the staff. Most of the time, he would hand over chocolates to the office staff.

Butch began his career in the maritime industry in 1995 when AMOSUP founder and former president, Captain Gregorio S Oca, recruited him from an accounting firm as an "assistant to the president." The captain saw Butch as a dependable "right hand" man fit for the vital role.

Butch joined AMOSUP when it was just in the process of building up its orgnisational strength in the employment of Filipino seafarers in international shipping following the success of mixed manning agreement from Japanese shipowners. At the same time, European owners and shipmanagers had begun to look into the Philippines as an alternative source of crew for their merchant fleet.

> **"Butch was a good and dedicated soldier. Now, it's time for him to report back to Captain Gregorio Oca, and to the big boss, Our Lord God."**

Later in his responsibilities, the captain let Butch tag along in his frequent trips overseas for business meetings with shipowners or negotiating collective agreements both with owners and heads of foreign unions. There were times he would just travel by himself abroad as an alter ego of the union president along with other AMOSUP officers.

Butch was always prepared to deliver his piece during open forums. He is sharp and knowledgeable, always exuding

confidence while answering questions from the press or from brothers and sisters from other unions.

The AMOSUP president's assistant eventually gained the full trust of his superior, and reciprocated it with his loyalty, passion and diligence at work. He was a good soldier and did his job well until the union's founding president breathed his last in November 2010.

Butch kept his loyalty to the union and carried on with his duties and obligations. When Dr Conrad Oca succeeded his father, the president's assistant continued the same central role. He was instrumental in the smooth transition of the organisation's leadership following the loss of its founder and former president.

The long years of AMOSUP's relationship with its mother union – the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) – paved the way to a much bigger, future role waiting for Butch. The global unions federation eyed the president's assistant from AMOSUP, which is the largest maritime union in the Asia Pacific, to be its regional head/secretary for its planned regional office.

As an area of growth, ITF wanted "to see more unions in the region affiliating with the ITF family," which Butch could aptly and confidently manage. So, in September 2017 as the ITF announced setting up its office in Singapore, Butch's new role was confirmed.

The ITF believes "the location and stability of Singapore make it the ideal hub for this work and we know the new office is going to play a vital role in coordinating and managing our activities across Asia Pacific." The preparations for the new office in the island state made Butch a lot busier. He travelled to different parts of the region and met with heads amongst ITF affiliated unions.

Butch's recent visit to Manila with ITF general secretary Stephen Cotton was the last leg of his trip prior to his fateful flight to Singapore. Though it seemed to be just like any of his usual travels to his homeland, nobody expected it to be his last.

Apart from his loving family, he had the chance to meet with the union leaders of various transport industries in the Philippines. He and Dr Oca assisted Mr. Cotton to preside over the ITF National Coordinating Committee meeting.

A graduate of Ateneo de Manila University in 1979 with Bachelor of Arts degree, major in Economics, Butch was a former corporate secretary in one of the country's leading accounting firms and other consulting companies before joining AMOSUP. In the union, he was also a governing board member and corporate secretary of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) and the administrator of the Professional Career Development Centre (PCDC).

Last May 2022, his family and the AMOSUP officers received the sad news of Butch's passing in Manila. The APAC Regional Head "passed away unexpectedly during his flight from Manila to Singapore, just minutes right before the flight taking off," according to Cyndi Kok, the regional coordinator at the ITF APAC Regional Office (Singapore).

Butch spent a total of 22 years with AMOSUP. "Butch was a good and dedicated soldier. Now, it's time for him to report back to Captain Gregorio Oca, and to the big boss, Our Lord God," shares Dr. Conrado Oca in his eulogy for Butch.

Butch was survived by his wife, Lissa, children, Angelica, Mona and Cara, and his sister, Nanette. SF

Seafarers win some, lose some at MLC meet

Latest Special Tripartite Committee meeting ended with agreement on several changes including mandatory internet access on board but failed on others such as repatriation accord

Working for long periods at sea can be isolating. A lack of contact with the outside world can have profound implications on seafarers' wellbeing, and the industry saw the worst effects during the pandemic.

The unions' winning the right to mandatory social connectivity for crewmembers – including internet access – is a cause celebre in updates to the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC). However, shipowners and governments may decide to charge for it.

As an international treaty designed to protect seafarers' rights, one of MLC's provisions is that governments, shipowners and seafarers meet periodically to keep the convention under review and up to date. The treaty was ratified by more than 100 countries representing 90% of the world fleet.

"We've learned a lot during the Covid period and that has been driving us to improve the MLC," said a statement from Mark Dickinson, vice chair of the International Transport Workers' Federation's (ITF) Seafarers' Section, STC vice-president and spokesperson for the Seafarers Group.

"Being able to keep in touch with family and friends isn't just a nice-to-have, it's a basic human right. That's why we fought so hard for seafarers to be given internet access and to have a mandatory provision in the MLC," stressed Dickinson.

Despite the fact that ships already have the technology to provide internet access, shipowners dug their heels in over the change. They insisted that they should be able to limit access and be able to charge seafarers for internet connectivity.

The Seafarers Group lobbied to ensure that any charges levied on seafarers remain an exception, and if any charges are imposed that they are reasonable. Governments were also encouraged to increase internet access in ports and associated anchorages without cost to seafarers.

The latest Special Tripartite Committee (STC) meeting ended in Geneva on 13 May, with agreement on several changes including a commitment to better social connectivity for seafarers.

Repatriation Rights Remain Archaic

The meeting, however, failed to reach an agreement on changes to the MLC's terms on repatriation under the MLC that were being demanded by the Seafarers Group. The Seafarers Group demanded that the breadth of shipowners' responsibility to repatriate seafarers at the end of their contracts be extended to the point at which seafarers land at their home location.

For most seafarers, the journey home is considerably longer than

shipowners currently cover. A Filipino, for example, who lives in Davao may find themselves dumped at Manila Airport 1,600 miles away from home. He will then have a subsequent air journey of around 2.5 hours, costing him PhP2,500–3,000. In that final leg, the employer is no longer covering insurance, medical or other costs.

As observed over the course of the pandemic, many seafarers have been detrimentally impacted by quarantine measures introduced in many countries, which has exacerbated the risk of disruptions and costs to seafarers to get to their actual residence.

"Shipowners outright rejected the proposal despite attempts at providing a compromise," said Dickinson. "As seafarers' representatives, we're disappointed. We're buoyed by the support of some governments, but still, it is the first time in the history of the STC that one group has rejected an amendment outright."

ITF General Secretary Stephen Cotton said that the refusal of shipowners to negotiate on this issue is heart-breaking given what seafarers who were caught up in Covid restrictions endured.

"It's a shame that after all the collaboration during the Covid period, when we worked together across the industry to defend seafarers' rights, that shipowners have failed to engage in dialogue at all, especially over such an important issue for their workforce. I'm sure that shipping executives' costs are covered door to door, why shouldn't a seafarer deserve the same right, especially given the cost-of-living crisis that many are facing," he stated.

A group of EU governments also sought an amendment to ensure a clearer commitment to the de facto maximum period of service of 11 months that seafarers can serve at sea before shipowners are obliged to get them home. Shipowners, and some governments, insisted on flexibility and requiring seafarers 12 months sea time to qualify, especially for trainees. The Seafarers Group refused to concede, citing fatigue and safety concerns.

"It is hard to believe that in 2022 we have to argue that 12-months service is too long," said Cotton. "And this doesn't even account for the fact that crewing levels have halved, and the reality that shore leave is now more restricted than ever. Shipowners say it is a freedom of choice for seafarers, but they have all the power, so it actually amounts to forced labour," he added.

Other changes

The STC did agree a number of significant changes to the MLC, including:

- Personal protective equipment must be made available in sizes that suit seafarers on board, including for women.
- Improved access to free drinking water, quality provisions and balanced diets were agreed as part of food and catering rules.
- Clarification on responsibilities for governments to provide information to seafarers on mandatory systems of protection that must be put in place by recruitment and placement agencies.

The STC also adopted several resolutions that will guide the future work of the Committee. These included further work on the eradication of sexual harassment at sea, the sustainability of the financial security provisions provided by P&I Clubs and insurers, and the ability of seafarers to enforce seafarers' employment agreements against shipowners.

In his closing remarks, Dickinson said he was disappointed that since the MLC entered into force, it appears that shipowners focus was on agreeing technical changes, rather than resolutions that support the continuous improvement of seafarers' conditions.

"They have lost sight of the original tripartite vision of the MLC to enhance the minimum standards for seafarers. Unless this changes path, it will have profound consequences on the future of the shipping industry."

ITF General Secretary Cotton called on the industry to continue to collectively tackle challenges that face the industry and seize on opportunities to make shipping a decent, safe and career for seafarers, especially for attracting women into the industry.

"Through Covid, ITF and ICS worked so well together, and with other shipping partners such as IMEC, so it would be an incredible shame if we didn't continue to work together in that spirit. Decent work for seafarers must be at the heart of this." SF

Source: *https://www.itfseafarers.org/en/news/seafarers-win-commitment-mandatory-internet-access-international-law*

MAAP further strengthens simulation-based training of its cadets

The delivery contract with Kongsberg Digital advances the academy's new and extensive Innovation Lab equipment

The AMOSUP-managed Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) is further augmenting its simulation-based training equipment with the delivery of a range of maritime simulators. The academy has been a first adopter of new simulation-based training tools for years, with Kongsberg Digital's simulator systems central to the future-oriented lab.

Its recent signing of a contract with Kongsberg Digital further geared the academy's new and extensive Innovation Lab with an already wide-ranging K-sim products, strengthening MAAP's position as an institution of excellence for maritime education and innovation in the region.

