

NEW YEAR EDITION

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IMEC Chair Belal Ahmed

SEAFARERS: AT THE FOREFRONT OF DECARBONIZATION

- **BBM & THE SHIOWNERS**
- **THE MLC IMPACT**
- **ITF ASIA PACIFIC**

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With a unique blend of seafaring and managerial experience, IMEC Chairman Capt. Belal Ahmed shares his perspectives on the challenges ahead -- digitalization and decarbonization.

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PUBLISHER NOTE

ONWARD, PHILIPPINES!

Marino World carries the message of global shipping in this edition - seafarers are at the center and frontline of establishing a sustainable future. Consequently, the Philippines, as the world's manning capital, is in the spotlight.

We consolidated data and speculations from multifarious sources to come to a more reflective perspectives on the challenges ahead – the digitalization and decarbonization.

Recent negotiations between President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, as well as representatives of the global shipping industry, have had a positive impact, which may lead to an increase in the number of Filipino seafarers serving in the global fleet.

Nevertheless, much remains to be done.

How the Philippines will move forward will depend on what happens in the next few weeks. If it does nothing and just talks, it will hurt

its dominant position in the crewing field. Other countries will pick up the slack.

In the midst of geopolitical conflict, shipowners and shipmanagers are now opening more opportunities for Filipino seafarers, not only for ratings but also for junior and senior officers.

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), as the country’s flag state administration, plays a vital role in regulating the industry. Zipping through decisions while ignoring the repercussions to the industry further compounds the problem.

The implementation of the Management Level Course (MLC) cannot be overlooked, since it could affect the availability of maritime officers. Perhaps, we can examine the options, more seriously.

As a result of the previous administration's successfully implemented reforms and efforts, there is a growing sense of confidence among the stakeholders. Nonetheless, the political climate

persists. The challenge now is the sustainability of these projects under the new MARINA administration, whose conflict of interest and leadership capacity are being questioned.

In spite of this, we express our optimism for the future, with the President directly engaged and DMW Secretary Susan "Toots" Ople leading the dialogues with all relevant parties to address the concerns surrounding the deployment of our seafarers.

Moreover, the actual investments and support of international shipping are undoubtedly motivating. This implies that our Filipino seafarers are performing exceptionally well, and probably our manning agencies, too. The economic crisis, the pandemic, and the geopolitical unrest all put the partnership to the test. And will become more resilient in the face of future challenges.

To those who still realize this, a Blessed New Year, indeed!

IMEC Chair Belal Ahmed

Seafarers: At the forefront of Decarbonization

Marino World had an in-depth conversation with Captain Belal Ahmed on November 24, the third day of the CrewConnect Global conference held at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila.

Ahmed is the Chairman of the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC), the only international employers' organization dedicated to maritime industrial relations. Representing over 265 shipping companies globally, IMEC takes an active role in the training and future employment of seafarers.

With a unique blend of over two decades of seagoing and over two decades of onshore executive management experiences, Ahmed's passion is into concerns of the global maritime industry, overarching those of personal interests.

The Captain sounds the clarion calls and conveys his perspectives in pragmatic terms. His thoughts reproduced here with minimal edits.



Warriors.

Today, the seafarers will be the soldiers to fight the climate change, at the frontline, they really are.

If you carry the 90% of the world's cargo, you have a heavy burden, the seafarers continue to do their job as they have done during COVID.

Ships are evolving, as are the machineries, and the digital economy has now entered the ships. We can't have the same crew. That is why we must all work together to upgrade our crew, and it must start in the Philippines, where everything starts.

We shipowners can see what kind of ships we have now and what we

will have in near future. We can also see what kind of people we need. After challenges of COVID-19, most of the ship owners continue to face challenges with regards to training their seafarers. One such issue is training our Filipino seafarers to latest technology that is part of many new built ships. Many of these training facilities are based in Europe where the technology comes from and training the seafarers becomes very expensive.

Dual Fuel ships are increasing being delivered that has options to choose from low Sulphur fuel to LNG and LPG. Fuel changeover technology on ships machinery is complex and is prone to severe safety issues. An appropriate training is a must for

ship engineers who need to run these engines safely and efficiently. Today's seafarers are increasingly exposed to handle multiple types of fuel on the same engines. This expertise will require intensive training for manufacturers of engine. Any generic training will normally not be sufficient.

Many of the technological changes that is being introduced in the maritime industry will require different type of competency for seafarers on board. These may even result in change to traditional ranks we are now used to see on board. Minimum standards needed in the future may make many ratings positions redundant, instead, there could be more computers and



Photo courtesy: IMO

software engineers a part of the crew complement. These changes are coming, and the Philippines must be ready to face the challenges.

Cooperation.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, as industry leaders we all came together to fight the crisis faced by seafarers and ensured the vital shipping sector continue to carry essential cargo globally.

The cooperation resulted from unprecedented various protocols and quarantine facilities for the seafarers. Everyone recognized the success of this collaboration and leading global maritime organizations decided to continue the cooperation to meet future challenges of decarbonization, training and welfare.

ICS, IMEC and ITF jointly signed an MOU to work together as a unified voice of the industry to face these challenges. ITF Secretary General Stephen Cotton, ICS Secretary General Guy Platten, and myself, as the IMEC Chairman have all committed to the process. The United Nations Maritime Just Transition Task Force will now include IMEC alongside ICS and ITF to ensure the visions of the task force with regards to decarbonization are achieved.

Meeting.

IMEC, together with International Mariners Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ) and other local

industry leaders met Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) Secretary Susan 'Toots' Ople on November 21 at the Diamond Hotel Manila. Issues affecting the employment of Filipino seafarers were discussed including the amendment on Magna Carta for Seafarers, ambulance chasing, garnishment, digitalization and decarbonization.

That meeting to our surprise was arranged quite urgently. I think, Secretary Ople, is really excellent person, the meeting lasted for 4 to 5 hours. This is something that has most likely never happened before. We were very happy and refreshed to have this kind of access and candid conversation.

Joint advisory body.

On behalf of IMEC, Capt. Belal proposed for the creation of a Joint Advisory body in which local and international stakeholders would convene to discuss and address industry challenges.

I think when we have a joint advisory body, we will be able to bring all of these into the fora.

Leadership changes.

Another frustration that we have over the years, well, I've been coming to the Philippines for more than 20 years, there is always an excitement when a new administration coming in and a lot of things to be done. Each time when there is a new administration, we

always try to convince them to listen to our views.

With the present Administration, we see a very supporting leadership, and hopefully we will do better than what we historically could do previously.

EMSA.

I think EMSA is a tricky issue. I don't want to be negative. There have been progresses made. Hopefully the MARINA will do much, much better and much faster way. It's difficult to suddenly tell MARINA what did you do with COVID in 3 years. Many schools and colleges are closed all over the world. In the last two to three years, because we could not really do a lot of things to make the changes, I think EMSA would look at it more favorably to give some time.

Forward.

The inherent problems affecting the shipping Industry in the Philippines should be resolved as soon as possible so that we can be ready to face the 'real' challenges of the future. When we talk of decarbonization and climate change, if you do not address the shipping industry, how will you address the climate change?

Suddenly the seafarers are in the forefront of really addressing the climate change because if they are trained and run ships with 0 or low emissions, they will be ahead of the game in the future.

As the international community comes

together to confront the challenge, we must do the same here (in the Philippines) and not have disparate interest groups. Everyone has gathered together to focus; we must do the same.

STCW amendments.

STCW revision is coming. When changes are in, The Philippines will need a lot of effort to comply. This should start now.

I think many years ago, when the (STCW) Manila amendments (2010) were introduced, we had the same discussions, but for different reasons. The situation now is very different.

A comprehensive revision of the IMO STCW Convention has been proposed in order to allow the industry to adapt much more effectively to technological advancements, such as increased automation, and to accommodate new developments in training or competences required to operate ships in the future.

Autonomous ships.

I think it is one day going to come but at the moment it's all experiment and countries like Philippines should not be worried about why such things are happening. It's not going to happen tomorrow, in the next 5 years, not even in ten years. So, we still need manpower of the ships and we must continue the development of the seafarers.

Education.

IMEC is involved in cadet training in the Philippines. We have a partner office here. The number of cadets is increasing, and the standards is getting better and better and better. There is still a long way to go, but I think our commitment to MAAP

(Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific) will remain.

The introduction of the 12-year education before going to the academy is going to change the whole complexity of the officers. It was a fundamental change that we had been asking.

