

MARINO WORLD

FUSION OF MARITIME NEWS AND VIEWS



Western Shipping 20 YEARS!

■ MARINA IRR

■ LNG Summit

■ WMU Journey

MARINO WORLD

20|25

20 Years of Fusion of Maritime
News and Views in **2025**

***Marino World Fun Run
"United in Maritime"***

***Marino World
Manning Expo & Conference***

***Marino World 20th Anniversary
Honors and Gala Night***

2nd Marino World Cup

www.marinoworldonline.com

FOLLOW US





Governance

MAGNA CARTA OF FILIPINO SEAFARERS IRR SIGNED, WHAT'S NEXT?

11

Energy

NORWAY-PHILIPPINES LNG SUMMIT

10

Cover Story

WESTERN SHIPPING SOUTHEAST ASIA

20 YEARS OF HONORING SEAFARERS AND FAMILIES

16

Special Feature

WMU JOURNEY

25



Cover Design by
Elmer Alitagtag

CONTENT

ABOUT THE COVER

Western Shipping Southeast Asia
celebrates 20th year of honoring and
supporting seafarers and their families

EDITORIAL BOARD

Publisher & Editor
Lyn Bacani

International Contributors
F R Chowdhury Mark Millar

National Contributors
Ms. Merle San Pedro RAdm Adonis Donato Comm. Tess Lora

News and Views Correspondents
Danilo Junco Ben-Oliver Matias Mao Tze Bayotas
Rachelle Ga Dave Florian Balanon

Internal Professional Services
Legal Consultant Publicity & Programs
Atty. Manuel Obedeza Jr Maritime Digital Media Corporation

Creative Director
Elmer T. Alitagtag
Photography & Coverage
Robert Cuyos Joamirica Tud Royette de Paz Bing Cuyos

EDITORIAL OFFICE ACCESS

Tel/Fax: +63 46 4582285 • Mobile: +63 962-2495594
Blk 12 Lot 10 Honeydew St., Phase 2, Valle Verde, Dasmariñas, Cavite, Philippines 4114
Email: marinoworldpublication@gmail.com

Published by Maritime Digital Media Corporation

www.marinoworldonline.com



ANCHOR OF HOPE

"The sea has always been a powerful metaphor for life. It is vast, challenging, and unpredictable, yet full of opportunities. And as we welcome a brand-new year, we set anchor on a long-awaited shore," says President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. in his keynote address at the signing of the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers or Republic Act 12021.

The law reinforces the country's commitment to ensuring the welfare of our seafarers, addressing not only the lingering concerns but also future challenges in the employment of our Filipino seafarers – our most valuable asset in maritime.

Much remains to be done. How the Philippines moves forward will be determined by how the Magna Carta's system of regulations is implemented, led by the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), in serious consultation with all stakeholders.

We take the perspectives of global industry leaders like CEO Francesco Gargiulo of the International Maritime

Employers' Council (IMEC), who asserts that "The proof is in the pudding." We will have to wait and see how that materializes.

We at Marino World will continue to be on watch: to alert, to listen, and to feel as we continue to write the stories. With a deeper editorial bench that searches and sifts, validates and critiques news, events and prospects.

As in real life of a seafarer, there are ups and downs, sometimes smooth sailing, sometimes rough when weather and waves throw unpredictable fits. And direct threats to our person and publication.

For those with us aboard, Salamat Po for grasping our hands when the going

goes rough. We are grateful, you have our resolve to sail on. For those who watch, please come onboard to hold the ramparts.

With grit and risk-taking, we will continue to bring out the news to the public --- out of the box and of fresher perspective.

Furthermore, Marino World is prepared to embark on a journey into the blue waters of 2025, as we approach our 20 years of delivering fusion of maritime news and views to the global world of shipping community.

And with a greater load: maximizing our digital platforms to reach out to more seafarers, shipowners' boardrooms, maritime communities across continents, and hosting events that foster camaraderie and collaboration among regulators and stakeholders.

Let's lift our Anchor of Hope, the Maritime Industry, for a better future! **MW**

Dynamic and Dedicated Team IONIC!

The 10th IONIC Annual Officers' Conference demonstrated once again the IONIC Team's vibrancy and commitment to service excellence.

About 100 marine officers and sponsored cadets attended the conference, held on November 21-22 at the Marco Polo Hotel Ortigas Manila.

They were exhilarated and empowered by the presence of the company's shipowners, top management and shore staff, as well as their colleagues, who watched the event onboard all IONIC ships via private live streaming.

Greek Ambassador to the Philippines Ioannis Pediotis also graced the event.

The two-day conference was replete with informative presentations, insightful panel discussions, focused split sessions, collaborative round table discussions, thought-provoking and straight-forward Q&A's and inspiring speeches.

Milestone

IONIC CEO Dimitri Frank Saracakis is certain, "the biggest milestone of 2024 has been the growth and the strengthening of IONIC Manila," IONIC's office in the Philippines.