The agreement, which consists of a Long-Term System Support Program (LTSSP), includes the delivery of Kongsberg Digital's cutting-edge maritime simulators which places emphasis on Digital Twin, Shore Control, Remote Control Center and MASS (maritime autonomous surface ship) technologies. The investment will enable MAAP to enhance training and assessment, and to conduct advanced research in, for example, e-Navigation, and validate operational concepts, including smart and autonomous ships.

As part of the Digital Twin initiative, Kongsberg Digital's Vessel Insight will be installed on the academy's training vessel enabling MAAP's students to take a leading role with first-hand experience on vessel-to-cloud data infrastructure. This can capture and give them the ability to analyse vessel data over time.


Image: Kamaya Point

Also covered by the system extension is the delivery of a brand-new celestial navigation simulator system, which allows instructors to provide trainee officers with hands-on experience in a safe, controlled, and realistic environment meeting the standards laid out in the STCW requirements.

In addition, Kongsberg Digital will deliver new consoles for MAAP´s existing K-Sim Navigation bridge simulators, as well as a mid-life upgrade of its motion platform, including four class-B K-Sim Engine room simulators. This will extend and complete MAAP´s wide range of existing K-Sim simulators covering various training purposes, like ship handling/navigation, engine room management, cargo handling and advanced firefighting simulator system.

Consolidating its position as a leading adopter of the new digital technology, MAAP started using Kongsberg Digital's K-Sim Connect platform in 2019 for cloud-based simulation training to complement classroom education. Since then,

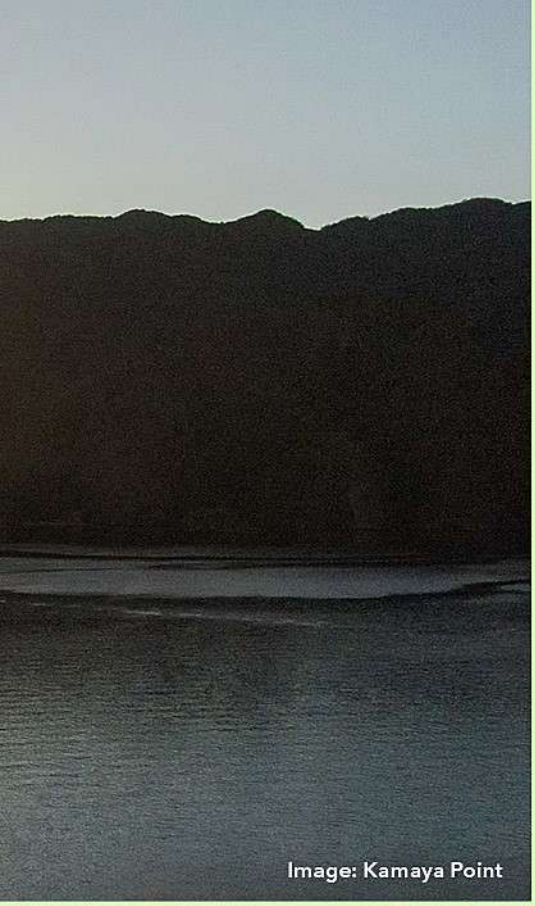

Image: Kamaya Point

the cloud-based K-Sim Engine training applications have allowed the academy's students to practice and prepare for their exams anytime, anywhere and at their own pace.

Kongsberg Digital will soon launch its latest extension to the company's cloud- based simulation portfolio, the K-Sim Navigation, and the contract with MAAP includes the delivery of this brand-new training application. MAAP will thus be one of the first training centers world-wide to start using it for blended learning.

MAAP President Admiral Eduardo Ma Santos, says: "MAAP is a leading institution of excellence for maritime education and training in the Asia-Pacific region, but the worlds of maritime training and simulation never stand still. Our longstanding relationship with Kongsberg Digital has consistently equipped us to retain our position as a pioneer in the use of new simulation-based training tools."

"With this contract, MAAP is demonstrating regional leadership and a willingness to invest in the future," says Andreas Jagtøyen, EVP Kongsberg Digital. "As a clear pioneer in the use of new simulation-based training tools and cloud-based solutions, MAAP is investing and demonstrating serious intent when it comes to the future education and training of seafarers. Our relationship with MAAP goes back decades, and we are immensely proud to be trusted by this respected institution. We are looking forward to delivering our K-Sim and Vessel Insight products and contributing to a very exciting innovation initiative." SF

Image: Kamaya Point

Snippets Of Life at Sea. MAAP's training ship Kapitan Felix Oca (KFO) hosted on board the more than 130 members of the academy's Versileas Class of 2023 in preparation for their one-year shipboard training overseas. The IMEC-sponsored cadets enabled to familiarise themselves snippets of life at sea as the 5,000-dwt ship sailed from Orion port in Bataan, where the 135 students embarked for their actual training last 30th May. Sailing to Coron, Palawan with three days on anchor, the midshipmen have familiarised themselves within the areas of operations such as safety, deck and engine watchkeeping, team building, and sea chanty. (Text and image: Kamaya Point) SF

‘Excellent performance, strong work ethic and loyalty to the company’ are key to do well, Class of 2022 told

Image: Van Villanueva

IMMAJ chairman Toshihito Inoue delivers his message to graduates of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP)

Having a licence means that you possess the competence. However, it does not necessarily mean that you would be promoted right away smoothly.

That was the keen advice International Mariners’ Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ) chair Mr Toshihito Inoue told graduates during MAAP’s latest graduation rites. IMMAJ is an organisation of Japanese shipowners responsible in negotiating labour standards for non-Japanese seafarers on board FOC vessels, which currently comprise 90% of Japan’s merchant marine fleet.

“At a certain point in your career you may feel that you’re not valued fairly or you are behind your peers in promotion,” Inoue-san, the guest speaker at the commencement rites of the academy’s Class of 2022 (first batch), said.

He advised them: “If you find yourself in that kind of situation in the future, it is not the end of a story or end of the line. Never give up! You must continue to study diligently and establish good rapport with your colleagues and superiors for you to prove how good, useful and important you really are.”

In his experience, Inoue-san stressed, “it is always through excellent performance, strong work ethic and loyalty to the company that one can have trust from [in order to succeed], not only with your seniors but your employers.” He told the senior cadets that “wherever you may go there could be a few temptations that are hard to resist,” as the IMMAJ chair reminded them they are “about to set sail for the new stage of your life” and “your journey as full-pledged seafarers,”

He added: “Whatever may happen in your long journey from now wherever sea is calm my advice to you is that you should be humble, patient, disciplined, confident… and grateful to those who had supported you.”

Inoue-san expressed confidence that when the graduates “constantly lived by those mottos you will be just like your seniors and

'LONG LIVE MAAP!!'. As an academy tradition during graduation, the last one to come up on stage has the privilege to shout "Long live MAAP!". Ens. Moses S. Zamora PN (Res.), from Valencia City, screams at the top of his lungs the very words every alumnus wishes MAAP to be. (Text and Image: **Midn 1Cl Van Villanueva**) SF

predecessors" as he advised them not "to be afraid of failure and to maintain your desire to take on new challenges."

A total of 151 senior graduates received their diplomas in Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transportation (BSMT) and BS in Maritime Engineering (BSMarE) at the commencement exercises held at the MAAP parade ground at Alas-asin, Mariveles, Bataan campus on 27th May 2022.

The list of BSMT finishers consisted of 75 male and five female, whilst BS MarE had 68 male and three female. The second batch of MAAP Class of 2022 graduates will receive their diplomas in December 2022. The Academy's graduate programme also conferred certificates to two candidates with master's degree in Marine Transportation. SF

Toshihito Inoue

Image: Van Villanueva

Delivering drastic responses to greater challenges

The Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) commencement rites of the Class of 2022 were the first held public since post-pandemic. In this welcome remarks, MAAP Chairman, Dr Conrado Oca, recounts how the Academy and cadets weather the storms of the public health crisis in continuing their mission of maritime education

It certainly has been a difficult time for all and another challenging academic year for our students and this academic community. The educational demands posed by the pandemic is wide ranging. Even the simplest protocol of "masking" in the learning environment is burdensome for teachers. Imagine teaching through and communicating with your students with masks on.

However, through the leadership of Vice Admiral [Eduardo] Santos, MAAP had taken drastic responses to address greater challenges including the shift to virtual and remote learning, massive upgrades in the technological resources and infrastructure, and designing a learning continuity plan with recalibrated policies on instructional delivery and course assessments. These innovative projects, informed and directed by a nuanced understanding of the students' online learning experience in the last three academic years, has enabled MAAP to continue with its mission of training future maritime officers for our country.
We are proud to share with every one that despite the limitations, MAAP has carried out its educational mission, without interruption. While most had ceased operations, MAAP seamlessly shifted to remote learning and continued to fulfill the vision of our founder, Captain Gregorio S Oca. I am equally sure that from where he is right now, my late father is looking down with pride and great favour for all of us.

Our graduation ceremony today may be scaled-down compared to the celebrations of the past. Yet the simplicity of this celebration does not diminish its essence including an acknowledgement of scholastic and social achievements of each of the graduating class. The class of 2022, in particular, has weathered a lot of storms. They have sacrificed much during their stay here in the academy, particularly the absence of face-to-face instructions.

However, their lack of social interaction may have been compensated by drastic improvements in the individual students' digital literacy skills, self-directed learning or learning autonomy, which are mandatory skill sets in today's digital world. These too, they say, are the foundations of lifelong learning.

Today, we highlight the personal triumphs of each graduate over their rigorous academic training. These students have completed their academic training. These students have completed their academic requirements for their

bachelors' programme along with their contemporaries. They have experienced a lot of highs and lows during the early part of the pandemic, yet they have developed a resilience that many of us never thought.