You cannot compromise basic education.

The Philippine education system should not be afraid to admit that in the shipping industry, which is so complex, and with all of the new technologies coming, we lack the necessary trainers. Because it is under education, the CHED does not allow foreigners to come and teach. They can only stay as consultants for a few months before returning.

I've fought and given up on the idea that the Philippine government should issue a specific type of visa so that these foreign experts can come and stay for a year or so with a legal visa.

The first step is to bring them in; they will train locals, give courses, and, in a few years, local trainers will also teach.

Training.

The IMEC and ITF are parties to the International Maritime Training Fund (IMTF), which provides funds for the training, upgrading, and education of Filipino seafarers employed aboard IMEC member vessels.

We held a Training Fund Management Committee meeting and once again approved a substantial amount of funding for Philippine training centers.

There are enough training centers

with simulators in the Philippines. Now we must look ahead and acquire those newer simulators for dual fuel engines. The engine manufacturers view is to control the standards of these training and do not easily provide licenses to training facilities in the Philippines. One of the objectives of the Joint MOU between ICS, ITF and IMEC is to address issues like this, that will result in bringing the training to the Philippines and other labor supply countries.

Biggest interests.

IMEC is trying to promote more Filipinos as much as we can. We obviously have other programs. but they will never be as large as the Philippines. It'll be the biggest yet.

This year's CrewConnect was a big success that shows the interest of the global industry. Shipowners need the Filipino seafarers, that is why they are here. Not because of anything else.

Ship owners view Philippines as an essential country to supply good quality seafarers. There are few options for supply of seafarers, but Philippines remains top country of choice. Many shipping companies pays a premium to have Filipinos on their ships. The quality of Filipino seafarers ensure they are hired on higher segments of the industry such as tankers, gas carriers, container ships, bulk carrier.

Much needs to be done to ensure that Filipino seafarers continue to remain a better choice, irrespective of cheaper options available elsewhere. This requires addressing the ambulance chasing problem, complying with EMSA audit requirements etc.



Kongsberg's Hasås

Menon Economics' Basso

NTC's Tomren, Höegh's Dahl and Misje Rederi's Fjereide

TECHNOLOGY & THE HUMAN FACTORS

“Humans are the driving force behind the technology, and technology and digitalization are for humans.” Morten Hasås, SVP for Maritime Simulations at Kongsberg Digital.

“Technology can ease the operations of everything,” he remarked. It can optimize things and it can really contribute to the green shift.”

Kongsberg has been the cutting edge for technology and innovation for over 200 years. Hasås believes, “the value and the work of seafarers will increase with the new skills sets, at the same time, it will also attract the new generation into the business.”

Survey.

Maren Nygrd Basso, Senior Economist at Menon Economics, provided the substance and findings of a survey report conducted on Norwegian shipping companies and Norwegian seafarers:

- Technology is not necessary the goal, but more a tool for the shipping companies to reach their goals either for more efficient ship operations, increase safety and so on.
- Several of the technologies are only used by a small proportion of the shipping companies today. However, in 5 years this will change. There will be a rapid and drastic increase in the use of technologies.

- Two out of every three shipping companies will have to employ people with the level of expertise beyond what they have today. Employers look for personal and social skills - the ability to acquire new knowledge and adapt to a new technological environment.
- 9 out of 10 seafarers believe that the requirement for digital competence is going to be higher; 8 out of 10 believe that their role onboard and their tasks are going to change due to technological development.
- A group of seafarers believe there’s a need for formal education and getting a certificate, but the courses need to be adoptive to their work schedule.
- There’s a need to motivate the seafarers, make them understand why the technologies are being used and also the value of it. For example, how it can simplify their work day, tasks, and also make it more efficient.

Getting ready.

The Norwegian Training Center (NTC) has been introducing programs in close relationship with the shipowners who tell what kind of expertise they need.

Capt. Jo-Even Tomren, NTC Managing Director confirms “that’s basically what where doing: robotics, automation, more on the electro-technical side, which is highly needed onboard now with all the new equipment.”

“We have to adapt to that to educate them (the seafarers) on that,” he added. We’re teaching them that this not a dangerous spot. This is the future. The future is bright; we need to tell them that look into the future and be positive.”

Education.

Misje Rederi AS CEO Nils Magne Fjereide, and Höegh Autoliners COO Sebjørn Dahl both underlined importance of basic education in development of future technology solutions.

Fjereide feels that all new technology knowledge is built on traditional seamanship, which begins with basic education. “The challenge is also that the universities that educate the future seamen have these technologies available or we have to do it together with the industry.” he concluded.

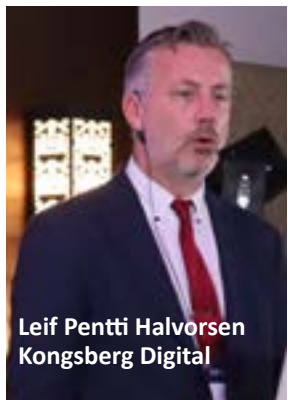
“A good educational system is a basic to keep up with a pretty rapid development going on now,” Dahl adds.

“So that is my Christmas wish to the Filipino fellow colleagues here. Focus on educational system, make the schools good; because that is a very good starting point for everybody. Education is important.”

(Editorial Note. Article based on the presentations and discussions at the first Norway-Philippines Maritime and Energy Conference on October 13, 2022, at the Manila Peninsula Hotel)



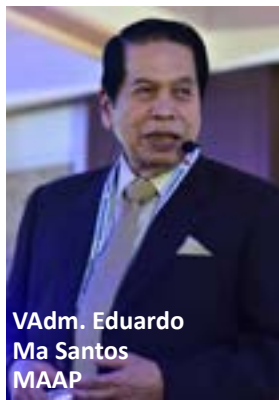
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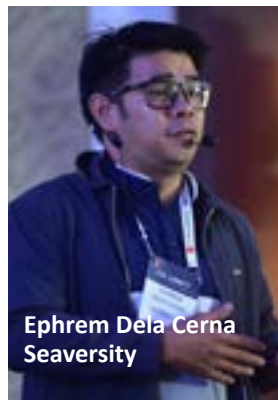
Leif Pentti Halvorsen
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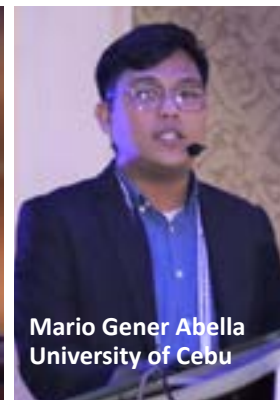
Erle Kristin Wagle
Kongsberg Digital



VAdm. Eduardo Ma Santos
MAAP



Ephrem Dela Cerna
Seaversity



Mario Gener Abella
University of Cebu

An ambience of collaboration pervades at the Kongsberg's Digital Maritime Simulation Sim Connect 2022, held November 25 at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila, bringing together 113 participants from various maritime stakeholders, to look at and discuss future challenges.

The event started with “marshmallow challenge,” a fun team-building activity, that allows teams to experience simple lessons in collaboration, innovation and creativity.

Main speaker VAdm Eduardo Ma Santos, President of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), never fails to inspire and motivate his audience. He underlined that working together is the greatest way to address the

challenges of the future.

The well-respected International Maritime Organization (IMO) Goodwill Ambassador encouraged the audience to “start thinking what we should do to ensure that our cadets, our junior officers now will be able to cope up with the developments in the future.”

Trusted.

Over the years, MAAP has relied on Kongsberg as a trustworthy technological partner. Its' recent contract, Long-Term System Support Program (LTSSP), includes the delivery of Kongsberg Digital's state-of-the-art maritime simulators to an Innovation Lab that focuses on Digital Twin, Shore

Control, Remote Control Center, and MASS (maritime autonomous surface ship) technologies.

VAdm. Santos also stated that their training ship, M/V Kapitan Gregorio Oca, will be a model for Digital Twin.

Kongsberg Digital will supply real time interface to the training ship for performance monitoring, including fleet tracking features and noon reporting.



A lively exchange of ideas



A test of teamwork



K-Sim Connect Online Navigation Action

“Why we are doing this? So that our junior officers and cadets will realize that these things are coming in the future.” Santos told the audience, “As soon we finished all our projects, rest assured that we will open this to you. We can look at how we work as a team.”

More learnings.