Dimitri, who came along at the conference with his brother Alexander, said, "This is a big investment or commitment to this beautiful country and to the people of the Philippines and specially you (the seafarers)."

The establishment of IONIC Manila is "certainly not the cheapest way

forward," he stated. But it's the only way that we can be closer to you and you can feel that you are closer to us.

Established in 2022, IONIC Manila, is situated on the 7th floor of Suntree Tower in Meralco Avenue, Ortigas Center. A day before the conference, Dimitri had a chance to visit the office with 21 Filipino employees, currently serving a pool of around 700 Filipino seafarers.

"I felt the energy and the passion of the team. I really urge you to use it more often and feel it as a second home," Dimitri told the seafarers.

Renewed commitment

Capt. Albert Bartilad, IONIC Manila President said, "This year's conference theme, "Navigating the Future: Elevating Training and Sparking Innovation, naturally continues their story last year captured by the theme "From Vision to Reality."

"It was a call to action of our declaration of our commitment to transform aspirations to achievements. One year later, I'm proud to say that IONIC Manila is now a fully operational and stabilized organization," Bartilad stated.

He thanked the principals for their unwavering trust to his team and told the seafarers, "You are the heart of the company and everything we do is to



IONIC's Technical Manager Demetris Vlassopoulos stresses his points during the panel discussion



IONIC Manila's Pres Bartilad (right) and IONIC Crew Manager Vlamakis discuss with the seafarers



His Excellency Pediotis (middle) with the Saracakis brothers (left) Alexander and Dimitri

support you, your journey and your success."

Now that we have established a strong foundation, our focus shift to the future: Enhancing our capabilities, empowering our people and embracing innovation to meet the evolving needs of our principals and you, our seafarers."

Bartilad proudly introduced the hardworking team of IONIC Manila, which includes the accounting, HR and administration, operations and recruitment departments.

Crystal Mae Bermoy, IONIC Manila Administrative Supervisor, reported that this year, they organized wellness programs for their seafarers, including a sportsfest, a relaxation session for the seafarers' wives and a financial literacy webinar.

Innovation

Spyros Vlassopoulos, IONIC Managing Director, provided a thorough update on the company's developments, including IONIC Innovations and fuel optimization.

He emphasized that IONIC firmly believes in new technologies and recognizes that innovation is more than simply adapting the latest technologies; it is actually integrating them into the organization.

"Together with all new developments such as innovation which our company and our principals are very much focusing on, we will all become stronger and better and we will show that we are leaders in our segments," Spyros said.

The conference highlighted IONIC's undertakings and collaborations with partners on smart technology and

equipping seafarers with innovative platforms.

Eight key executives from the IONIC headquarters in Greece shared and exchanged knowledge and expertise and engaged in conversation with the seafarers. This, according to Spyros, underscores "the owners' commitment to IONIC Manila and the Filipino seafarers."

Other guest speakers and panelists were Tiliakos Stavros, Owner's Representative of Nautilus Pacific Maritime Training Center; Kostas Christidis, senior consultant of Danaos Management Consultants S.A.; and Jisette Espinoza, Deputy General Manager of MarCoPay.

Sustained excellence

IONIC presently has a fleet of 18 vessels, with one more set to be added by 2025. The ships are of excellent quality, built in reputable Japanese shipyards, and managed and maintained to top maintenance and safety technical standards. Not surprisingly, IONIC's vessels that call on ports in U.S. waters are USCG Qualship 21 approved, the most

difficult quality certification to attain in the world.

Spyros declared his vision for IONIC in 2025 is to solidify the company's reputation as an industry leader by exceeding expectations in service and innovation, fostering meaningful connections with colleagues both ashore and on board, and empowering all colleagues to achieve personal and professional excellence.

"Together, we aim to set new standards of growth, recognition, and integrity that inspire pride in all that we do!," he exclaimed.

Recognitions and celebrations

Following his presentation of IONIC Manila's successful recruitment and cadetship program status, IONIC Crew Manager Nikolaos Vlamakis addressed the seafarers, whom he called "the heart and soul of IONIC."

"You are the ones who keeps IONIC's flag high in every corner of the globe, showcasing our commitment to excellence. Thank you for your hard work. Thank you for your loyalty. Thank you for your trust in us. Together we will continue to chart new courses and we will continue to strive to become our better selves."

Several seafarers were honored with 10-Year Loyalty Awards during the conference's conclusion, the Christmas Party, with their families.

Truly, the IONIC Team takes training seriously, but they also know how to have fun. They danced all night to amazing music from live band and DJ, as well as exciting raffle prizes. **MW**



Honors for Chief Cook Jerry Mata

UMTC Pres Galvez (left) and MD Bautista receive the plaque from DNV represented by Raquel Omli

The United Marine Training Center (UMTC), the country's largest maritime training center, hosted an engaging party for its clients and industry partners on November 13 at the Avenue Deck of the Manila House BGC, Taguig, just a short walk from the venue of this year's Crew Connect Global conference 2024.