> **"They have sacrificed much during their stay here in the academy, particularly the absence of face-to-face instructions."**

From that perspective, we are given another cause to celebrate, for this graduation serves as a testimony of each graduate's resilience and grit, commitment and dedication.

Finally, this graduation marks not just the end, but the beginning of the transition to another amazing chapter in the lives of the graduates which we are all privileged to share today.

So, allow me to greet once again to meet all the graduates: Congratulations for making it to this very much anticipated day. I am sure that your lives will be better because you have literally invested your personal time and skills in your education.

I would not want to miss this opportunity to greet and congratulate the parents, along with the members of the faculty and staff. This celebration is yours as well in grateful recognition for the guidance, support, and love that you have provided your children or students, especially through their probationary period, recognition, isolation and locked down periods. You are all instrumental in shaping and molding the character of these graduates. You have paved the path of these graduates." SF

TOMSP AWARDEE. Newly commissioned Ens. Keith Aiken M. Pajarillo PN (Res.) receives a bible from the MAAP President, Vice Admiral Eduardo Santos, after getting his Exemplary Award for being one of the Ten Outstanding Maritime Students of the Philippines (TOMSP) in 2019. Pajarillo hails from Quezon City and is also a Bravo Buccaneer. (Text and Image: **Midn 1Cl Van Villanueva**) SF

THE FINAL SALUTE. Graduates render their final salute to the parading midshipmen as they are about to shout their last hurrah. Those who will be left behind also make three cheers as a salutation to those who will leave them behind. (Text and Image: **Midn 1Cl Van Villanueva**) SF

Image: Kamaya Point

Report explores human element in maritime digitalisation

Inmarsat and Thetius highlight generally positive relationship between seafarers and emerging maritime technologies but suggests more needs to be done to alter crew perceptions of digitalisation

A new report published by Inmarsat, the world leader in global, mobile satellite communications, indicates that seafarers are largely in favour of greater digitalisation but that a sizeable proportion of those working at sea also fear shrinking job opportunities. Compiled by maritime innovation consultancy Thetius, ***Seafarers in the Digital Age – Prioritising Human Element in Maritime Digital Transformation*** draws on the results of a survey of 200 maritime professionals.

After canvassing seagoing and shore-based shipping personnel for views on the impacts of digitalisation on their health and welfare, on training, careers and job retention, and on performance, Thetius describes the relationship between seafarers and emerging maritime technologies as "broadly positive". However, responses also reveal that shipping companies and technology providers have work to do to change crew misgivings over digital transformation at sea.

In a standout finding, the report informs that over 1 in 3 seafarers choosing personal access to digital technology as the key factor when considering a new employer. In fact, as an inducement, internet access ranks higher than pay (chosen by fewer than 1 in 4). The Seafarer Happiness Index (SHI) for Q1 2022 indicates crew well-being dropping to its lowest level since the SHI was founded in 2015, with limited access to basic internet connectivity given as a primary cause, Thetius notes.

Encouragingly, Seafarers in the Digital Age captures a shipping industry responding quickly to crew connectivity needs: 78% of ship operators surveyed reported having installed internet connectivity on board for the personal use by crew in the last five years.

However, the report also highlights the way seafarers see risks in the wider deployment of digital technologies. Half of the seafarers responding expected job opportunities to decline by 25% within five years.

"If half of our seafarers believe that traditional job opportunities at sea are disappearing, as this research suggests, more needs to be done to highlight how digitalisation will help jobs to evolve or create entirely new roles," said Matthew Kenney, Head of Research and Intelligence, Thetius, in a statement.

"Digital tools and connectivity can create happier and more productive ships, while newer, better ways of working are possible. Instead of allowing maritime professionals to become distrustful or even fearful of digital and emerging technologies, the sector must recognise the continued importance of human capital and work hard to bring crews along on the journey."

Ben Palmer, president at Inmarsat Maritime said: "The inclusion of mandatory internet access to the Maritime Labour Convention in May represents a paradigm shift for seafaring rights, putting into law what responsible owners already fully understand: high-quality onboard internet has become a key indicator of crew welfare and hence recruitment and retention of high quality personnel. Today, it also provides the basis for new and exciting next-generation job roles at sea, as well as supporting safer operations, greater sustainability and productivity gains." SF

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Mental health training, acoustic night mark AMOSUP celebrations of Seafarer's Day 2022

To celebrate the Day of the Seafarer 2022, AMOSUP marked the occasion with the launch of a mental health training in the day, and a dinner and entertainment night for union members.

The Union, along with Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), Gregorio Oca Leadership Development (GOLD) Foundation and AMOSUP Youth, launched the 'Mental Re-berth: Berthing in the Seas of Adversity' on 25 June at the JSU-AMOSUP Sports Complex and Maritime Museum, Malate, Manila.

The one-day training course aims to equip seafarers with extensive knowledge in managing mental health issues using positive approaches, as well as using this knowledge to help others. The training course, which attracted over 40 participants from both upcoming ang vacationing seafarers, was held towards its mission to produce resilient and adaptable seafarers who can overcome mental health challenges and recover from setbacks brought by the working and living environment on board ships.

Vice Admiral Eduardo Ma R Santos, AMOSUP EVP and MAAP president, graced the occasion with an inspiring message on the importance of problem management being encountered while at sea providing good insight on how to overcome adversities and address mental health issues.

At the union's headquarters in Intramuros, members shared a meal and music during an acoustic night with live bands to commemorate the dedication, perseverance and sacrifice of seafarers to keep world trade moving.

It was a night of fellowship full of good vibes and solidarity, thanks to the members who joined in and shared their time in the celebration on the Day of the Seafarer Acoustic Night at the AMOSUP Convention Hall and meal at the Sailor's Home!

In his message, AMOSUP President, Dr Conrado Oca, praised the seafarers and extended his heartfelt thanks: "Sa nakalipas na mahigit dalawang taon ipinakita ninyo sa buong mundo ang inyong galing, tibay at kakayahang lampasan ang anumang hamon ng pagbabarko sa gitna ng pandemya. Kasama ang mga katuwang natin sa industriya at sa pamahalaan ay naiangat natin ang Filipino seafarers bilang key workers providing an essential service to frontliners."

(In the past two and a half years, you have shown the world your excellence, resilience and your ability to overcome the challenges at sea in the midst of the pandemic. Alongside our social partners in the industry and government, we were able to elevate the status of the Filipino seafarers as key workers providing an essential service to frontliners.)

"Sa bawat byahe gumiginhawa ang buhay ng pamilya n'yo. Sa bawat paglalakbay itinataas ninyo ang bandila ng Pilipino. Patuloy ang aming dasal para sa inyong mabuting kalusugan, kaligtasan at tagumpay."
(In every voyage, you provide a comfortable life to your family. With each journey, you raise the flag of the Filipino people. We continue to pray for your good health, safety and success).

Muli, maligayang araw ng mga mandaragat! (Again, Happy Seafarer's Day!!) SF

Berthing in the seas of adversity

This innovative psychological intervention provides skills to improve management of practical problems and associated common mental health problems through the provision of four strategies

Like a ship that needs a vertical front for safe, secure loading and discharging of its cargoes, the human mind requires its own berth to facilitate acquisition and sharing of knowledge. Simply put, it takes time to train current and future seafarers to unload and transfer this knowledge to help others in overcoming mental health challenges.

On Seafarer's Day, AMOSUP launched the 'Mental Re-berth: Berthing in the Seas of Adversity', a one-day training course designed to facilitate loading of knowledge about mental health.

R-Dee Diones, Department of Shipboard Training Coordinator at the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific, the lead facilitator of the training course, says the mental re-berth project aims to equip both future and current seafarers with "extensive knowledge in helping others. The project functions towards a mission to produce resilient and adaptable seafarers who can overcome mental health challenges and recover from setbacks brought about by working and living environment aboard vessels."

The objectives include sharing of information on positive approaches on how to look after each other's mental health on board; raise awareness about common health issues among seafarers; upskill seafarers to increase knowledge in positive mental health interventions; and teach seafarers about non-violent communications.

Non-violent communications, Diones points out, is an approach based on principles of non-violence, which is "not a technique to end a disagreement, but rather a method designed to increase empathy and improve the quality of life of those who utilise the method and the people around them."

Developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), this innovative psychological intervention provides skills to improve management of practical problems and associated common mental health problems through the provision of four strategies: problem solving counselling, stress management, behavioral activation, and strengthening social support.
He says the training provides an opportunity to present mental health situations from different countries, stressing that it also "helps future trainers to understand mental health from a wider perspective, as well as foster awareness to the current global mental health needs." SF

REPOSITORY OF SEAFARERS' SOCIAL HISTORY. On this the Day of the Seafarer, the ITF Seafarers' Trust (ITFST) is launching a new seafarers' photo competition: LIFE AT SEA 2022. ITFST Head Katie Higginbottom explained: "In 2020 we received almost 3,000 remarkable submissions documenting seafarers' experiences during the pandemic and crew change crisis. Striking imagery combined with touching commentary providing an instant insight into seafarers' living and working conditions. We followed up with Out of Sight, Not Out of Mind in 2021, adding a wealth of portraits of seafarers by seafarers to the archive. Through this project we have been able to engage directly with seafarers helping inform our grant making strategy and enriching our understanding of current issues. The task ahead is to develop the archive as a unique repository of seafarers' social history and use it to reach a wider audience through museums and galleries around the world. Competitions are fun, but the serious work is in raising the profile of seafarers, giving them a voice and educating a global public about global supply chains and the seafarers who keep them moving." SF

Australia grants shore leave

AMSA put deed to word for the long-suffering mariners who have been denied such right for the past two and half years

Maritime unions have applauded the move of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) to enforce an article in the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) requiring shipowners and shipmasters to allow shore leave and access to shore-based facilities.