Speakers Engr. Ephrem dela Cerna, CEO of Seaversity, presented his knowledge on Mapping exercises and Assessment, while Engr. Mario Abella, from University of Cebu METC, highlighted how UC adopted the K-Sim Cloud Based Simulators.

Dela Cerna advocates for standardization of assessment systems so that “there is no problem for MARINA to calibrate from Luzon to Mindanao because they have the same solution.”

Abella, on the other hand, confirmed that “the K-Sim Cloud Based Simulator has been an invaluable, cost-effective tool for educational institutions to realize their blended learning potential.”

Team Kongsberg Digital Maritime Simulation speakers highlighted the most recent maritime training trends and Kongsberg Digital's Products and Services for Bridge, Engine, and Cloud. The presenters are Vice President Erle Kristin Wagle, Product Director Leif Halvorsen, Regional Sales Director Asraf Ibrahim, Project Manager Vegard Pettersen, and APAC System and Service Manager Muhtar Latif.

Topics covered are:

- Incorporating Blended Learning with K-Sim Connect,
- Expanding the use of Simulation Technology,
- K-Sim Engine & K-Sim Cargo News and Updates,
- Polaris, K-Sim Navigation and K-Sim GMDSS News and Updates, and
- K-Sim Support – Maximizing the Product Life Cycle.

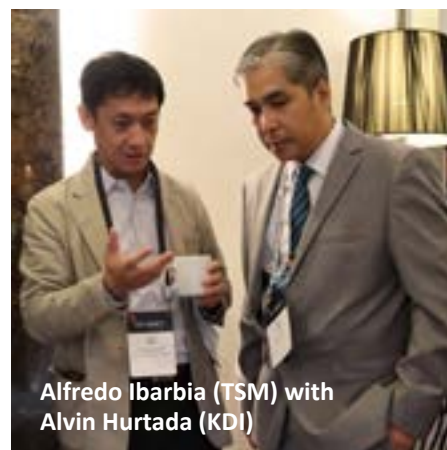
Interactive.

The presentations were interesting and welcoming. At the conclusion of the presentation, every participant in the open forum was passionate and totally involved.

Commitment.

Latif said, the Philippines should be proud of having the most simulators in the region and worldwide. "We always provide the best equipment to the simulator center in order to produce the world's best seafarers."

He emphasized, “We give the best support to the people in the Philippines.”



Alfredo Ibarbia (TSM) with Alvin Hurtada (KDI)



(From left) Veggard Pettersen (KDI), Asraf Ibrahim (KDI), Gerardo Ramon Galang (MAAP), Felix Oca (MAAP), Peterwilson Tamang (KDI)



BBM meets the shipowners

Marino World Editorial Pool

As part of his foreign policy tour, President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. met with leaders of the global shipping industry on December 13 in Brussels, Belgium.

Shipowners and shipmanagers' organizations are represented at the meeting, including Guy Platten, Secretary General, and Robert Alexander Ho, Hong Kong, China, Board Member of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS); Francesco Gargiulo, CEO; Simon Spacey, and George Pitaoulis, Vice Chair of the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC);

Philippos Philis, President, and Sotiris Raptis, Secretary General of the European Community Shipowners' Association (ECSA); and Wilfried Lemmens, Managing Director of the Royal Belgian Shipowners' Association.

Jesus Sale, Vice President for Internal Affairs of the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), represented the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF).

Marcos Jr. was joined by House Speaker Martin Romualdez, Senator Mark Villar,

and Migrant Workers Secretary Susan "Toots" Ople.

The President thanked the employers for their continued interest in the Philippines and their support for Filipino seafarers.

"I thank you once again for your continuing interest in the Philippines and I can feel very much that you support the seafaring industry of the Philippines," the President said in a brief video shared by Malacañang.

Advisory council.

Marcos has ordered the creation of an advisory board that will include representatives from government organizations, foreign shipowners, the workforce, and other interested parties to address concerns about the deployment of Filipino seafarers.

The International Advisory Committee on Global Maritime Affairs (IACGMA) is expected to draw experts from both the industry and the workforce to support the Philippine government.



Pres Marcos, Sec Ople and Speaker Romuladez with the industry leaders

During the meeting, he also reiterated his administration's goal to partner with the private sector to improve the maritime industry.

Top of the agenda is to address the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) findings on the country's compliance with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Standards



Pres Marcos with EC Pres von der Leyen

of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) Convention for seafarers. In the event of noncompliance, over 50,000 Filipino seafarers on European-flagged vessels would be in risk of losing their jobs.

“Our seafarers are of great importance to the Philippines in many, many ways. Although we recognize that in the last many years, the Philippines has done very well in terms of being the leading seafarers around the world, however, with the changing situation after the pandemic, with the changing situation especially when we talk about supply line problems, all of these areas have to be revisited,” Marcos told shipowners and stakeholders.

“That comes with the training, changes in the curriculum, all of these things have to be ascertained,” he noted.

Ople explained, “Under the law creating the Department of Migrant Workers, the department can actually form or create advisory bodies with the participation of key stakeholders including employers and, in this case, the international shipowners.” She continued, “We can meet on a regular basis with MARINA, CHED and other relevant institutions.”

Reforms.

The employers also urged President Marcos to defend Filipino jobs, by reforming the country’s problematic seafarers claims industry.

They said, “While intended to secure speedy resolution and compensation for injured and aggrieved crew, the injury claims industry system today sees seafarers’ hardship and goodwill exploited by ambulance-chasing lawyers. The victimization of Filipino Seafarers by people or groups to make fraudulent and costly injury claims against their employers, has resulted to companies look elsewhere for their seafarer workforce.”

Technical support.

On the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-European Union (ASEAN-EU) Commemorative Summit, Marcos met European Commission (EC) President Ursula von der Leyen on December 14.

“I explained to her what we have done, that we have this new advisory council and she made a promise that she would -- the commission itself would provide technical help to us so that within the 3 months -- we have a three-month deadline -- within the 3 months that we will be able to remedy all of the deficiencies that EMSA has been pointing out and hopefully we finally solve this problem,” Marcos said.

Boost.

IMEC CEO Gargiulo was impressed with President Marcos’ “grasp of the complex picture of the maritime industry in the Philippines and comforted by his stern determination to tackle our common challenges head on. The creation of the advisory board, he said, “is an inspired initiative which we are convinced will soon help steer the country towards calmer seas.”

ICS SecGen Platten emphasized, “Seafarers are at the very heart of our industry and cannot be forgotten as we look to the future. Every member of the delegation meeting with President Marcos Jr today recognizes this and we ensured that our seafarers were not lost sight of. As a major seafaring nation, the Philippines is key to our industry and its future, and collaboration and cooperation with governments is vital.”

ITF SecGen Cotton further stated, “The Philippines is a crewing powerhouse. Filipino seafarers have contributed much to our global shipping industry over the decades. But it is not without its issues. That’s why it was encouraging for seafarers’ unions to hear President Marcos acknowledge some of those issues in Brussels. Better yet, the president has already started to take action with the establishment of a new tripartite maritime advisory body.”

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THE MLC IMPACT: FACTS & PERSPECTIVES

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) issued **Advisory No. 2022-56** on November 10, 2022, declaring canceled, effective immediately, the advisory issued by the previous Administration: 2021-23 dated May 7, 2021; 2021-45 dated August 3, 2021; and 2021-49 dated August 26, 2021.

In view of this:

- Seafarers applying for competency assessment and subsequent issuance of a Certificate of Competency (CoC) as Master and Chief Mate; and Chief Engineer and Second Engineer Officers must first complete the Management Level (training) Course (MLC);
- MARINA will no longer adopt and implement equivalence on CoC revalidation for seafarers who have undertaken duties deemed equivalent to seagoing duty; and
- Seafarers must complete refresher training courses in order to revalidate their Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) on Basic Training (BT), Survival Craft and Rescue Boat (SCRB), Fast Rescue Boat (FRB), and Advanced Firefighting (AFF), regardless of seagoing service of not less than 12 months and showing attestation or document as evidence of onboard trainings.

Obsolete.

MARINA Advisory No. 2022-56 was a reiteration of the MARINA Circular 2014-01 series of 2014, which adopted and promulgated the MLC for marine deck officers and marine engine officers; whereas the three Advisories issued by the previous Administration that were revoked by the said Advisory were a clarification/reiteration of STCW Advisory No. 2019-05 on the Implementation of STCW Circular No. 2018-02, which removed the MLC as mandatory courses for the issuance of CoC for marine deck and engine officers.