UNITED MARINE TRAINING CENTER

Voyage of Connections

UMTC President Tony Galvez expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the attendance of over 100 guests, calling it "a testament to the strong bonds we have forged and the mutual respect we share in our commitment to excellence in maritime training."

"Your trust in UMTC has been instrumental in our pursuit of delivering top-notch training programs that meet the highest standards of the maritime industry," Galvez stated.

During the party, DNV, the world's leading classification society, recognized UMTC for its "consistent delivery of exceptional training services."

Raquel Omli, DNV sales and marketing executive, described the plaque of appreciation as "a symbol of deep gratitude and the strong relationship we have built together for 15 years and counting."

She continued, "UMTC's commitment to quality has been proven throughout the years. Their consistent delivery of exceptional training services. Their dedication to excellence is reflected in their quality control processes, continuous improvement initiatives and unwavering trust of its clients and partners."

Onwards and upwards

The party was made more uplifting by Engr. Donald Bautista, UMTC Managing Director, who provided



The Asyad Group, with IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassador George Hoyt (rear right)

Industry partners enjoy the camaraderie of their colleagues

a brief summary of the most recent updates and developments at UMTC. The organization has trained more than 30,000 seafarers in 2024 and employs 65 full-time instructors, 63 non-teaching staff, and 21 Hotel & Food Services

workforce.

UMTC built 3 Tier Container that included additional nine rooms for practical exercises. The new methanol engine will be operational in 2025. More refrigeration, heating, ventilation, and



Harris (second from left) joyfully displays his award for winning the Star of the Night with IMEC's Amog

air conditioning units were purchased to expand ETO training. The UMTC complex currently houses more training instrumentation, automation, alarms and monitoring system, as well as super freezers and reefers. It now offers specific customized training for crane.

Bautista said that in 2024, UMTC established milestone partnerships with NYK Group and MSC Cruises for training their cruise ships' crew.

Moreover, UMTC met the requirements for the first-ever ETO cadetship program of the International Maritime Employers Council (IMEC).

"UMTC was chosen to be one of their training providers come 2025. We are really excited to start this partnership with you," Bautista remarked.

Another milestone, he noted, is UMTC collaboration with Asyad Group for management level officer trainings.

He also announced the launch of UMTC client portal, which will enable clients to book training and other services directly online.

Bautista exclaimed often throughout his address, "Thank you for your trust!" He said: "UMTC will cater whatever demand you will give us now and in the future."

UMTC Sales and Business Development Manager Judie Kallio concluded the event with further encouraging words, "As we look ahead, let us prioritize building meaningful connections. Let us navigate a path toward a future filled with promise and achievement!"

Appreciation

Galvez recognized the organizing team, whose "dedication and hard work made this momentous event possible and ensured an unforgettable

experience for all attendees.

Kallio, UMTC Brand and Marketing Manager Gerille Tuala, Sales and Business Development Associate Mary Ann Aguilar, Brand and Marketing Associate Sheree Palicpic, and Multimedia Associate Jyan Francisco each received a bouquet of flowers.

Celebrations

The UMTC management and staff, together with their clients and industry partners, celebrated all night with the venue's perfect ambiance for festivities and camaraderie, as well as collaborative painting, delightful cocktails, exciting raffles and souvenirs.

They were captivated by the Manila String Machine's elegant musical renditions, the powerful voice of multi-talented vocalist Sweet Buchanan, and the lively performance of show emcee Jasmine Fitzgerald.

The crowd's mood was heightened by the spontaneous performances of Raal Harris, Ocean Technologies Group Chief Creative Officer; Justin Vicente, Maersk-Filipinas Crewing Senior Recruitment Technical Officer; and Jake Amog and Sarah Stevens, Intl Maritime Employer's Council (IMEC) Training Manager and Deputy Head of Training, who participated in the "Stars of the Night" fun contest and jammed with the UMTC Band "d's Band," led by vocalist Bautista. **MW**



IMEC's Amog (right) jams with the "d's Band"



Norway-Philippines LNG Summit promotes energy security and LNG growth



Energy Sec Lotilla (in barong) with the LNG Summit speakers

■ **By DAVE FLORIAN BALANON**

Industry leaders from Norway and the Philippines convened on November 11, 2024, at the Dusit Thani Hotel in Makati City for the Norway-Philippines LNG Summit, focusing on strategies to advance the Philippines' liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector.

The summit organized by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Manila, the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), Norwegian Energy Partners (NORWEP), and the Philippines Norway Business Council (PNBC), highlighted LNG's role in energy security and transition.

Norwegian Ambassador to the Philippines Christian Halaas Lyster opened the event by stressing the urgency of collaboration in the energy sector. "The Philippines has been one of the most dynamic economies in Southeast Asia and Pacific region. The economy has sustained a strong momentum, growing at 6% the first half of 2024, placing it in the top performers in this region. Energy security contributes to economic prosperity, and Norway recognizes the importance of LNG can play to ensure energy security of the Philippines," Lyster said during his remarks.