A marine notice AMSA issued has drawn attention to the importance of providing shore leave to seafarers for ships visiting Australian ports.

It says companies, owners and masters of ships are reminded of the requirement under MLC, 2006 for approval of shore leave. MLC Regulation 2.4, Para 2 states: "Seafarers shall be granted shore leave to benefit their health and well-being and consistent with the operational requirements of their positions".

The move follows the request of Maritime Union of Australia (MUA), the ITF and seafarers' welfare providers to put deed to word to allow shore leave for long suffering mariners who have been denied for the past two and half years.

AMSA says that companies are responsible for crew health, safety and wellbeing. Shore leave and access to shore-based welfare facilities is key to seafarer physical and mental health recovery and reduces risks of fatigue.

States and territories around Australia along with Commonwealth agencies have reported relaxing COVID protocols. Whilst it is recognised that the risks associated with COVID are still highly relevant and cannot be eliminated entirely, says AMSA, there are suitable and acceptable means of allowing seafarers to access shore leave safely.

It expects that companies strongly consider the benefits to seafarer wellbeing and recovery when assessing the risks of allowing shore leave to crews. AMSA reminds companies that the decision to grant shore leave should not be based on financial implications.

AMSA Port State Control officers may take action when there are clear grounds to believe the master or officers in charge of ships have not complied with the requirements as set out in the MLC 2006, for seafarer shore leave. SF

‘Saludo kami sa inyong hindi mapapantayang dedikasyon at kakayahang makisama at magtrabaho ng buong katapatan’

Dr Conrado Oca’s message on the Day of the Seafarer 2022

Sa minamahal naming miyembro ng AMOSUP, isang mapagpalaya at maligayang araw ng mga mandaragat!

Sa nakalipas na mahigit dalawang taon ipinakita ninyo sa buong mundo ang inyong galing, tibay at kakayahang lampasan ang anumang hamon ng pagbabarko sa gitna ng pandemya. Kasama ang mga katuwang natin sa industriya at sa pamahalaan ay naiangat natin ang Filipino seafarers bilang key workers providing an essential service o frontliners. Hindi naglaon ay naging prayoridad kayo sa vaccination program ng bansa.

Hindi pa rin natatapos ang krisis bagkus ay nadaragdagan pa ang mga sakuna sa iba’t-ibang panig ng mundo. Pero anuman ang mangyari nandiyan pa rin kayo, ginagampanan ang inyong tungkulin. Saludo kami sa inyo sa inyong hindi mapapantayang dedikasyon at kakayahang makisama at magtrabaho ng buong katapatan.

Kaya naman patuloy naming sinisikap na makapagpahatid ng dekalidad na serbisyo sa inyo at sa inyong mga pamilya upang mapangalagaan ang inyong kalusugan, ang mga pangangailangan, ang mga social protection ngayon at sa hinaharap. Mahalaga ang inyong papel at kontribusyon hindi lamang sa ating bansa kundi sa buong mundo. Kaya naman lubos ang aming pagkilala at pasasalamat sa inyo.

Sa bawat byahe gumiginhawa ang buhay ng pamilya n’yo. Sa bawat paglalakbay itinataas ninyo ang bandila ng Pilipino. Patuloy ang aming dasal para sa inyong mabuting kalusugan, kaligtasan at tagumpay.

Muli maligayang araw ng mga mandaragat! Mabuhay tayong lahat! SF

(English translation)

‘We salute your unparalleled dedication and ability to co-operate and work faithfully’

To our dear AMOSUP members, a liberating and happy Day of the Seafarer

Over the past two and a half years you have shown to the world your excellence, resilience and your ability to overcome the challenges at sea in the midst of the pandemic. Alongside our social partners in the industry and the government, we were able to elevate the status of the Filipino seafarers as key workers or frontliners. Eventually, you became a priority in the country’s vaccination programme.

While the health crisis persists, other incidents unfold in other parts of the world. But amidst everything that’s been happening, you’re still there, performing your duties. We salute your unparalleled dedication and ability to co-operate and work faithfully.

We continue to do our best to deliver quality services to you and your family so that we can take good care of your health, needs and social protection now and in the future. Your crucial role and contributions are important, not only to our country, but also to the entire world. We wholeheartedly recognise and thank you.

With each voyage, you provide a comfortable life to your family. With each journey, you raise the flag of the Filipino people. We continue to pray for your good health, safety and success.

Again, Happy Day of the Seafarer! Long live us all! SF

Department of Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade's message

Sa ating mga mandaragat,

Ako po ay bumabati sa inyo ngayong araw na ito ng isang makabuluhan, mahigaya at kaaya-ayang Day of the Seafarer. *Napakahalaga po ng araw kung saan ating kinikilala ang mga bayani sa karagatan – ang mga seafarers. Sila po ang* movers of international trade and enablers of global economy. *Sila po ay nagbibigay ng connectivity sa atin hindi lamang sa archipelago ng Pilipinas kundi sa buong mundo.*

Mahalagang bigyan natin ng importansya ang ating mga seafarers *pagka't sila po, lalo't higit ngayong pandemya ay isang malakas na susi upang patuloy na tumatakbo ang ating ekonomiya.*

At the onset of COVID-19, Filipino seafarers have been on the frontlines as they perform vital functions that sustained the stream of important cargo from food to medicine and logistics, among others.

Ngayong araw na ito ating sinasabi: "Kayo ang aming modernong bayani sa mga karagatan." Iniiwan ninyo ang inyong mga mahal sa buhay upang gumawa ng misyon na magpapalaganap ng kabuhayan para sa Pilipinas.

Being the world's largest suppliers of maritime labour, the Transport Department and its maritime sector are putting emphasis on the wellbeing and safety of our seafarers who give pride and honor to our country with dedication and hard work. To show appreciation, your Department of Transportation has focused to finding ways and means *upang mapadali ang inyong mga pangangailangan sa trabaho.*

Meron kaming inilunsad na crew change hub. *Ito po ay ang itinayong pasilidad sa iba't ibang puerto na ngayon ay 12 na, kung saan ay mapapadali ang pagbaba, pagsakay sa pagbibyahe ng ating mga* seafarers.

On this day we pay tribute and show our appreciation to our seafarers. They sail on merchant ships while facing uncertainties in the toughest of seas during bad weather. *Kaya gusto ko din bigyan ng pagbati at* congratulations *ang organisers ng ating* Day of the Seafarer. *Kayo ay nagbigay ng dedikasyon at direksyon upang magkaroon ng selebrasyon na nauukol para sa ating mga seafarers. Tanggapin din ninyo ang aking pasasalamat.*

Kayo ang aming modernong bayani sa mga karagatan

Kayong mga seafarers, sa inyong paglalayag at pagganap sa trabaho, ang inyong mga pamilya at mahal sa buhay ay naghihintay at nagbibigay ng pagmamahal sa inyo. Ang inyong republika naman ay nakahandang magbigay ng ayuda upang mapadali ang inyong trabaho.

To all the seafarers, may you have fair winds, following seas and safe voyages. Please accept our love, affection and congratulations. *Mabuhay*! SF

Department of Migrant Workers Secretary Susan Ople's message

Happy Seafarer's Day sa lahat at sa AMOSUP!

Kayo ang haligi ng maritime industry. Ang dami na ninyong natulungan na nakasandal sa inyo bilang institusyon na ng industriya at bilang parte ng legacy ni Captain Gregorio Oca.

Ngayong Day of the Seafarer, gusto ko lang din ipagmalaki na dito sa ating binubuong Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), uumpisahan natin ang pagbabalangkas ng rules at procedures at ma-streamline din ang mga proseso para sa ating mga seafarers at manning agency. Dito ay kakailanganin ko rin ang tulong, advice at suporta ng AMOSUP dahil alam namin kung gaanong katagal na ninyong ipinaglalaban ang karapatan ng mga mandaragat.

Ang ating DMW ay mayroong Office of the Assistant Secretary for sea-based concerns. Magkakaroon din tayo ng mga programa sa mga seafarers natin at sa kanilang pamilya at ang lahat ng 'yan ay dadaanin sa konsultasyon. Mayroon naman tayong tripartite motif. Inaasahan kong lalo pang iigting ang collaboration ng ating magiging tanggapan at ng AMOSUP dahil iisa naman talaga ang hangarin nating mapabuti ang kalagayan ng ating mga migrant workers lalo na ang mga sea-based workers.

Kaisa ninyo ako. Happy Seafarer's Day! God bless everyone! SF

The Columbia River Bar: 'Graveyard of the Pacific'

For over two centuries a small stretch of waters in the Pacific North West has gained that notorious reputation. Since the 1800s it has wrecked over 2,000 ships and claimed hundreds of lives. C/E Mark Philip Laurilla explains how to this day, it remains one of the most dangerous waterways where ships pass through regularly

For the past few months our ship has been passing the trade route to Japan and the US crossing the Pacific to load our cargo in the Port of Calama and Port of Washington. We have been loading corn from the Columbia River area for the past three voyages and some have expressed interest in the Columbia River Bar.

I must admit I have no idea what it was at first, but I did some research and was actually surprised to find out that for the past few months, our ship has been going in and out of the River. We have been passing through what is called the "graveyard of the pacific."

The Columbia River Bar is a system of bar and shoals at the mouth of the Columbia River which runs at the state of Oregon and Washington. The bar is where the river's 1,200-mile flow crashes into the massive energy of the Pacific Ocean's wave, which, depending on the direction of the wind and ocean's swell, generates large waves sometimes as high as 12m. In addition, the river's outflow carries massive amounts of sediments, which create sandbars that shift every season.

I have been in the Columbia River but so far, I have never experienced any significant rough sea condition while crossing the bar. I guess I've been quite lucky all this time because apparently, conditions can change from calm to life threatening within a few minutes due to changes in wind and wave direction.