MARINA
Admin Fabia

Some stakeholders voiced worry about how the current administration developed its new rules, citing outmoded issuances as its foundation.

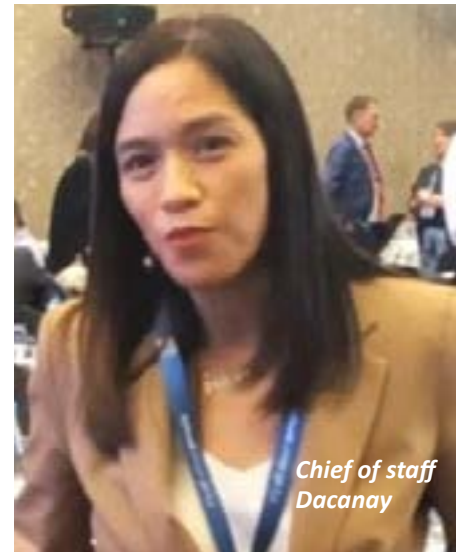
On August 17, 2022, the new Administration also issued **MARINA Advisory 2022-43**, suspending the implementation of a circular for domestic ships, "Revised Rules and Regulations on Safe Manning Ships Operating in Philippine Waters," specifically the manning complement tables.

MARINA Advisory 2022-43 refers to MARINA Memorandum Circular No. 148 of 1999 as its basis, but this was repealed October 3, 2012 by MARINA Circular No. 2012-06, which aims to ensure that all Philippine-registered ships are manned by a sufficient number of qualified, competent, and certificated officers and ratings who can safely operate the ship at all times.

Backward.

In an ambush interview on November 22, MARINA chief of staff Atty. Jabeth Sena Jephath Dacanay told *Marino World* that the MARINA Advisory No. 2022-56 is simply a reinstatement of the **MARINA Circular 2014-01 series of 2014**.

Dacanay explained, "*Binalik lang natin 2014. Hindi ito bago, hindi ito ngayon lang pinanganak. Nandun na siya,*



Chief of staff
Dacanay

ginawa lang siyang non-mandatory. Nire instate lang natin." (We just returned 2014. It's not new. It was not born just now. It was already there. It was just made non-mandatory. We just reinstated it.)

Dacanay served as Chief of Staff and Deputy Executive Director of the MARINA STCW office during the tenure of former MARINA Administrator Maximo Mejia Jr. and STCW Executive Director Alvin Tormon in 2014.

Dacanay confirmed, there are already six training centers approved to offer the MLC since the immediate effectivity of the Advisory No. 2022-56. These are the training centers which have kept their accreditations since 2014. Those who stopped offering the course may reapply.

Dacanay noted that the STCW office is still researching ways to improve course delivery.

"Mag enhance siya pero inaaral pa rin yun ngayon, although meron na ngayong ginagawa. Kakaupo lang ni sir, wala pa nang 6 months yung tao (It will be enhanced but still under study. Although something is now being done. Sir (Fabia) has only been in office for less than six months."

Inconsistency.

MARINA published **Memorandum Circular No. SC-2022-05** on November

29, 2022, revoking MARINA/STCW circulars and advisories, including STCW Circular No. 2018-02 and the MARINA Circular 2014-01 series of 2014 (basis of Advisory No. 2022-56).

Attached to 2022-05 is a list of mandatory training courses, which includes MLC for marine deck and engine officers.



*IE Milhar
Fuazudeen*

According to MARINA Administrator Atty. Hernani Fabia, the move was “to comply with the findings of the Independent Evaluator (IE), in preparation for the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS), wherein the Philippines is scheduled for a mandatory audit in October 2023.

Manning executives reacted, “It is hurting the integrity of the government agency. What they have done was contrary to the response submitted to EMSA.”

Under the previous administration, MARINA and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued joint advisory and circulars reiterating the continued implementation of the existing curriculum under **CMO 67 series of 2017**, which includes management-level modules, as part of the country's most recent response to the European Maritime Safety Agency.

According to the European

Commission (EU) Assessment of Compliance Report released in January 2018, the corrective action incorporated in the CMO No. 67 series of 2017 "Revised Policies and Guidelines for the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) and Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE) Programs “has been taken



*EMSA lead
auditor Veiga*

into account, and the shortcoming is considered to have been addressed.”

Repercussions.

Stakeholders are concerned that the MARINA new administration has been rushing through decisions while

ignoring the consequences.

An officer of a major manning organization expressed his disappointment to the new Administration, “You are here for the industry you're not here for yourself. We are in emergency situation now, competing with other countries to find berths for our officers. The shipowners had already employed other nationalities by the time we had re-prepared our officers. We no longer have the ability to regain lost employment prospects.”

Many seafarers are discouraged from taking the MLC because, in their opinion, "doing the course is a waste of time and money." They maintain that "the MLC is a clear money-making scam disguised as creating competent seafarers, and complying with international audits" and that it "serves the interests of maritime training institutions more than the interests of Filipino seafarers."

"Crews are evaluated on a regular basis," according to a shipowner. Some firms have a competence management system in place where a seafarer is reviewed on a regular basis and must demonstrate their ability to execute particular things. If that system is effectively implemented, you will know exactly what kind of people you have. And if we find gaps, we'll look for training."

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WORLD-CLASS SPEAKERS AT THE AWA MARINE-WÄRTSILÄ SEMINAR

Two renowned speakers from the world's top shipmanagement companies shared their perspectives at the First Simulation User Seminar in the Philippines, hosted by AWA Marine and Wärtsilä Voyage on November 21 at the Solaire Resort & Casino Manila.

Capt. Pradeep Chawla, Managing Director, QHSE and Training of Anglo-Eastern Shipmanagement Ltd. Hongkong and Capt. Faouzi Fradi, Group Director, Crewing and Training, Columbia Shipmanagement Ltd. were presenters and directly answered the questions from the audience. AESM and CSM are major clients of AWA Marine and Wärtsilä.

Captains Chawla and Fradi are joined by Mr. Liam Murphy, Chief Executive Officer at AWA Marine; by the team of Wärtsilä Voyage Simulation, namely: Mr. Neil Bennett, Director, Sales Americas; Mr. Chris Chung, APAC Regional Director, Sales and Ecosystem Development; Mr. Johan Ekvall, Head of Products at

Wärtsilä Voyage; Mr. Kiran Kumar Varanasi, Head of Sales (Simulation and Smart Ports APAC); and Mr. Bhupesh Gandhi, Sales Manager, Simulation, Regional Sales MEAI Region.

Mr. Henning Davies, Commercial Director at Ocean Technologies Group (OTG) also spoke at the event.

improve safety and efficiency at sea.

Wärtsilä and OTG recently received the Crew Connect Global 2022 Innovation and Adoption of Technology and Industry Solutions Awards, respectively.

Prime mover.

Capt. Chawla proudly said that AESM has been leading the industry



AESM's Capt. Chawla



CSM's Capt. Fradi

The seminar, which focused on technology and innovation in maritime education and training, drew between 90 and 100 Industry stakeholders from 50 different companies.

AWA Marine, Wärtsilä, and OTG collaborate to provide the maritime industry with cutting-edge technology and services that

in digital transformations through its partnership with Wärtsilä. Since its' first installation of simulator, AESM now owns 12 Simulator stations, with roughly about 22,000 seafarers going to their training centers every year.

Chawla stated proudly that AESM has led the industry in digital transformations through its team up with Wärtsilä. Since its first

TRANSAS/Wärtsilä simulator installation, AESM now owns 12 simulator stations, with approximately 22,000 seafarers visiting their training center each year.

"We compete on how we run ships, not what the seafarers have to study," Chawla emphasized, "because all seafarers, regardless of which company, should be highly trained so that we don't collide with each other's ships and we don't get into problems as an industry."

State-of-the-art.

Capt. Fradi of CSM has provided a brief overview of the cutting-edge facilities of the Nautilus Pacific Maritime Training Center (NPMTC), which is now the CSM's exclusive and chosen partner for seafarer training in Manila."

NPMTC's design, construction, and fit-out were handled by AWA Marine. Along with that, it provided Wärtsilä Voyage Maritime training and simulation systems.

"Having a large training center was always something that was really close to my heart personally," Fradi said.