Carl Martin Faannessen, President of the Philippines Norway Business Council (PNBC), also spoke during

the opening session, emphasizing the need for partnerships "and do business" to realize the summit's goals.

Department of Energy Secretary Raphael P.M. Lotilla presented an overview of the Philippine LNG sector, emphasizing its potential to address rising energy demands. "In the case of the Philippines, I would like to emphasize what the Ambassador is saying, that the objectives of having this affordable and sustainable source of energy is important for the people and for the economy. We characterize the role of natural gas as a transition fuel. If we did not adapt and improve our LNG sector, we would be stuck with coal," Lotilla said.

Francis Giles Puno, President and COO of First Gen Corporation, provided insights into the strategies needed to align the Philippines' LNG goals with the country's 2040 energy landscape. Puno highlighted the expectations for both the government and private sectors in creating a cohesive and sustainable LNG ecosystem.

Norwegian experts showcased cutting-edge LNG solutions, with Eirik Melaaen, Director of LNG, Hydrogen & CCUS at NORWEP, discussing Norway's advancements. "Our technology has been at the forefront of global LNG development. For the Philippines, adopting these solutions could accelerate its energy goals while ensuring sustainability and efficiency," Melaaen explained.

Ma. Laura L. Saguin, Division Head of the DOE's Natural Gas Monitoring

Division, elaborated on the role of LNG in catalyzing energy security and shared plans for its integration into the country's energy grid.

The summit also addressed workforce development in the maritime sector, as Captain Nebuchadnezzar Rabaya, Training Manager at the Norwegian Training Center, discussed LNG's potential to create jobs. "The advancement of LNG handling facilities into maritime operations in the Philippines opens up significant opportunities for Filipino seafarers and cadets, providing them with advanced training and competitive skills to excel in the global market," Rabaya said.

During a panel discussion, Emmanuel V. Rubio, President and CEO of MERALCO PowerGen Corporation, called for stronger collaboration between the public and private sectors. "A collective approach is essential to overcome challenges in project development and execution. Public-private partnerships are crucial to fast-tracking LNG infrastructure," Rubio stated.

Global trends and LNG's future were also discussed, with Helge Drange, EVP and Head of Fleet Management at BW LNG, emphasizing the fuel's critical role. "LNG is not just a transitional fuel; it is a key component of the global energy mix. The Philippines has the opportunity to position itself as a leader in LNG adoption and usage (i.e. the BW Batangas)," Drange remarked.

The summit featured various technical presentations, including discussions on cryogenic insulation for LNG applications by Kjetil Lund, Managing Director of PASSER Marine, and optimizing LNG handling through simulations by Leif Pentt Halvorsen, VP of MCS Product at Kongsberg Digital. The sessions explored innovative solutions for enhancing energy resilience and performance in the LNG sector.

Concluding the summit, B2B networking and cocktails provided a platform for participants to explore potential collaborations and reinforce partnerships. The event underscored a shared vision to harness LNG for energy security and economic development. **MW**



PBBM with the seafarers
and JMG's Marquez and
Josephine Francisco

Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers

IRR signed, what's next?

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., urged public servants, industry leaders, and maritime advocates to strictly implement and comply with the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the Republic Act (RA) No. 12021 or "An Act Providing for the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers."

Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac of the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) and Administrator Sonia Malaluan of the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) signed the IRR at the Kalayaan Hall Malacañan Palace on January 8, 2025, witnessed by the President, seafarers, key government officials, legislators and major stakeholders.



DMW Sec Cacdac and MARINA Admin Malaluan sign the IRR



PBBM and House Deputy Speaker Mendoza (4th from left) with the seafarers and major maritime stakeholders

In his keynote speech, President Marcos asked, “To the DOTr, MARINA, DOLE, DMW, and other concerned agencies, please ensure the immediate issuance of all remaining guidelines relative to the implementation of this IRR and the Magna Carta of Filipino seafarers, monitor its strict compliance by all stakeholders, and assist our seafarers to maximize the benefits that it provides.”

“Let us ensure that every provision of this law and its IRR are not just words that appear on paper but a bulwark that our seafarers can rely on,” the President emphasized, stating that “the IRR provisions are part of a holistic framework designed to uplift the lives of Filipino seafarers and their families.”

He continued, “As we formally implement this landmark law, I urge all of us – public servants, industry leaders, and maritime advocates – to embrace our roles with determination.”

Present at the signing ceremonies were Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista, Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma, Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla, Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa, House Deputy Speaker Raymond Democrito Mendoza, House Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs present and former Chairperson Jude Acidre and Ron Salo, and Overseas Workers Welfare Administrator Arnell Ignacio.

Dr. Conrado Oca, President of the Associated Marine Officers’ and Seamen’s Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), affiliate of Transport Workers Federation (ITF); Ericson

Marquez, Chairman of Joint Manning Group and Atty Iris Baguilat, Chairman of Association of Licensed Manning Agencies (ALMA) Maritime Group.