With all the dangers with the bar crossing, some ships just deliberately avoid it. However, this waterway opens the region to massive profits and to many people, the financial gains outweigh the risks. So, for the past 200 years, more and more ships have attempted the crossing.

To increase the chances of crossing the bar safely, ships hire local mariners to aid in navigating the treacherous waterway. In 1846, the then territory of Oregon established the Columbia River Bar pilots. To provide further aid in navigation, a lighthouse was also built at Cape Disappointment in 1856.

But the threat of running aground the shipping sandbars remain. So, in 1885 the Army Corps of Engineers started the construction of jetties at the mouth of the Columbia River, which created a nozzle effect and

sped up the river's outward flow which then drew all the debris further out into the ocean to prevent clogging at the river's mouth.

The project took over 50 years to complete, but as a result, the jetties greatly lessened the risk of sandbars forming and acted as a breakwater against the powerful waves of the Pacific Ocean.

After all these improvements, the channel became more predictable and more ships gained access to many inland ports which, at present, accounts for the move of about of 40 million tonnes of cargo valued at $23 billion each year.

Nowadays, ships are fitted with modern equipment and the pilots can board them using helicopters. These technological innovations more or less guarantee the safe passage most of the time, anyway. The Columbia River Bar may have been made predictable with mass ingenuity, but as anything related to nature, it can never fully tame. In this day and age of modern equipment, the Columbia River Bar can still claim its toll.

It was our third voyage loading cargo in the Columbia River. On the previous voyages, we did a bar crossing at night so I never had a chance to record anything. But luckily, on the third run we were scheduled to enter during daytime.

As our ship approached the entrance to the Columbia River, the bar pilot radioed in the run level point. We then proceeded to pick him up. On our previous runs, pilots boarded our ships by a helicopter. This time, however, he was far over to us by boat. Once on board, the pilot's task is to navigate the ship safely through the Columbia River Bar all the way to the anchorage area off the shores of Astoria.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING, TEAMBUILDING. MAAP's incoming Class of 2024 Acting Fleet Officers had their leadership training and team building at the Academic Building (Annex) and Pool Side, CGSO Campus on May 14-15, 2022. As they will soon train onboard the IMMAJ ships, the 31 soon-to-be second-class men have been empowered by enhancing their character, skills and mindset through a series of talks, games and small group activities. (Images: Kamaya Point via **Midn 1CL Van Villanueva**) SF

Bulk carriers usually drop anchor for cargo hold survey and await their turns to go alongside the terminals for loading operations. Having learned the history of the Columbia River Bar, I now have greater appreciation for the apparent serenity that the Astoria anchorage provides.

It has always been a safe haven for me after weeks of crossing the Pacific Ocean especially if we get to stay at anchor for at least a few days. But the words 'safe haven' have much more relevance to me now that I know before our ship arrives in the calm waters, it had to go through all the potential hazards when passing through the graveyard of the Pacific. SF

Court rules box lashing should be assigned to dockers, not seafarers

The ruling ensures that cargo handling must be performed by trained local dock workers where possible, and not given to seafarers as an additional responsibility

A Dutch court has ruled that shipowners, shipmanagers and charterers must honour a clause that prevents seafarers from being assigned lashing work where professional dock workers are available.

The clause says: "Neither seafarers nor anyone else on board whether in permanent or temporary employment by the company shall carry out cargo handling services in a port, at a terminal or on board of a vessel, where dock workers, who are members of an ITF affiliated union, are providing the cargo handling services."

The clause further states, "Where there are not sufficient numbers of qualified dock workers available, the ship's crew may carry out the work provided that there is prior agreement of the ITF Dockers Union or ITF Unions concerned; and provided that the individual Seafarers volunteer to carry out such duties; and those Seafarers are qualified and adequately compensated for that work."

Cargo handling services, the clause referred to, "may include but is not limited to loading, unloading, lashing, unlashing, checking and receiving."'

The ITF said the ruling from the Rotterdam District Court is "an important victory in the campaign for seafarers' safety." It also reaffirmed an exemption to the provision that collective bargaining agreements (CBA) are exempt from certain requirements of EU competition law.

as part of a CBA in 2018, but the clause came into force just in 2020. However, the refusal of Marlow Cyprus, Marlow Netherlands and Expert Shipping to adhere to the Non-Seafarers' Work Clause prompted the ITF, FNV Havens and Nautilus NL to take the case to court in the Netherlands.

The ruling from the Rotterdam District Court means that the companies who employ seafarers on shipowners' behalf, according to the ITF, "must ensure that cargo handling must be performed by trained local dock workers where possible, and not given to seafarers as an additional responsibility."

ITF President and Dockers section Chair said in a statement that "the court makes clear that the parties are bound to the terms of the agreement."

"Given the weight attached to social dialogue within the European Union, and in the principle statements of companies – it is of paramount importance that they follow through. That starts with employers doing what they say they will," said Crumlin.

He asserted, "Employers like those we've won this important case against, have been reminded by the court about what it actually means to be a social partner. It means doing what you say you'll do. It means keeping your word."

Crumlin said "seafarers, dockers and our unions have upheld our parts of the agreement, which has delivered these companies stable profits. This case is a big step forward in our campaign, but we won't be happy until we get all charterers to respect the clause."

The ITF president stressed "it is time for these employers, particularly short sea shipping charterers, to return to true social dialogue and restore good faith with unions. This must include working with shipowners to implement the Non-Seafarers' Work Clause."

"Our industry has important issues to tackle together, and we will continue to be part of the IBF process that has improved wages and working conditions for seafarers for almost 20 years," added Crumlin.

ITF Dockers' Section vice-chair Niek Stam, who is also the leader of Dutch dockers' union FNV Havens, said the ruling was both a victory for seafarers' safety and for dockers' jobs.

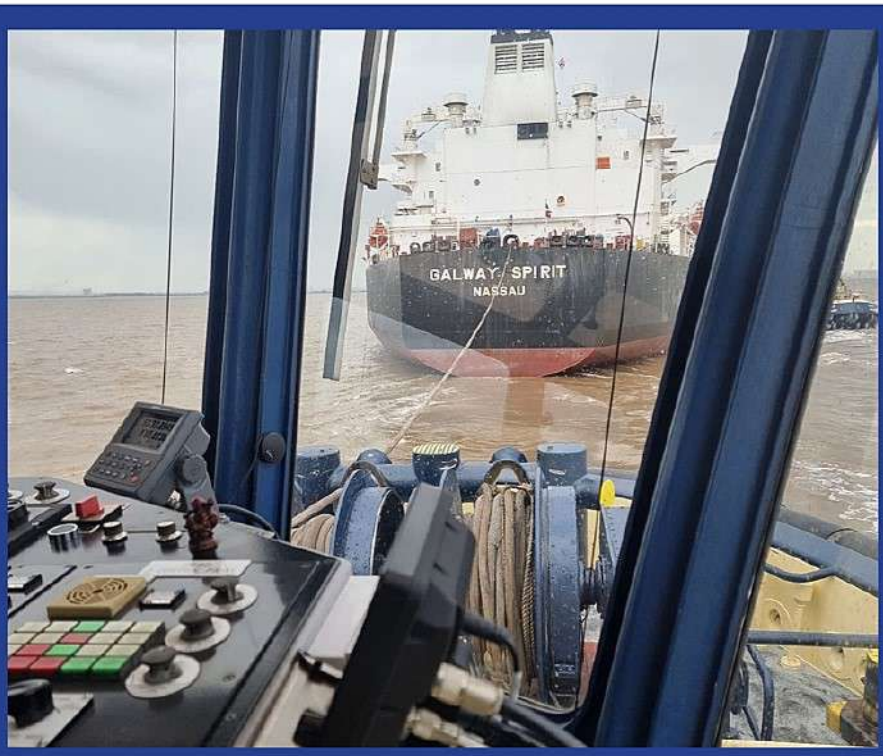
"Those who don't fight will never win. This is the only logical outcome of the lawsuit. Otherwise, a signature would no longer be worth anything. A deal is a deal," said Stam.

"Lashing can be extremely unsafe for seafarers, who are often untrained in port operations, such as the dangers of moving cranes. Automated terminals and supply chain pressures have further increased these dangers to ships' crew," he said.

ETF General Secretary Livia Spera said, "This ruling makes clear to shipowners and others that it is a legal requirement to honour the terms of a collective bargaining agreement."

This is the result of years of hard work from the union side and this verdict represents a victory for both seafarers and dockers, "It is about the safety of our transport workers, it is about the obligation of the charterers to use the specialised workforce of dockers, and to not exploit seafarers' safety in this way," she stated. SF

Source: *https://www.itfseafarers.org/en/news/victory-seafarers-safety-dutch-court-sides-unions-container-lashing*



TOWAGE OPERATION IN SAFEST MANNER. A ship deck officer is impressed with his new colleagues as they really took the time in explaining how to approach towage operations in the safest manner and ensuring he understood how to conduct the role with minimal risk. He's looking forward to learning more from them in the next two weeks and becoming part of the team, with eyes and ears open. (Image: 2/O Lee Sample via Linkedin) SF

Image: Fleet Management

Industry partners must play a greater role in safety, says INTERCARGO

The group urges shipowners, operators, and seafarers to exercise extreme caution when accepting, for carriage, nickel ore, bauxite, iron ore fines, ball clay and other cargoes that have the potential to liquefy

INTERCARGO, the International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners, said Industry partners could still do more to ensure the safety of crews, as it has submitted its latest Bulk Carrier Casualty Report to the Sub-Committee on IMO Instruments (III 8).

Despite high levels of awareness from shipowners themselves of the dangers of improperly loaded cargo, the Report identified that liquefaction continues to be the greatest contributor to loss of life in the bulk sector. Liquefaction of a solid bulk cargo occur when excessive dynamic loading, induced by rough seas and vessel vibrations, is transmitted to the cargo.