He stressed Columbia's goal of always having highly trained and qualified seafarers onboard ships. "We expect the highest quality, so we audit, check, and inspect to

ensure that our training providers meet our expectations and, more importantly, the expectations of our seafarers," he said.

One-stop-shop.

Since 2018, AWA Marine Philippines has served as Wärtsilä Voyage's sales and service distributor in the Philippines.

Now, it is a one-stop-shop for the industry's maritime education and training requirements in the Philippines from simulation systems, building design and construction services.

Murphy encourages clients who are planning to relocate to a new facility or build a training center to let AWA Marine manage the project from start to finish."

He also announced "AWA Marine will move into our new office in January 2023, doubling our office capacity and space as we continue to grow our footprint here in the Philippines for Simulation, Construction, AWA Marine will move into our new office in January 2023, doubling our office capacity and space as we continue to grow our footprint here in the Philippines for Simulation, Construction, New Build Ship Packages, and specific government projects."



AWA Marine's Murphy (4th from left) with the Wärtsilä Voyage team: Ekvall, Bennett, Varanasi, and Chung.



Murphy and Engr. Rey Tanudtanud of AWA Marine (2nd and 4th from left) with maritime training executives



Seafarers, families, staff, and management from the Western Shipping Southeast Asia Inc. (WSSAI) gathered as one family at the Midas Hotel in Pasay City on November 19 to celebrate a night with Filipiniana theme, a symbol of Filipinos' unique identity and culture that emphasizes modesty, practicality, and resilience.

WSSAI President RAdm Bayani Gaerlan recalled that Family Day is an annual event, but they were unable to hold it because of the epidemic. "Therefore, after more than two years, we are back as, a Family, One Family, the Western Shipping Family, and we enjoy each other's company and camaraderie.

Over 300 individuals came together to celebrate WSSAI's 18th anniversary and Family Day under the banner of "Together for Greatness," thanks to the support of WSSAI's generous principals, Western Shipping Pte. Ltd. (WSP) and Byzantine Maritime Corporation (BMC).

First, there was a kid-friendly celebration with clowns, a magic show, games, and finger foods. The Rev. Rollin Flores then presided over a liturgy.

A variety of talents were on display that evening, including contemporary ethnic dances performed by cadets

and office workers. Cadet Rayven Olete blew some sweet horn sounds on the saxophone. There was also a live band and performances by the children of seafarers. Samantha and Sabriena Sitchon, twins of WSSAI General Manager Capt. Kharvic Sitchon, also wow the audience with their presentation.

Dimitrios Davaris, were joined by Anglo-Eastern Shipmanagement's C/E Jessie Rex Martin and Capt. Rex Clyde Hingpit, IMEC's Mr. Dan Tolentino, PAMTCI's Capt. Arsenio Padilla, Pandiman's Capt. Andy Malpas, and P & I Dr. Jose Emmanuelle Gonzales.

"The moment I entered this hall and



The officers and crew currently onboard were also felt in the occasion through the AVP presentations. The event was also made more exciting by raffle draws. The WSSAI's godfathers, Capt. Belal, Mr. Davaris, and RAdm. Gaerlan, also gave the children cash gifts.

Special Guests.

WSP Managing Director Capt. Belal Ahmed, and BMC Crewing Manager

meeting all of you is unbelievable," said a beaming Captain Ahmed. He remarked seeing videos of their happy seafarers "really makes all of us very proud of why we have progressed."

Capt. Davaris is optimistic that "the next years will improve and we will be together again and again."

Recognition.

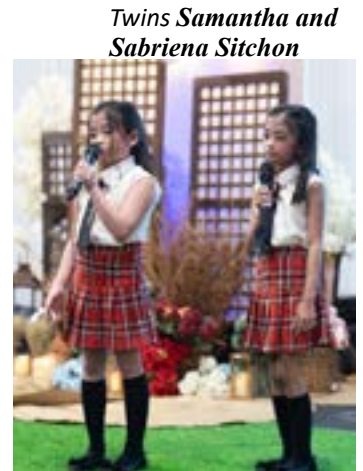
Captains Ahmed and Davaris and RAdm Bayani Gaerlan presented the



Lakambini 2022



C/E Fernandez and Family



Twins Samantha and Sabriena Sitchon

awards to loyal seafarers. There were four categories of awardees: for those who had worked for the company for 5, 10, 15 and 20 years.

Tradition.

Traditional cake-cutting and singing-together-while-holding-hands ceremonies capped off the event. And with a rekindling message from Capt. Sitchon for the Western Shipping Family, “We, in Manila we are always open for any challenges that will come, but “we will always deliver no matter what. Together for greatness!”

Earlier.

WSSAI held the Crew Safety Conference at the Marco Polo Hotel on November 17 and the Prestige Tower on November 18 in Ortigas, Pasig City, respectively, in advance of the Anniversary and Family Day celebrations.

The conference, themed "Make Safety a Reality," drew 60 officers and crew members. Among the speakers on seafarers' technical and soft skills are: Capt. Unnikrishnan M.N., WSP

Operations Manager; Capt. Alban Castellino, WSP Maritime Training Center Consultant; Capt. Hemant Arora, WSP HSQE Compliance Manager; Mr. Narayanan Sundaram, WSP IT Manager; C/E Prem Babu Pillai, WSP Technical Superintendent, C/E Edwin Rafon, BMC Technical Superintendent and Lloyd’s Register’s Mr. Decena Bernardo.

Other speakers and their subjects include: MTI Network's Gina Virtusio on Crisis Media Management and Social Media Usage; Marine Benefits’ Ms. Rebecca Jane Mejia, on Mental Health; Del Rosario & Del Rosario’s Atty. David Evelio Valencia, on Seafarer’s Protection Act; and P & I Doctor Dr. Edgardo Gary on Loss Prevention.

Capt. Sitchon concluded the conference with an open discussion on crew issues.

The company.

Western Shipping Southeast Asia Inc. currently employs all-Filipino crew on nine bulk carriers and mixed

crew on eight tankers, with 86% of the crew being Filipinos, for a total of 600 crew for WSP and BMC vessels both onboard and on vacation.

WSSAI is an active member of the Filipino Association for Mariner’s Employment (FAME) and the local International Maritime Employers’ Committee (IMEC), as well as a consistent sponsor of IMEC cadets at the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP).

Through ISO 9001:2015, WSSAI strives for efficient, relevant, and globally competitive services.

WSSAI’s partner in the promotion and training of Filipino seafarers, WSP Maritime Training Center, has cutting-edge facilities augmented by a Resource Center with a library, laptop work stations with learning software to a range of computer-based training and instructional videos, and is located in the same building where WSSAI has its office, on the 17th and 18th floors of the Prestige Tower in Pasig City.



Team WSSAI



ONE Family: VMCI, Vega Reederei, Contship and JBLFMU

Vega Manila Family REVITALIZED FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Auspicious at 17th, the Vega Manila Crewmanagement Inc. (VMCI) held its biggest Family Day on December 1 at the Iloilo Convention Center or ICON, a remarkable structure at the heart of the Iloilo business district.

More than 800 people gathered at the state-of-the-art convention venue, including seafarers and cadets with their families, the company's principals, management, and staff, partners and suppliers.

The vibrant celebrations rolled on the theme, "Vega Manila: Stable at 17. Full Speed to the better normal". The audience was enthralled by spectacular intermission numbers performed by the Sidlangan Dance Company and the JBLFMU Kinaadman Chorale.

The competing groups of the Vega Scholars, Vega Commanders (seafarers' wives), Vega Hub (staff), and Vega Explorers (active seafarers) all performed impressively beautiful and superbly

with the theme of Greek mythology and seafaring.

Fun games, good food, raffle draws,

meaningful with the presence of VMCI principals: Vega Reederei GMBH & CO. KG Managing Director Dr. Arrend Brügge and



and inspirational messages rounded out the event.

Bonding.

The event was made more

wife Sabine; Contships Management Inc. Managing Director Angelos Tyrogalas and Crewing Manager Manos Zacharakis. The Vega Manila officers and staff greeted them at the airport with a Dinagyang

tribe performance by Sidlangan Dance Company at the airport on November 30.

In the evening, an intimate dinner hosted by Capt. Vic Fedelicio, VMCI President and CEO and his wife Dr. Nelibeth Fedelicio, was held to bond the principals, management, and staff before the big event of meeting the seafarers and their families the next day.