Some marine officers were also in attendance, including ITF inspector C/E Arvin Ivan Peralta who led the invocation and expressed his gratitude for the Magna Carta of Filipino seafarers which will provide protection, recognition and rights for the seafarers and their families.

He prayed, “*Sa paglagda ng mga patakarang ito ngayong araw hnihiling namin ang inyong patnubay sa aming mga lider, ang aming mahal na Pangulo, mga tagapagpatupad ng batas, mga kasama sa industriya upang magkaisa para sa ikabubuti ng lahat.*” In signing these policies today, we ask for your guidance to our leaders, our beloved President, law enforcement officials, and industry partners to unite for the greater good.

Collaboration

DMW Secretary Cacdac emphasized that the IRR reflects months of thorough consultations, rigorous review and sincere dialogue among all stakeholders and social partners, and that it, “encapsulates the essence of the principles of tripartism.”

He called for sustained collaboration in order to fully implement the landmark legislation.

“Together, let us turn these regulations into meaningful action and real change,” Cacdac stressed.

Onwards

MARINA Administrator Malaluan highlighted the IRR’s key provisions under four major objectives: Strengthening seafarers’ rights

and welfare, promoting equality and inclusion, advancing maritime education and training, and ensuring accountability.

Malaluan underscored, “Moving forward, various government agencies involve including MARINA will begin with the development of subsequent detailed policies and guidelines identified during the three-month consultations in order to give full and complete effect to the Magna Carta and its IRR.”

The signed IRR contains 22 rules. Some of its provisions still require guidelines to be developed by concerned agencies for implementation, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, within a reasonable period of time, including;

The DMW and the DOH shall develop joint guidelines for the implementation of Section 5, Determination of Disability Grading or Fitness to Work, including the selection, training, maintenance, and review of the pool of accredited third doctors.

Secretaries of the DMW and the DOLE and heads of relevant government agencies to establish a pool of trained maritime industry conciliator-mediators, labor arbiters and accredited maritime industry voluntary arbitrators.

The DMW through the Agarang Kalinga at Saklolo Para sa mga OFW na Nangangailangan (AKSYON) Fund, shall issue pertinent guidelines on the financial assistance to the seafarer for the payment of premiums of the bond, including the availment process, amount, or length of validity.

The DMW, through the National Reintegration Center for OFWs shall develop a full-cycle and

comprehensive reintegration program for seafarers.

The OWWA shall provide guidelines to ensure seafarers can maintain membership continuously while on board, taking into consideration the contract duration and the two-year validity of OWWA, membership and adopting digital technology for access to renewal.

Allotment

Under Rule VII of Terms and Conditions of Employment of Overseas Seafarers, Section 6 entitled Allotment and Remittances of Wages, the monthly salary to be remitted monthly to the seafarer's designated allottee/s shall consist of basic wage plus fixed or guaranteed overtime, at no expense to the seafarer.

ALMA President Capt. Antonio Ladera relayed that "According to the lawmakers, it is to safeguard the earnings of the seafarers but it should not include variables or moving targets such as tips."

Furthermore, the IRR states: "The allotments shall be paid to the designated allottee/s in Philippine currency at the rate of exchange at the time of remittance indicated in the

credit advice of the local authorized Philippine bank, which information shall be provided to the designated allottee/s."

Former MARINA official and manning executive Capt. Jeffrey Solon commented, "This is a disaster. They have removed the right of the seafarers to manage their own income."

He suggested, "Let the seafarers open up a dollar account and don't mandate them to have their 80% converted to Philippine currency. Let them decide if they will convert it or not."

Education and Training

Malaluan emphasized that, "Quality maritime education and training are vital to maintaining the competitiveness of the Filipino seafarers in the global market." The IRR further strengthens MARINA as the single Maritime Administration with jurisdiction over maritime education both for overseas and domestic seafarers.

According to the IRR, MARINA, in consultation with other relevant government agencies shall regulate the operation of all educational and training institutions offering courses

related to seafaring or maritime education.

At a press conference held at the MARINA central office on December 19, 2024, Malaluan admitted that they will be challenged with the implementation of the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers or RA 12021, which will be a key focus in 2025.

MARINA requested additional budget of P200 million for the implementation of the Magna Carta, to be used primarily for the establishment of the Office of the Deputy Administrator for Human Element which will focused on research, policy and development of education and training courses for international and domestic shipping.

Malaluan explained that P130 million will be allocated for the personnel and to capacitate them technically. "We have to work doubly hard this January to get the personnel that we need," she said.