In the last ten years the lives of 70 seafarers were lost as a result of five bulk carrier casualties, four carrying nickel ore and one carrying bauxite, INTERCARGO said.

During this period the Report identifies a total of 27 bulk carriers over 10,000 dwt as total losses, and 92 crew members lost their lives. Liquefaction accounted for 18.5% of the total vessel casualties, yet was the cause of 76.1% of the total loss of life.

The Report highlighted that not only were IMSBC Code requirements not being followed, especially in relation to testing and certification of cargo condition, but that there was also lack of adequate assessment and monitoring of the condition of cargoes being loaded in the cargo holds by representatives of all interests.

Uttam Kumar Jaiswal, Vice-Chairman of INTERCARGO said in a statement: "Unusually, this report is not targeted at ship operators. They are well aware of the risks to their crews and their vessels caused by carrying cargoes prone to liquefaction and make every effort they can to mitigate those risks."

He stated, "It is the lack of consolidated effort and commitment from many stakeholders to resolve the problem that is evident. These can include shippers, receivers and port state authorities at loading and discharging ports. We need action from those in the industry who rely upon for its safety – the IMO, legislators, and suppliers to ensure that that the minimum obligations under the IMSBC Code are properly fulfilled. The industry is simply talking to itself, if we cannot force action from our other stakeholder groups."

"INTERCARGO urges all shipowners, operators, and

seafarers to exercise extreme caution when accepting, for carriage, nickel ore, bauxite, iron ore fines, ball clay and other cargoes that have the potential to liquefy.

They need to be especially cautious when loading during a wet season as is currently being experienced in certain parts of South-East Asia and West Africa. We would like to stress the importance of adhering to the provisions in the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code) to ensure the safety of lives at sea and the safe transportation of dry bulk cargoes."

The Report highlights grounding as the most common reported cause of bulk carrier losses from 2012 to 2021, with 13 casualties, representing 48.1% of total losses. The investigation reports available highlight that human error both operationally and in navigation contributed to the majority of the 13 casualties.

Accident reporting also comes under the spotlight. INTERCARGO says It is well known that lessons from incidents and casualties and sharing of experience are effective approaches to raise safety awareness and vital to deepen understanding and knowledge of existing rules, regulations and skills.

All too frequently however, there is a significant delay between the time at which a report, or an initial report is submitted by an accident investigating organisation and when that information becomes publicly available.

There is some good news. Statistics of ship losses and consequential seafarer fatalities suggest that safety performance of the bulk carrier industry is heading in the right direction, with a clear trend of improvement. However, the association added that there is no room for complacency and there are still opportunities for further improvement by re-evaluating and implementing enhanced measures to address cargo safety and safe navigation, thereby striving to eliminate losses in the future. SF

Source: *https://www.intercargo.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/INTERCARGO-MEDIA-RELEASE_07_07_2022-1.pdf*

IN SEARCH FOR CADETS. The International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC) announces that it is now on the lookout for talented young men and women who will commence their cadetships with the employers' group in 2023. All IMEC Members will have the option to sponsor the cadets, who from 2023 onwards, will be following the 3-1 system. Also in 2023, IMEC will be introducing a hybrid syllabus, whereby the top candidates can qualify as both a marine engineer and ETO. Another new programme will convert existing mechanical engineers into marine engineers. SF

Slow, scant reporting of enclosed space, lifeboat drill incidents worsen death tolls

InterManager raises awareness of the fact that seafarers are not required to be in the lifeboat when launching during drills to prevent any further loss of life

Enclosed space and lifeboat drill incidents on board are two of the hazards that have taken the lives of many a seafarer over the years.

Yet the industry has still to heed to their lessons well judging by the inadequate reporting of serious and fatal accidents, according to InterManager - the international trade association for ship and crew managers. For lifeboat drill, the association says it needs some legislative change.

Captain Kuba Szymanski, InterManager secretary general, has hit out at the shipping industry's lopsided reactions in a statement following some more incidents last May. "Another two workers have died this month. They were two shore workers who apparently entered the wrong space' on a cargo ship and paid the ultimate price for their mistake."

Captain Szymanski said, "The shipping industry is very slow in reporting accidents in enclosed spaces, as it also is with lifeboat incidents. Accident reports take ages even for Flag States rated as 'excellent'."

He stressed even the "IMO's Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) database is largely being ignored by Flag States. We have discovered that only 26% of enclosed space accidents were reported through GISIS – which means 74% were not reported at all!"

By not reporting accidents, Captain Szymanski noted "the shipping industry is not giving people the chance to properly investigate, understand and learn from them. This is potentially putting the lives of more seafarers and port workers in danger."

He urged the shipping industry to work harder to address the root causes of enclosed space accidents, which InterManager has identified are particularly due to ship design, time pressure on workers, contradicting and confusing regulations.

InterManager says it is currently working with the members of the Human Element Industry Group (HEIG) to identify the biggest risk factors and potential solutions to minimise deaths and injuries in enclosed spaces.

Unions Perspective

The ITF has also called attention to the hazards of confined space entry after a "shocking spike" in the number of deaths associated with the known risk. Saying confined space fatalities are all too familiar to the shipping industry, the ITF has cited a number of dockers and seafarers who have died from asphyxiation or explosions in

confined spaces – or from falls after passing out due to bad air. Putting the rise in number of deaths in perspective, it says there have been a total of 145 in the past 20 years, but an alarming 28 of those have occurred in just the past months prior to the pandemic.

The ITF says the massive rise in fatalities says everything about the "callousness" of decision makers in the industry, including companies that choose profits over properly training and equipping workers, or investing in onboard safety culture.

While the industry agrees that most maritime workers are generally aware of the risks associated with entry into confined spaces, the ITF warns that these same workers may not be aware of the details and extent of the varied dangers posed by forest products, coal, iron ore, grains, gases and other cargo.

The ITF said: "It is not enough for a worker to rely on opening the hatches for 30 minutes and hoping for the best, or to do the best they can to protect themselves on their own It is not enough for workers to take all available precautions but sometimes still be caught without sufficient protection by pockets of gases and lack of oxygen. And it is absolutely not enough that workers are left to cope with an inhumane industry by doing what humans have always done for one other: risk their own lives to save their fallen colleagues."

Problem With Hooks

Likewise, seafarers die needlessly as maritime law doesn't require lifeboats to be manned during drills. InterManager also raises awareness


Captain Kuba Szymanaki

of this fact as it highlights a change in legislation making it unnecessary to be on board when lifeboats are tested.

SOLAS regulation III/19.3.3.3 requires each lifeboat to be launched at least once every three months during an abandon ship drill, and manoeuvred in the water by its assigned operating crew. However, the regulation, whilst requiring each lifeboat to be manoeuvred in the water by its assigned operating crew, does not actually require that crew to be on board when the lifeboat is launched.

InterManager says many of the lifeboat fatalities have occurred during launch of the lifeboats, often due to problems with the hooks. The association insists the IMO in 2009 agreed that the assigned operating crew "should not be required to be on board lifeboats during launching, unless the Master, within the authority conferred to him/her by paragraph 5.5 of the ISM Code, considers it necessary, taking into account all safety aspects."

"This is an extremely important change which seems to have been missed by some ship operators and is still included in some Shipboard/ Safety Management Systems. To prevent any further loss of life in this way we are raising awareness of the fact that seafarers are not required to be in the lifeboat when launching during drills," suggested Captain Szymanski.

InterManager collates figures on lifeboat accidents on behalf of the maritime community and to assist in its role as a member of the International Lifeboat Group, which aims to reduce lifeboat accidents and deaths.

Since 1981 there have been 419 deaths involving lifeboats, 346 serious injuries and 116 minor injuries.

The secretary general says "It's important that everyone involved, particularly Port State Control officers, understand and apply this regulation correctly. The maritime community must do all we can to ensure the safety of seafarers." SF

Source: *https://www.intermanager.org/2022/05/record-all-enclosed-space-deaths-urges-intermanager-as-two-more-workers-die/*

Fishers' labour woes blot arrays of cases at local ITF Inspectorate

Wives, crew receive aid following rights abuse complaints from employers

The ITF and its inspectorate in Manila have attended to a number of cases involving fishers and their recruiting agents dotting complaints of rights abuse by employers.

The espouses of three Filipino fishers of a Chinese fishing vessel that had been figured in cases of crew's rights abuse have been extended financial aid, whilst another three fishers - one with injury and in medication - from a different vessel had also received direct assistance from the ITF.

ITF Inspectorate Manila said three of the fishers' wives received Seafarers' Trust Emergency Fund (STEF) of 1,000 GBP each whilst the three other fishers received 500 to 1,000 GBP each.

Manila-based crewing agency Able Maritime had been close to being "red listed" by the global unions federation following a series of incidents from the agency's fishers of working at a much lower rate than specified in their contracts.

The ITF said: "These seafarers have been trapped into working conditions well below the minimum we would expect and, in some cases, below what national and international laws allow. Manning agencies have the duty to protect the seafarers that they place in work, and to get them home if conditions prove unsatisfactory or the jobs were advertised in a misleading way. At least three times in as many months, 'Able Maritime' has fallen well short."

Arvin Peralta of the ITF Inspectorate Manila said there have been 29 fishers from FV Han Rong 362, 366 and 369 that had been "assisted to file administrative complaints in POEA and money claims in NLRC with assistance of other welfare organisations against their manning agency Global Marine and Offshore Services." Recruitment violation and disciplinary cases have been filed in POEA's Adjudication Division.
On 14th January 2022, 22 fishers were repatriated from Mauritius.