Dr. Mary Lou L. Arcelo, President Emeritus and Chairman of the Board of John B Lacson Foundation Maritime University (JBLFMU), and Dr. Ronald Raymond L. Sebastian, Chief Executive Officer, also attended the Family Day, along with their trusted campus administrators. JBLFMU

extended and morphed the shipping crisis that started in the year 2008., “Several companies faulted,” he continued, “but those who really has the tightest belt survived.”

Fedelicio praised their shipowners who hurdled the challenge because of the outstanding controls and strong business acumen of the top management like Dr. Arrend Bruggee of Vega, Mr. Nick Pateras of Contships and MSC Group Chairman Captain Gianluigi Aponte.

He declared the resumption of Vega Manila’s tradition with the collaboration of their new principals Contships and MSC. “Our culture of empowering Filipino seafarers, supporting the wellness of their

this crisis.” He confirmed selling ships during the pandemic, while acquiring new-built ships.

“Why we have sold so many ships? We are taking our chance. Now, we can say we are recovered. We are very proud to have these new ships because we must sync to the future and we must get greener. Some of the ships are not the greenest ones but they are very fuel-efficient and representing the state of the art,” Brügge explained.

From Cyprus, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) Group Managing Director & CEO Mr Prabhat Jha and his wife delivered their inspiring messages via zoom. MSC is now the world’s largest container shipping company.

More fun.

From Iloilo, the VMCI management and staff, with Dr. Arrend Brügge and wife Sabine travelled to Antique, the hometown of Capt. Fedelicio.

Capt. Vic’s resort-style residence and highland farm served as the venues for the next two days, which were sizzling and filled with fun, songs and dances. The bubbly and rarin’ staff also enjoyed water sports led by Capt. Vic himself.

On the last night of the party, Capt. Vic distributed cash envelopes to everyone of his office workers.

Bigger.

Everything is happening or being done with a lot of determination and at full speed. VMCI is off to a great start as it secures more office space in preparation for the official launch of its shipmanagement firm in 2023.

The reinvigorated Vega Manila Family is not only ready to serve, but can also pierce through opportunities.

is a partner in the VMCI's Cadet Scholarship Program providing opportunities for youth.

Stronger.

Grateful VMCI’s Fedelicio reflected on the Covid-19 pandemic which “brought havoc to lives and

families that integrates well to the community. Thereby, affording quality of life. That’s the trust we’re practicing.”

Grateful Reederei’s Brügge remarked, “I thank you and all the Vega family and also your wives, your relatives bringing us through





OSM Pres Maily Borillo **Shipmanagement** **is All About People**

Ms. Maily Borillo, President and Managing Director of OSM

Philippines, presented with pride and enthusiasm the company's best practices for achieving a crew retention rate of greater than 95% and a medical repatriation rate of 0.74%.

OSM Maritime Group is one of the world's leading shipmanagement companies, providing highly-competent and loyal seafarers of over 70 nationalities, including Filipinos to more than 700 vessels under its management.

"Seafarers are human being not human doing," Borillo, emphasized that "Shipmanagement is about people, retaining the right people."

Crew is traditionally retained by legal contract, competitive salary, performance bonus, seniority bonus benefits, etc. But sometimes with the financial crisis or due to poor market condition, financial benefits are normally not possible thus not sustainable."

Borillo said OSM does things differently by establishing a "stronger psychological contract, an informal contract between two people based

on trust and establishing a life relationship with the seafarer rather than just a work relationship."

In 2017, OSM launched the **OSM Cares program** to equip the seafarers not only with technical skills but also with life skills. Tools that will help them nourish good physical health, as well as mental health. Tools that will focus on holistic being of seafarers.

Some of the initiatives of the program are the following:

Health and Wellness. The OSM health and wellness hub was created in collaboration with Nordic Medical Clinic, and it implements mandatory health and wellness training, telemedicine, regular health seminars, psychological counseling for physical sickness onboard, and a holistic health onboard program for creating healthy food onboard and a healthy lifestyle.

The OSM Family Club. With seven chapters across the country, dedicated family counselors, and regular seminars, the seafarers and their families are inspired to improve family life and relationships.

Financial Program. The interactive financial seminars are backed up by reprogramming company policies. Automatic savings and investment, as well as advance crew planning, assist seafarers in financial management.

Borillo summed up, the program "must be holistic, it should be targeted not generic, it should involve the seafarers and family. It should have a surency connection, as we have the same program for our employees."

Support.

OSM also walks the talk, the company policy supports the system.

"It must also be proactive; it must be part of the strategic planning and management review which we are doing annually and quarterly, respectively. It must be data-driven with facts and data and involving the expert.

Culture.

"It's not a revolution; it should be continuous." A beaming Borillo said. It should be a regular thing to do for the seafarer and must be embedded in the company culture.

Because at the end of the day, "Shipmanagement is All About People."

(Editorial Note: Article based on Ms. Borillo's presentation at the first Norway-Philippines Maritime and Energy Conference on October 13, 2022, at the Manila Peninsula Hotel)



OSM Chair Adonis Donato Lifetime Achievement Awardee

The Crew Connect Global Awards 2022 recognized **Rear Admiral Adonis Donato, PCGA, Chairman of the Board of OSM Maritime Services**, with a Lifetime Achievement Award on November 24 at the exquisite Sofitel Philippine Plaza in Manila.

So much may be learned from him who retired with a gold watch and honored with a charitable foundation to his name – the OSM Adonis Donato Foundation, Inc., the corporate social responsibility arm of OSM Maritime Group.

Donato is proudly Filipino, an early achiever: captain of the crew of cadets, class president, corps commander, editor-in-chief and summa cum laude, Marine Transport ('67), at the Philippine Merchant Maritime Academy (PMMA), the State premiere maritime school, the oldest in Asia.

He served the Philippine Navy for 12 years, and the Coast Guard (PCG) for three. At PCG, he headed the Seamen Processing and Registry Unit,

chaired the Inter-Agency Seafarers Coordinating Committee and was the sole Philippine delegate to the IMO-STCW Convention in London, England.

He commanded bulk carriers, even saved a Dutch family from a sinking yacht off the French Coast.

Donato joined OSM Maritime Services, executive officer for four years, then President and GM for 16 years. He was always double-tasking for the industry, like:

- With a small study group at the Coast Guard Auxiliary, they wrote the book, Philippine Navigational Sealanes, Sailing Guides to Masters, and Vessels Traffic Management System”
- Part of the lobby that pushed the passage of the Merchant Marine Act of 1997 which enabled the Philippines to be in the IMO “WhiteList” of Complying Countries to the STCW 78 Convention
- Among others, president of:
 - Master and Mates Association of the Philippines, a professional organization accredited by the

Philippine Regulatory Commission (PRC);

Philippine Federation of Professional Association, of 45 different professional disciplines accredited by PRC;

Maritime Movement of the Philippines, a united effort of major maritime stakeholders to have a National Maritime Agenda, a commitment of former President Rodrigo Duterte to the group; and

PMMA Alumni Association.

As a corporate executive and social reformer, he is active in all major maritime organizations, elected (and always re-elected) to senior positions, including a nomination of a PartyList for a seat in the Lower House of Congress.

Technically, he is retired. Practically, he never will be.

For with his peers in OSM, he shares his competency onboard and offers his credentials in the Board. But overarching is his goodwill: consistent, not contrite; deep into the soul, beyond the clutches of business nor profit.



UMTC Pres Galvez



UMTC Managing Director Bautista

UMTC Banquet and Socials STAKEHOLDERS CELEBRATE TRIUMPH

Cheers and Cherish!

United Marine Training Center President Mr. Antonio Galvez and Managing Director Engr. Donald Bautista raise glasses to their clients, colleagues, and partners at the UMTC Banquet and Socials atop the UMTC Building in Manila, on the evening of November 23.

Galvez declares the revival of the UMTC's tradition of open house gathering for their valued clients and friends from the maritime industry, after almost two years of limited personal contacts because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event reflects UMTC's promotion of industry collaboration and commitment, with attendees including shipmanagers, manning agents, educators, suppliers, and even counterparts in the training sector.

Government officials also joined the

stakeholders: From the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), Chief of Staff Atty. Jabeth Dacanay and METS Supervisor Presca Lugo. Regional Director Florencio Sunico Jr. and NCR Director Nina Connie Dodd of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) and NATSA-NTSB President Chef Gabriel Prats.

Present also are IMO Maritime Goodwill Ambassador George Hoyt and International Maritime Employers Council (IMEC) Head of Training and Operations Adam Lewis.