The IRR stipulates that, "With respect to the maritime higher education institutions and maritime education programs, MARINA and CHED shall establish a transition plan within a reasonable period of time after the effectivity of this IRR." **MW**

NIPPON KAIJI KYOKAI

Manila Office

NIPPON KAIJI KYOKAI a leading International Ship Classification Society related to Shipmanagement & Shipbuilding industries seeks qualified applicants for the following positions:

Quality Management Auditor

QUALIFICATIONS

- Age: must be 30 to 45 years old.
- Bachelor's degree or University graduate
- 5 years working in Ship Management Company and 3 years' experience as superintendent.
- 5 years working in Ship Manning and Crewing or
- 3 years working in Quality Management Section
- Preferably living in Metro Manila

Surveyor

QUALIFICATIONS

- Degree in Naval Architect & Marine Engineer or Mechanical Engineer
- Previous experience on ship repair or shipbuilding
- Candidates should be less than 40 years of age and must have the ability to communicate in English language both oral and written.
- 5 years working in Ship Management Company and 3 years working experience as superintendent.



For interested applicants, please email resume with passport sized photo to hrml-iso@classnk.or.jp

ClassNK

IMEC CEO Francesco Gargiulo

Magna Carta to address training issues

“What we want is for the Magna Carta to be the catalyst to resolve the issues currently have with training in the Philippines,” Francesco Gargiulo, CEO of the International Maritime Employers’ Council (IMEC) told *Marino World* in an interview after the council’s local members meeting on November 15 at Shangri-la The Fort, Manila.

Gargiulo expressed concern, “too many people going through the system but not enough people getting a job at the end of it, not enough people actually getting the opportunity to have a training berth.”

The Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers strengthens the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) as the single Maritime Administration with jurisdiction over the country’s maritime education.

Gargiulo believes, “given the right resources form the government and they do this right, it’s a great idea.” We understand they will be given resources, financial resources to hire staff that can implement some of the provisions.

He also warned that, “There are parties out there who wish for this provision to fail because that impacts their bottom-line. But ultimately, we should be carrying all what’s good for Filipinos.

“I think the proof is in the pudding. We will have to wait and see how that materializes,” Gargiulo said.

Future-forward

IMEC is a party to the International Maritime Training Fund (IMTF), which provides funds for the training, upgrading, and education of Filipino seafarers employed aboard 8,111 IMEC member vessels globally. Its 15-year-old Cadet Program in the Philippines, has already produced more than 1,600 graduates. According to Gargiulo, the Electro-Technical Officer (ETO) program is one of IMEC’s biggest investments in 2025.

IMEC is a party to the International Maritime Training Fund (IMTF), which provides funds for the training, upgrading, and education of Filipino seafarers employed aboard 8,111 IMEC member vessels globally. Its 15-year-old Cadet Program in the Philippines, has already produced more than 1,600 graduates, According to Gargiulo, the Electro-Technical Officer (ETO) program is one of IMEC’s biggest investments in 2025.

He noted that it is difficult to generate ETOs in the Philippines due to the high cost, but with IMEC subsidizing the course, they expect to grow the number of ETOs servicing their members.

Gargiulo also announced the inauguration of the new IMEC Academic Building at the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific

(MAAP) campus in Kamaya Pt., Brgy. Alas-asin, Mariveles, Bataan on the second quarter of 2025. The IMEC building features modern training facilities and equipment.

He believes that the Philippines is the biggest key to fill up their need for officers. “The industry needs more officers. We believe the Philippines is the biggest key to our lacking benchmark. We’re living in a globalized industry, which means people are also looking into it. Having said that, Philippines remains the leading contender,” Gargiulo remarked.

Concerns

The IMEC CEO emphasized that there are a number of reasons why their members were delighted that the Magna Carta is finally in place, “not just in terms of ambulance chasers.”

“It’s for all the protection it brings in to Filipino seafarers which is obviously we think that we care the most about. We want to make sure that Filipino seafarers are protected, are looked after... Magna Carta is translating MLC (Maritime Labor Convention) into Filipino law and it’s long overdue but we’re very very happy that were there now,” Gargiulo said.

However, Gargiulo expressed concerns: “If someone puts a case in now. Will it be dealt with according to the new Magna Carta provisions or it will be dealt with according to the old provisions?” because he noted “cases growth,” in November.

The Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers was signed by President Marcos Jr. on September 23, 2024, and its IRR was signed on January 8, 2025.

“This interim phase is where we’re not clear. The government wasn’t clearly clear about. In fact, I think some of the ambulance chasers think it doesn’t apply yet, because it’s been

"It's for all the protection it brings in to Filipino seafarers which is obviously we think that we care the most about. We want to make sure that Filipino seafarers are protected, are looked after... Magna Carta is translating MLC (Maritime Labor Convention) into Filipino law and it's long overdue but we're very very happy that were there now."

—FRANCESCO GARGIULO,
CEO of the International Maritime
Employers' Council (IMEC)

a rush of cases growth," Gargiulo said.

Rule XI, Section 5 of the signed Magna Carta's IRR states, "Noting the urgency of the full implementation of this IRR, the DMW and the DOH, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, within a reasonable period of time, shall develop joint guidelines for the implementation of this section, including the selection, training, maintenance, and review of the pool of accredited third doctors."