They worked on board FV Lu Qing Yuan Yu 115, 116 and 117, and were told to report to another manning agency Buwan Tala Manning but still haven't received their earned wages as of writing. They had been guided and assisted to file administrative complaints in POEA and money claims in NLRC with the assistance of other welfare organisations against their manning agency Able Maritime Seafarers. The POEA cancelled the manning agency's licence on 03 February 2022.

Likewise, POEA conciliation hearings with Var Orient Shipping, which faces complaints of unpaid wages from its three fishers on board Narimuto Maru, failed as it opted to pay only 50% of earned wages. The seafarers already filed administrative complaints and money claims in NLRC against their manning agency.

Two more cases with Var Orient were received in January from another vessel Fu Yuan Yu 8515, and all four cases with the manning agency have common concerns: Misrepresentation of contracts (vessel name and rank are not same with actual vessel), poor working/ living conditions and requests for crew repatriation.

Peralta said this was reported to the ITF Inspectorate Coordinator and other concerned ITF Inspectors, as cases are being monitored and seafarers assisted/guided in filing necessary complaints to concerned government agencies. Case summaries were forwarded to POEA Welfare Services Branch Head and POEA Sea-based Center Director. SF

ITF's PH affiliate unions pledge active participation for Aspac regional meet in Manila

Members of the National Coordinating Committee (NCC) of the Philippines affiliate of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) expressed commitment for their active participation in the upcoming Asia Pacific regional conference (APRC) to be held in Manila this October.

A second meeting conducted at the AMOSUP Convention Hall last 27th July 2022 led by NCC chair, AMOSUP president Dr Conrado F Oca, discussed the preparations for the upcoming APRC.

Representatives from various unions at sea, land and air transport industry who attended the official meeting included the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), Associated Philippine Seafarers' Union (APSU, ALU-TUCP, ITF Aviation Organizing Team, Kapisanan ng mga Manggagawa sa GOCC at GFI (KAMAGGFI Transport), Philippine Airline Employees' Association (PALEA-TUCP), PISTON Land Transport Coalition, and Port Workers' Union of the Philippines (PWUP/AWU).

Each union had designated a "point person" dedicated to coordinate APRC matters leading up to the regional event.

AMOSUP Legal Department Head, Atty. Emmanuel Partido, noted the strong solidarity among member unions of the ITF Philippine NCC as "the APRC is another opportunity to showcase the Filipino spirit of 'bayanihan' before the ITF Asia Pacific delegation," he said.

Aside from the APRC agenda, the union leaders also shared some updates from their respective organisations. The NCC also welcomed the newly-formed ITF Aviation Organising Team composed of young organisers as Nimfa Atienza, Nico Forteza, Mark Angelo Tolentino of ALU-APSU and Forie Jean Ramos of Juan Wing. The group introduced their ongoing initiatives in the main airport hubs in Asia, including the Philippines.

Dr Oca acknowledged ITF's new campaign to organise and empower aviation workers and expressed his support on behalf of all the members of the ITF Philippine NCC. "It is inspiring to see young people like you advance our mission to champion the rights and welfare of transport workers," he said. Likewise, Atty. Cecilio Seno III of ALU-TUCP said they can also extend their assistance to the group through their provincial headquarters in Cebu.

The ITF Asia Pacific Regional Conference will feature ITF's 'State of the Industry' and work programmes on the Future of Work, Sustainable Transport, Supply Chains, and Occupational Safety and Health, as well as discussions on Motions, Resolutions and the 2024 Congress Theme. About 400 ITF-affiliate union leaders from all over the Asia Pacific region are expected to attend the APRC in Manila. SF

‘Women making waves’

The AMOSUP forum reiterates the Union’s commitment to champion gender equality in the industry and the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work

In celebration of the International Day for Women in Maritime last 18 May 2022, AMOSUP Women and Youth Committees conducted a forum, “Women Making Waves,” at the AMOSUP Convention Hall at the Seamen’s Center in Intramuros, Manila.

In his opening remarks, AMOSUP President, Dr. Conrado F. Oca welcomed the participants to the first face-to-face activity of AMOSUP Women and Youth since the pandemic, and reiterated the Union’s commitment to champion gender equality in the industry and the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work. “Explore the opportunities in front of you and seize it. If there is a talent shortage, equip yourself with the necessary knowledge and skills so you can bridge the gap and fill the void. This is the time to show the world that indeed, women can make waves in the maritime industry,” he said.

Vice Admiral Eduardo Santos, AMOSUP Executive VP and IMO’s Maritime Goodwill Ambassador also talked about the opportunities for women in maritime and their huge potential to succeed in the industry despite the existing challenges.

Invited speakers, Nimfa Atienza and Nice Coronacion, led insightful discussions on Gender Sensitivity and ILO C190 (Convention on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work), respectively. Among the attendees were women, men and LGBTQIA cadets from the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), as well as active women seafarer members of AMOSUP.

Special Projects and Communications Head, Camille A. Simbulan said AMOSUP is amplifying its efforts in advocating diversity, equity and inclusion in maritime. “We believe that our campaign for a gender equitable maritime industry is only possible if seafarers of all genders become allies in working together towards that goal,” she said.

The International Day for Women in Maritime was declared in 2021 through a resolution adopted by the International Maritime Organization Assembly proclaiming an International Day for Women in Maritime on 18 May each year. According to the IMO, “the day celebrates women in the industry and is intended to promote the recruitment, retention and sustained employment of women in the maritime sector and raise the profile of women in maritime.” SF

Seafarers guide to getting help

Filipino seafarers' first point of contact should be his union – if he is an AMOSUP/APSU member. If not a member, contact information about the International Transport Workers' Federation and other international maritime organisations extending assistance to seafarers needing help.

Seafarers can also contact the Philippine government agencies, of the Philipine government maritime agency. Make sure to have the relevant information ready:

I. About you:
Name
Nationality
Contain details (mobile number and/or email address)

II. About the ship
Name
Flag and IMO number
Current location
Number of crew and nationality

III. About the problem
Describe the problem
How long have you been on board?
Are all crew having the same problem?

Contact information:

AMOSUP Legal Department
Email address: legal@amosup.org
AMOSUP website: www.amosup.org

AMOSUP ITF Inspector:
Mr. Arvin Peralta: peralta_arvin@itf.org.uk

Associated Philippine Seafarers Union (APSU) ITF Inspector:
Atty. Joselito Pedaria – jpedaria@gmail.com

Philippine Government Maritime Offices

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)
Hotline: 8-722-11-44/8-722-1155
www.poea.gov.ph

Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA)
Hotline: 1348
www.owwa.gov.ph

Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA)
www.marina.gov.ph

National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP)
www.nmp.gov.ph

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)
Hotline: 8-834-49964000 / 8-834-3000
www.dfa.gov.ph

Department of Foreign Affairs – Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs (DFA-OUMWA)
Hotline: 8 834-4996
Email: oumwa@dfa.gov.ph / oumwa.database@gmail.com

Internatiobal Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)
ITF Inspectors Worldwide
Contact No. +44(0) 20 7403 2733
Email: mail@itf.org.uk

OWWA Meet Dubai OFW. The Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) held consultation meetings with overseas Filipino community leaders and Philippine overseas labor officials in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, UAE last 5-10 June 2022. The official visit coincided with the Migrant Workers Day celebration. During the trip, Deputy Administrator Arnaldo Ignacio, together with the Board of Trustees composed of Atty. Antonio Partoza, Jr. of the Landbased Recruitment Sector, Capt. Felixberto Rebustes of the Seabased OFW Sector, Capt. Emmanuel Regio of the Manning Sector, and Directors Jocelyn Hapal and Gerald Tan presented OWWA's programs and services, such as the livelihood and Tulong Puso programs. They also awarded certificates of appreciation to some Filipino community organizations and associations actively advocating OFWs in UAE. The delegation paid a courtesy call on Philippine Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Her Excellency Hjayceelyn Quintana, Philippine Overseas Labor Attaché in Abu Dhabi, Atty. Manuel Dimaano, Philippine Overseas Labor Attaché in Dubai, John Rio Bautista and Consul General Renato Duenas. SF

The future is now

Carlos Salinas points out the things the country must do to effectively support an industry that moves the world

How are we doing in the way of dealing with the climate crisis? If we think that picking up where we left off before the Covid-19 pandemic turned our world upside down, think again. British economist James Meadway recently wrote an article in The Guardian that warned against the mistake of planning on the assumption that things would return to normal.

'The environmental crisis isn't going away. The best available projections from climate forecasters point to greater instability – more heat waves, more floods, worse shortages of food, even an increased risk of future pandemics,' he says and laments that this instability, is 'now becoming a part of our daily lives, scarcely seems to register with the institutions charged with managing the economy.'

That's right, the future is now. Not in 2050, when we are supposed to have attained carbon neutrality. Not even in 2030, when we should have succeeded in limiting global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius. It is now, today, this minute.

Shipping is seen as the low-hanging fruit that will bring about change – such as achieving International Maritime Organization's (IMO) ambitious net zero emissions targets and addressing the spiraling cost of transporting goods worldwide as well as domestically.

We anticipate the massive change in digitalization and automation that characterizes the fourth and fifth Industrial Revolutions, ensuring that all global maritime professionals currently on board, and those still aspiring to become the next generation seafarers, are appropriately skilled, upskilled and reskilled to keep their places in an ever-changing and increasingly complex work environment, driven by consumer demands.


Carlos C Salinas

Are we ready? Is the Philippine maritime industry ready to take on these massive undertakings to ensure that the big-ticket projects will be effectively addressed by the country as a real maritime nation with a huge contribution to the international maritime industry? Are we ready to lay the groundwork for 2050, just a short sprint to 28 years from now, when our population is expected to breach 150 million?

What will it take to live up to the IMO's aspirations for shipping, to ensure a cleaner, more sustainable and resilient planet for all? What must our country do to effectively support an industry that moves the world?