Banquet food and entertainment abound, interspersed with messages

from UMTC's top brass.

Grateful.

Galvez expressed gratitude to their valued clients for sharing their passion for training excellence.

“It is through our partnership and collaboration and your continuous patronage that United Marine Training Center maintains to be one of the top providers for maritime training in the Philippines.” He emphasized UMTC's commitment to “training your good seafarers to become better.”

Bautista enthusiastically welcomes the audience and turns nostalgic, asking the mostly foreign audience,



(From left) with Chef Prats and TESDA's Sunico and Dodd



•MARINA's Dacanay and IMO's Hoyt



Industry colleagues



With industry colleagues

"Kamusta?"

He explains "Kamusta", (Hello, How are you in English), for Filipinos signifies love, care, concern. It is a sight to behold, he said, "that we have here today all of you celebrating our triumphs over the challenging times. All of you here sharing stories."

Everybody cheers as Bautista exclaims "for all the challenges we have overcome over the years and for the coming challenges that we'll surely be overcome in the coming years. For the better in 2023!"

Profile.

UMTC currently has over 135 clients worldwide and is expanding. Its' training portfolio covers over 180 courses, including a number of courses adopted by MARINA as

the template and benchmarking tool used by maritime training centers nationwide.

To meet the needs of shipowners and managers, UMTC created promotional courses for each rank, from rating to operational and management levels.

Electro-Technical Officer (ETO) program, Deck Courses, trade tests, evaluation, and assessments are among the most popular.

This year also marks UMTC's collaboration with the Integrated Electrical Engineers of the Philippines Inc. (IEEP), the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) only accredited organization of electrical practitioners to bring more competitive Electro-Technical Officers and Electro-Technical

Ratings on board.

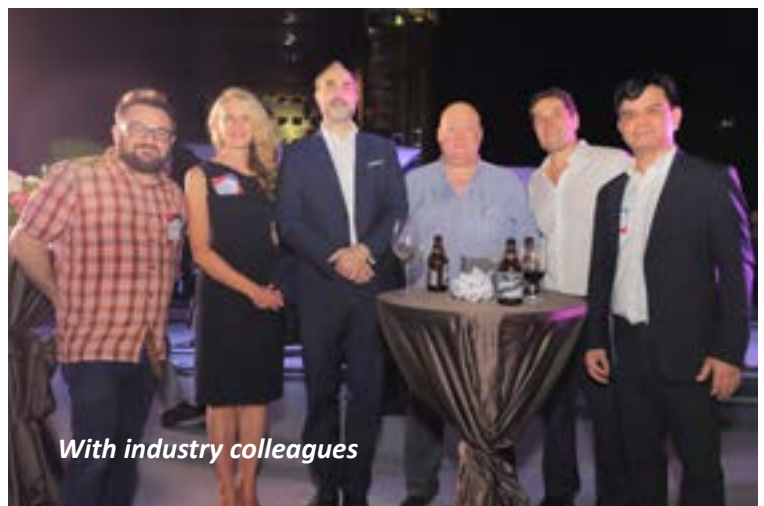
UMTC is the product of more than two decades of pursuit of training excellence and innovation in the maritime sector.

Established in 1998, it traces its humble beginnings in a single lecture room doubling as the office and another room for culinary training. In 2004, the center expanded their operations to further fulfill the growing need for well-trained seafarers. UMTC finally moved to its present site in the heart of Manila in 2008, providing training for up to 40,000 seafarers annually.

The company keep expanding, enhancing, and improving to continue providing world-class training to seafarers.



IMEC's Lewis and Dan Tolentino



With industry colleagues

ITF Asia Pacific Conference REFLECTING FROM THE PANDEMIC

“The reality is, transport workers, seafarers have kept the world and economy moving throughout the pandemic,” underscores ITF Secretary General Stephen Cotton.

Cotton led the discussion with hundreds of delegates from ITF union affiliates in Asia Pacific from the maritime, aviation, railroads, public transportation, ports, and docks sectors at the ITF Asia Pacific Conference held October 17-18, 2022 at the Conrad Hotel Manila.

The Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), the world's largest union of seafarers, co-hosted the conference.

Marino World was granted back-to-back exclusive interviews with Cotton and ITF President Paddy Crumlin centered on the realizations brought forth by the pandemic and the future challenges ahead.

Keyworders.

“There’s a couple of things when it comes to seafarers,” Cotton explained. We have to be in a position to learn the lessons of the pandemic.

He underlined the importance of ensuring “a global system in issuing visas for seafarers; that they are treated as essential workers when it comes to prioritizing vaccines; and that governments and big businesses know the world doesn’t move without ships and ships will not move without seafarers.”

Crumlin recounted the sacrifices of the seafarers during the pandemic “They can’t get home, can’t get off their ships for months and sometimes years, even abandoned. They’ve been a victim of the pandemic. They have been shut

away from their communities.

“Seafarers are essential workforce, so we’re making sure that the shipowners make their responsibilities to them; the governments from the countries they came and the countries they go to. That they are not treated like external threats to the community. They should be properly respected and acknowledged.”

MLC.

Crumlin noted that the successful implementation of the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC) depends on all the stakeholders, including flag state, port

and the changing energy fuels; workers must have a say in it,” Cotton said.

“Most importantly, Asia Pacific is the most unique, diverse, multi-cultural region in the ITF family. And we need to do much more to share best practices to build a very strong platform.

In this very complicated, political times, being part of a trade union is the most important; being a member of a union that will protect you and ensure you have a good job.”

AMOSUP.

Cotton and Crumlin both expressed gratitude to AMOSUP, which was founded by Capt. Gregorio Oca and is currently led by his son, Dr. Conrado Oca.

“For me and the ITF family, our relationship with Dr. Oca and AMOSUP is incredibly special. It’s the biggest seafarer union in the world, it’s the biggest democratic union in the world,” Cotton conceded.

“They are acting the true spirit of the trade union as collectivism,” Crumlin remarked. In a country with gaps in social mechanisms, they build hospitals, provide social support, and ensure that their members are properly remunerated.”

AMOSUP currently has over a hundred thousand of marine officers and crew as members.

state, shipowner and the workforce.

“It’s really about port state control. If the country has a large number of properly trained inspectors who thoroughly investigate complaints. If the government does not want to fully prosecute, then nothing happens,” said Crumlin.

Future.

The conference focused on global supply chain concerns, occupational health and safety, the future of young and platform workers and the green economy.

“We make sure that workers understand the green economy



ITF SecGen Cotton



ITF Pres Crumlin



In full force AMOSUP led by Pres Oca



From left: MARINA Fabia, MAAP Santos, AMOSUP Oca, Speaker Romualdez and Governor Garcia

ROMUALDEZ AT MAAP GRADUATION RITES

73 future marine officers were conferred diplomas for the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) and the Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE) at the 20th commencement exercises of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP) in Mariveles, Bataan on December 2, 2022.

MAAP is a leading institution of excellence in maritime education and training in the country and the Asia-Pacific region.

House Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez was the Guest of Honor and Keynote Speaker. Other special guests include Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator Atty. Hernani Fabia and Bataan Governor Albert Garcia. Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Phis (AMOSUP) President Dr. Conrado Oca and MAAP President VAdm Eduardo Ma Santos led the graduation rites.

Romualdez, in his speech, stated that the proposed Magna Carta for Seafarers is a "high priority" for the Congress.

"In fact, it was among the 32 legislative measures specified as priority under the common legislative agenda of the Senate and the House of Representatives," Romualdez said.

Other priority bills, he said, are the Maritime Education and Training Act, which seeks to implement a modern maritime education and training regime and support the needs of maritime students and professionals; and the International Maritime Instrument Domestication Act, which calls for the

maritime schools for helping to keep the "economy afloat in trying times by producing world-class seafarers who continue to make us proud in the global arena."

Protection.



full and effective implementation and enforcement of international maritime instruments and other international conventions, to which the Philippines is a state party.

Recognition.

Romualdez said that he and his colleagues in Congress are "aware of the importance of the seafaring sector to the economy, the country being one of the largest suppliers of manpower to the maritime industry."

He acknowledged MAAP and other

The Magna Carta law, according to Romualdez, seeks to "institutionalize the protection of Filipino seafarers' rights to legitimate concerns such as just terms and conditions of work and safe and secure workplace that complies with safety standards, free legal consultation and representation, and appropriate accommodation, recreational facilities, proper and adequate nutrition onboard in order to protect and promote health and physical, emotional and psychological well-being of seafarers."