Moreover, Rule XI, Section 3 says, "Pending the establishment of a specialized pool of maritime industry labor conciliator-mediators and arbitrators and without prejudice to the jurisdiction and authority of concerned agencies as provided for in existing laws, rules and regulations,

the Conciliator-Mediators of the NCMB, Single Entry Assistance Desk Officers (SEADOs), Labor Arbiters and Commissioners of the NLRC, and Voluntary Arbitrators accredited by the NCMB shall continue to conciliate and mediate as well as adjudicate maritime cases involving seafarers."

Meanwhile, Gargiulo said, he had an opportunity to meet with some MARINA officials and discussed about publicising the potential consequences for seafarers who claimed to be disabled, but they're not.

"We're talking about what happens when we have repeat offenders when we have situations that our seafarers are been deemed to be 100% disabled but

they turned out to another ship, another principal without their papers ever been revoked," Gargiulo remarked. They can be claiming to be disabled without actually them understanding what the consequences are.

He affirmed, they even talked about the idea of suspending peoples on a temporary basis, suspending peoples' papers when they have submitted an affidavit in which they claim to be 100% disabled."

Gargiulo added that IMEC also raised their concerns to the MITC (Maritime Industry Tripartite Council), which is the appropriate channel to address those particular concerns.

The MITC, composed of government, management and labor sectors, was created pursuant to Executive Order No. 403 in 1990, as amended by EO 97, Series of 1999, to "serve as a forum through which labor and employment concerns, and acts as an advisory body to industry stakeholders in terms of policies and programs affecting labor and employment in the maritime industry" (ILO, 2011). **MW**



IMEC CEO Gargiulo

Western Shipping Southeast Asia

20 Years of Honoring Seafarers and Families

"To all the children whose fathers and mothers work in the shipping industry, your parents are doing an amazing job. We're so proud of them!", exclaims Ms. Lara Stafilopati, Executive Director of Byzantine Maritime Corporation, at the opening program of the Western Shipping Southeast Asia Inc. (WSSEAI) 20th Anniversary and Family Day celebrations on November 22, held at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club Pavilion in Mandaluyong City.

Ms. Lara called on stage Bella, daughter of a seafarer working on one of WSSEAI tanker ships, who proudly told her and the crowd, "I would like to be seawoman just like my father."

The Greek shipowner reacted quickly saying "This is so inspiring, and we can't wait to have her onboard one of our vessels."

In her speech, Ms. Lara presented a short video produced by the Union of Greek Shipowners (UGS) about the importance of shipping, which resonates the importance of seafarers' contributions to the world.

She stated, "We've been working with the Filipino seafarers for more than three decades now. And the Filipino seafarers that stood by us all these years are deep in our hearts."

Ms. Lara also expressed her gratitude to the seafarers' families. "Without you, we couldn't do this - the families and the wives who stayed behind to support all of the men that



Shipowner Lara with Bella, a proud seafarer daughter

are onboard who work so hard to have their mind peaceful to really focus on their work to keep the seafarers safe."

Recognitions

Plaques of recognition were bestowed to loyal

seafarers who had served the company for 5 to 20 years.

WSSEAI President RAdm Bayani Gaerlan also received a plaque in appreciation of his dedicated leadership throughout his successful presidency. He was succeeded by



Honors for 20 years of Loyalty



WSSEAI outgoing Pres Gaerlan (left), Ms. Lara and Mr. Kyriakos Savoglou lead the traditional cake-cutting

seasoned Captain Joseph Raluta on December 12, following his retirement.

RAdm Gaerlan expressed his profound gratitude to shipowners Stafilopati for their "continuing support, trust and confidence to the management and staff of Western Shipping, both for manning agency and training center."

"This support and trust inspire us to perform our task with rigor and dedication."

He also thanked Capt. Belal Ahmed, Western Shipping Pte. Ltd. CEO and Managing Director, for his "continued guidance and assistance."



Incoming WSSAI Pres Capt. Joseph Raluta (middle) with Western Shipping Pte. Ltd. Capt. Hemant Arora, HSQE Compliance Manager (left), and Capt. Ketan Vaze, Fleet Personnel Manager

Capt. Belal was unable to attend the event for compelling reasons, but he extended his congratulations for attaining 20 fruitful years of service. "He joins us to continue our selfless commitment not only for the betterment of our company but also for our contribution to the maritime industry here and abroad," relayed Gaerlan.

Family-focused

A Holy Mass kicked off the family-centered celebrations, attended by hundreds of seafarers and their families, management and staff, guest and industry partners.

The kiddos were treated to an early Christmas party featuring magic shows, games and cash gifts. The shore-based personnel and cadets wowed the crowd with their impressive dance presentations. A live band performed. There were photo booths, raffles, sumptuous food, and, most importantly, a sense of family belonging throughout the large venue.

The gathering concluded with traditional cake-cutting and singing-while-holding-hands traditions.