Four main areas need our immediate and aggressive attention:

- Safety considerations in attitude and mindset across all industry stakeholders, driven by the theme 'Together in Safety,' while harnessing the power of collaboration in getting things done.
- De-carbonization – working with partners in the industry to help achieve a net-zero emissions future for shipping. Just recently, over 11,000 scientists from around the world signed a manifesto seeking urgent and concerted global action on climate issues.
- Talent Acquisition – understanding and defining the workforce of the future – managing through diversity, flexibility and automation, among others, to attract the best and brightest.
- Eliminating waste – driving

> **Recognizing that continuing to do what got us to where we are today will not get us to where we need to be is another must. Unless we adapt and disrupt, address the evolving issues, and anticipate the future, we will be lost in terms of how the game will play out in the years ahead.**

productivity by merging the physical and the digital, which in reality is at the heart of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

These topics are relevant for us today as we plan the Future which is Now.

Understanding the global shipping industry and its reach is a must.

Recognizing that continuing to do what got us to where we are today will not get us to where we need to be is another must. Unless we adapt and disrupt, address the evolving issues, and anticipate the future, we will be lost in terms of how the game will play out in the years ahead.

Throughout history, we have evolved the use of the seas and oceans to drive development, global trade and humanity.

The Byzantine Greek historian and philosopher George Pachymeres summarized the importance of shipping quite nicely, way back in the 13th century:

'*Shipping is a noble thing, useful beyond all others to mankind. It exports what is superfluous, it provides what is lacking, it makes the impossible possible, it joins together men from different lands, and makes every inhospitable island a part of the mainland, it brings fresh knowledge to those who sail, it refines manners, it brings concord and civilization to men, it consolidates their nature by bringing together all that is most human in them.*'

What Pachymeres said about shipping remains true now as it was eight centuries ago. What has changed, Lincoln Paine says, is 'a global consciousness of the sea,'

and what it means for us all.

global consciousness of the sea,'
and what it means for us all.
The Future is Now is a call to action for all of us, to renovate, evolve and cultivate the mindset needed to face a future that is upon us.

The mindset that will define the future of seafaring for the Philippines and the Philippine maritime industry, while ensuring that a Filipino global maritime professional will continue to sail on every vessel, in every sea, moving the world, making us proud. SF

Carlos C Salinas is Goodwill Ambassador to the International Maritime Organisation

Source: https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/07/27/business/maritime/the-future-is-now/1852328

QUOTE IN ACTION

"The hearings do not inquire into the facts and law of the case but are reduced to negotiations on how much the shipowner shall pay regardless of the validity of the claim."

Atty Iris Baguilat, Founding Member and Trustee of the Association of Licenced Manning Agencies (ALMA), on how cases are allegedly decided for seafarers, which overwhelmingly winning at the NCMB level.

"It is always through excellent performance, strong work ethic and loyalty to the company that one can have trust from, not only with your seniors but your employers."

Toshihito Inoue, Chairman of International Mariners' Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ), on how one can rely on in order to succeed based on his experience.

"Because the union has the expertise when it comes to matters dealing with CBA."

Captain Reynaldo Casareo, Director at Filipino Association for Mariners' Employment (FAME), on educating union members as part of strengthening grievance machinery once complaints crop up.

"The pandemic has thrown much light on how different managers deal with their principals' ships and crews."

Edward Ion, Managing Director of Navigate Response and Helix PR (Singapore), on the accelerated change in the business models of many ship managers.

"We are the industry not the government. I wish this (bill) to be the 'final solution'."

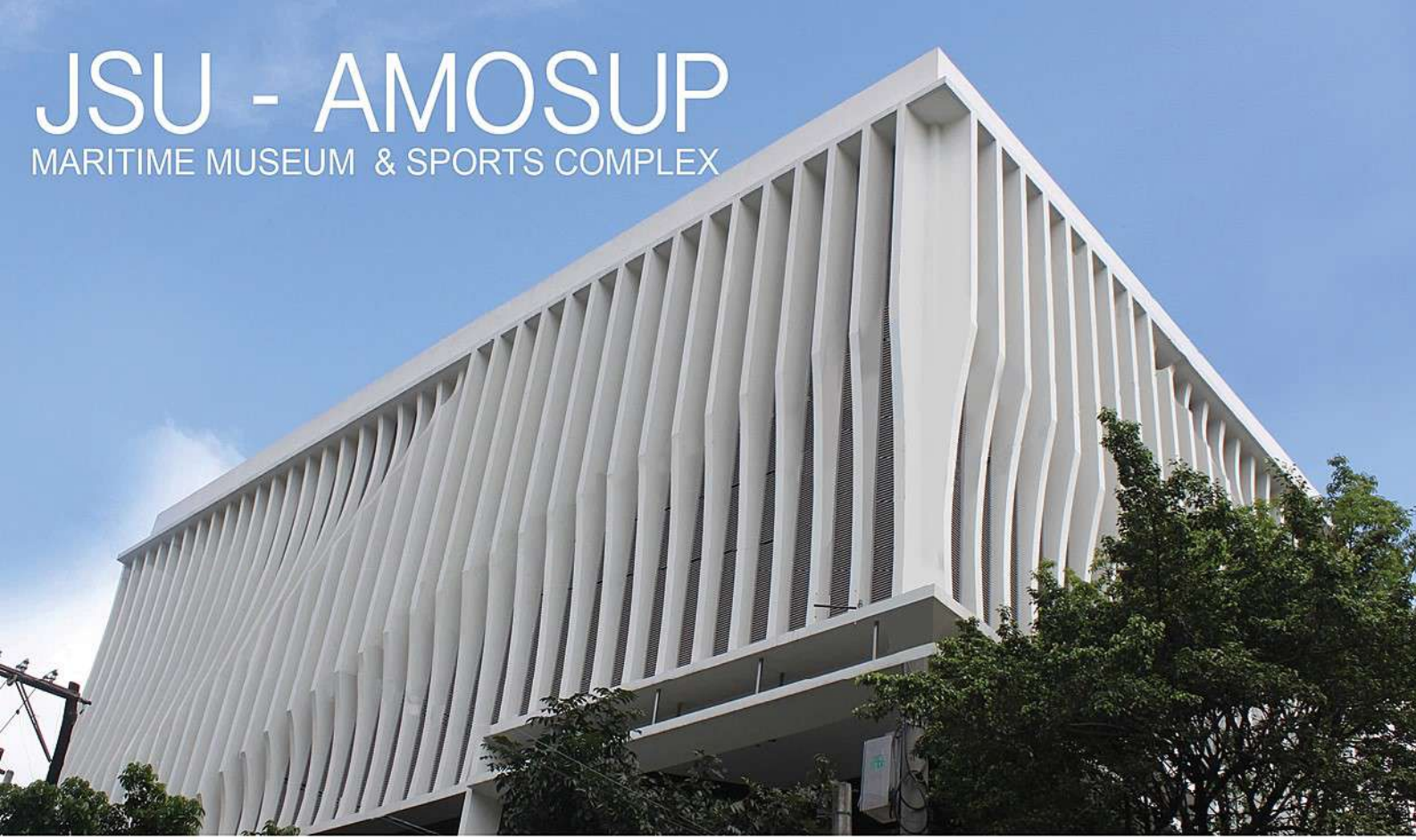
Ericson Marquez. Spokesman of the Joint Manning Group (JMG), on the anticipated passing into law of the Magna Carta for Seafarers Bill in Congress as the answer against the crewing industry's ambulance chasing problem.

"Accident reports take ages even for Flag States rated as 'excellent'."

Captain Kuba Szymanski, Secretary General at the InterManager, on the shipping industry's sluggish reporting of enclosed space accidents, as well as with lifeboat incidents.

JSU - AMOSUP

MARITIME MUSEUM & SPORTS COMPLEX



SPORTS COMPLEX

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Telephone : +632 353 8180 E-Mail: museomarino@yahoo.com

JAPAN SEAMEN'S UNION-ALL

AMOSUP

PTGWO-ITF

LOOKING BACK... SAILING FORWARD!

M/V Kapitan Felix Oca

M/V Kapitan Gregorio Oca

Capt. Gregorio Oca
Founder, AMOSUP (1926-2010)

ASSOCIATED MARINE OFFICERS' AND SEAMEN'S UNION OF THE PHILIPPINES

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

• AMOSUP Seamen's Center (+63 2) 527 8491-98 / 527 3535 • Maritime Academy of the Asia and the Pacific (+63 2) 741 1024 / 527 2110 • Seamen's Training Center (+63 2) 741 1024 • Professional Career Development Center (+63 2) 527 2110 / 528 0954 • Seamen's Hospital (+63 2) 527 8116-20 • Sailor's Home Manila (+63 2) 527 3605 • Slop Chest - Manila (+63 2) 527 2109 • Seamen's Village (+63 46) 973 0370 • JSU-AMOSUP Mariners' Home - Manila (+63 2) 521 5180 / 400 0461 / 400 0463-64 • Seamen's Hospital - Cebu (+63 32) 346 2598 • Sailor's Home - Cebu (+63 32) 236 9928 • Slop Chest - Cebu (+63 32) 236 9928 • Seamen's Hospital - Iloilo (+63 33) 321 3523 • AMOSUP-JSU Multi-Purpose Center - Davao (+63 82) 234 7185 • G.O.R. Seamen's Hospital - Davao (+63 82) 234 7184

Other welfare Facilities in Partnership with Affiliated Union • JSU-AMOSUP Mariners' Home Annex • JSU-AMOSUP Maritime Museum & Sports Complex


Seamen's Hospital


Sailors Home


Seafarers House


PCDC


Slop Chest


Seamen's Center


MAAP


Provident Fund