At MMPI and MOC Family Affairs **SEAFARERS SHINE!**

The spotlight is on the seafarers at the Maine Marine Philippines, Inc. (MMPI) and Manila Ocean Crew Management, Inc. (MOC) Christmas Get-Together parties held in Iloilo, Cebu, Manila and Cavite under the auspices of the Misuga Management Services, Inc. (MMSI).

Four opulent hotels hosted the gatherings: the Courtyard by Marriott in Iloilo City on November 19, the Holiday Inn in Cebu City on November 26, the New Coast Hotel in Ermita, Manila on December 3 and the Bayleaf Cavite on December 10.

The events are part of their Crew Family Affair (CFA) program, which aims to bring together seafarers, crew families, and company officials and staff to foster good relationships and mutual development while also increasing their knowledge on a variety of relevant topics.

Under the CFA's banner "We value crew relatives as much as we value our seafarers," seafarers, crew families, officers, and staff of MMPI, MOC, and MMSI attended the events.

The attendees were all eyes and ears to the officers who delivered their unfeigned messages: From Iloilo, C/O Janssen C. Manero, C/E Wende M. Buenafior, and 1AE Mark Anthony P. Legislador; From Cebu, C/O Ermond G. Hisoler, C/E Glenn T. Mondares; From Manila, Capt. Nestor J. Ceniza and C/E Bernard V. Ramos; and from Cavite, C/O Ivan Hans-Josef B. Regis and C/E Macario L. Villafior, Jr.

Additionally, addresses were given by Mrs. Natalia Marites V. Gonzales, the wife of Capt. Rheyhan P. Gonzales, Mrs. Esther T. Misa, the wife of C/E Vicente F. Misa Jr., Mrs. Marlyn S. Gepes, the wife of C/E Gefer G. Gepes, and Mrs. Marylyn P. Saulog, the wife of 2/O Bobby I. Saulog.

Family.

C/E Bernard Ramos, 22 years with MMPI, emphasized how much seafarers value their families: "Our families and loved ones are the primary reasons. Our sacrifices could not be paid by any material thing when we see them successful in their chosen endeavor."

Capt. Nestor Ceniza, who has been with MMPI for 21 years, caught COVID-19: "This is the perfect time to acknowledge our perseverance and for overcoming the past years challenges. With this experience I have valued my own health and my family more. Let us strive to come home safely by following safety protocols and awareness how to protect ourselves and our families."

Mrs. Natalia Marites V. Gonzales, her husband Capt. Rheyhan P. Gonzales, and their son Jay were on Misuga Kaiun vessels when the pandemic struck: "While stuck, I looked around and I came to realize how blessed I am that despite the pandemic our Maine Marine Family still opens doors to their seafarers to be onboard and take care of them as well while they are at sea at the height of the pandemic."

Grateful.

C/E Glenn T. Mondares, has been sailing for 30 years: "Indeed the company is a blessing to me because it helped us to have a job to live our lives productively. I thank the company for endowing me with the privilege and responsibility of





my position. I will not be able to reach my situation and go further if not for the help of the company.”

C/O Janssen C. Manero, who took his on-the-job training at MMPI until he became an officer said, he just dreamt to live a comfortable life but MMPI gave him more: his name, confidence, recognition and wonderful seafaring journeys. “To all these, my heart is overflowing with gratefulness. *Maraming Salamat MMPI!*” he exclaimed.

Concern.

C/O Ermond Hisoler expressed not only gratitude but also concern for the company's ability to retain competent seafarers: “Misuga Kaiun, MMPI along with MOC have increasing number of vessels every year, an increase of competent seafarers is in need. Therefore, our company Misuga Kaiun, MMPI, MOC have implemented career development plans and also specific trainings to develop the practical skills of our seafarers. In line with this, I would like to ask masters, chief officers, chief engineers and first assistant

engineers to please impart your knowledge. Help us to train our junior officers, our ratings to be competent and be promoted.”

Management.

The top management of Misuga Kaiun, MMPI, and MOC are all grateful to their mariners, families, and staff for their support despite the difficulties brought on by the pandemic.

Capt. Keita Okajima, president of MMSI, praised the crew's work attitude and character, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, citing their flexibility to work and their willingness to extend cooperation and support to the company and its principal.

Mr. Yasuhiro Sone, Managing Director and Head of Misuga Group's Crewing Department, also sent a message to the crew families. On Misuga Kaiun's behalf, he also expressed gratitude to the seafarers and their crew families for their unwavering support.

“Thanks to the support and understanding of each of you, our

seamen and their family, our vessels are able to sail safely the same as pre-pandemic time.”

Manager Mr. Kei Yamamoto of Misuga Management Services, Inc., likewise, delivered an inspiring message.

MMPI General Manager Ms. Ma. Corazon "Coi" G. Songcuya, expressed gratitude to Misuga Kaiun Company, Ltd. for its generous support, to the staff members for their efficiency in running the business, and to the courageous seafarers and their helpful crew families who are enduring maritime work and the difficulties that come with it.

The heartwarming moments were followed by festive meals, exciting games, and raffle draws.

The year 2022 marks the beginning of the company's efforts to re-open doors to a new normal in reaching out to seafarers and crew families.

These programs serve as a launching pad for future events and activities that will resume in the new normal setup.



The Hidden Cost of Seafaring

by 2/E Mao Tze Matillano Bayotas



One of the most stereotype ideas hovering through the Filipino society is this “*ay seaman yan, marami yang pera (that seaman has a lot of money).*”

Yes it is true that seafarers receive a much competitive salary than land-based jobs. Yes we are earning dollars, “x50 ika nga (varies depending on exchange rate)”. But little did they know that there are costly expenditures that we seafarers are spending hefty sums of dollars in order to cope up with the emotional and mental struggles that we are experiencing on board. Working in the middle of the high seas comes with privileges as well as price. And this is the price we are willing to pay for the people we hold dear:

1. The price of communication

Being physically away from your loved ones demands constant communication in order for relationships to be nurtured. Technology has blessed us with the power of connectivity unparalleled in the past which gave rise to cellular phones, satellite phones, fax machines, email and seaman’s bestfriend the internet! Large portions of on board pay of seafarers goes into buying of sim cards and loads for internet connectivity. Yes there are companies with great concerns for seafarers that provide free internet on board but a vast majority of them don’t provide them yet. As a result seafarers have become the greatest collectors of sim cards

from different countries of the world. Spending 10 dollars to about 30 dollars for a handful amount of data for “every port they report” is a costly vice. Consequently, seafarers’ families also need to have internet connection at home which can also cost from 1000php to about 500php depending on your connection capabilities. Other seafarers also purchased chat cards and satellite cards for them to call their families even if they are in the middle of the sea. Some even purchased costly personal satellite phones just to avoid missing a beat on family matters.

2. The price of travel

Some seafarers including their loved ones will conquer the distance literally just to be with their family. Some wives and girlfriends travel halfway across the globe just to visit their precious marino. Though the frequencies vary depending on the location of the ship. Most probably travelling to countries in the Asia Pacific region is much frequent occurrence than travelling to the far west. It may be financially impractical to do so but practicality has no place in the realm of love. Some partners of seafarers especially senior officers are allowed to sail with them but the cost of travel is being shouldered personally. Lucky mariners who have the opportunity to call in Philippine ports would bear the cost of the transportation of a handful of their relatives just to visit them in their ships.

3. The price of training

Seafaring is a dynamic profession and demands constant upgrading of qualifications in order to be competent and compliance with the recent regulations. Even during leave or vacation, seafarers must take up countless of never ending trainings just to keep in pace of the international standards. Great companies shoulder the training fees of their crew but majority of them are placing the cost to the personal pockets of seafarers. Mandatory trainings are already costly, how much more does specialised training cost? The high salary earned by seafarers in the open seas is being balanced out by numerous and costly training on land. This siphoning of hard earned money is not being properly addressed by MARINA since no steps are being done to lighten the burden of seafarers. On board training is one way to reduce the training cost incurred to seafarers.

So next time you judge seafarers as someone who have lots of money in excess, think twice because the “benjamins” they have earned on board have tolls to pay. Working your tails off in the middle of the sea has a price and it’s a price they are willing to pay.

2/E Mao Tze Bayotas is a Curriculum Developer/LMS Officer of the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP).



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