Growth opportunities

Inspired by the Anniversary theme, "Sailing Through Two Decades: Navigating Success and Innovation," Ms. Lara announced, "Our company is growing. It's renewing its fleet. They're coming more eco-friendly," but gave assurance that, "No matter how much we grow, we are always a family."

Prior to the Anniversary and Family Day celebrations, WSSAI hosted a Crew Safety Conference at the Marco Polo Ortigas Manila on November 20 and the Prestige Tower on November 21 in Ortigas, Pasig City, themed "Stop Me from Unsafe Acts."

Presenters were senior executives from Western Shipping Pte. Ltd.; with guest speakers including officials from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

In a rare opportunity, Ms. Lara was interviewed by Marino World. She emphasized that Decarbonization is their company's top priority, and the whole shipping industry is making huge effort to decarbonize.

"For us particularly, we do want fuel-efficient ships, we want to be efficient in every way by the paints, by the technology, by anything that we can do to make it as efficient as possible."

She added, despite the advancements in AI and technology, the shipping industry remains in high demand for talented seafarers.

The Filipino seafarers, who number approximately 700, constitute the majority of the seafarers in the bulk carriers and tankers of the WSSAI fleet.

Ms. Lara anticipates an even more promising future since Filipinos have a very deep knowledge of the sea. "We're so happy with their temperament, loyalty, hard work. I see that they have a drive within them to excel, be educated and be promoted." **MW**



Byzantine's Lara and Crewing Manager Capt Dimitrios Davaris (middle) with the WSSAI management and staff



WSSAI Team for safe and sustainable shipping



AWA Marine and Wärtsilä support

Industry decarbonization and digitalization

AWA Marine and Wärtsilä hosted the 3rd Annual Simulation User Seminar held on November 13 at the luxurious Solaire Resort in Manila, themed “Decarbonization and Digitalization- Driving Change in Maritime Training.”

126 representatives from 60 education and training institutions, alongside key maritime industry stakeholders participated in the discussions and knowledge sharing.

Shayne Gent, AWA Marine General Manager, said the huge turnout shows a shared commitment to enhancing maritime training and education in the region.

Ben Chng, Wärtsilä Global Director of Sales, urged the attendees to support the crew’s upskilling and transition to become better equipped on alternative fuel engines, new energy saving devices, and optimization tools.

“One of the key enablers for us to be successful in achieving this goal is really about collaboration across the eco system,” Chng pointed out.

So, at Wärtsilä, we believe we cannot do this alone, we have to do this with our partners, across the eco system. This means ourselves



**Wärtsilä's
Chng**



**MARINA's
Nalupa**



**PAMI's
Oca**



**Wärtsilä's
Bennett**



**Wärtsilä's
Verma**



**Wärtsilä's
Thasari**



**Wärtsilä's
Bajaj**



**Mevea's
Nikkila**

as suppliers, our local partners AWA Marine, the regulators, the government bodies, shipowners, ship managers and of course the training institutes, the instructors, seafaring crew community. All of us need to be part of this value chain.”

Education and Training

Herbert Nalupa, Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) STCW Office Maritime Education and Training Standards Supervisor (METSS) and concurrent Chief of Public Information Division and Monitoring



Networking conversations

discussed about the “Role of MARINA in the implementation of the STCW Convention in the Philippines,” while Felix Oca, Chairman of the Philippine Association of Maritime Institutions (PAMI) presented on the “Status of Maritime Higher Education in the Philippines.”

Nalupa said, “From the governments perspective, from the regulators perspective when we say transition to decarbonize industry the Philippines would have to think of seafarers.”

He explained, “It’s all about how seafarers will be trained, educated on using alternative fuel, emerging technologies, new equipment onboard and new shipboard operations.”

There are currently 83 recognized MHEIs in the country. Oca discussed on the challenges encountered by MHEIS on implementing the changing curriculums.

He expects that with the emerging new technologies in global shipping, there will be additional knowledge, understanding, and proficiency (KUP)

requirements in the curriculum.

STCW review

Neil Bennett, General Manager Sales, Global Simulation and Training, Wärtsilä Voyage, outlined the four objectives of the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention: continuing to deliver competent seafarers, providing internationally recognized standards, adapting to the industry’s new technologies and developments, and ensuring harmonized and consistent implementation.

He went on, “We’re trying very hard to make it easier to utilize simulators in your training and make it easier for flag states to be able to show that a simulator is “fix for purpose” or capable of being used for particular types of training, as part of “in-service training.”

There were 50 papers submitted by different countries and organization that identified around 400 gaps to be addressed in the ongoing comprehensive STCW review.

Nalupa confirmed, the Philippines submitted five papers for the proposed revisions, including reduction of the onboard training requirements, stating that “New and emerging technologies may support training and certification of seafarers. This could include the use of simulations as an alternative to a portion of a requirement for seagoing service. In addition, considering the initial phase, the training and certification of seafarers often precede the implementation or installation of these new technologies on ships.”

“Nowadays if we talk about education and training and implementation of seafarers building their competence either reskilling, either upskilling, we cannot do that without simulator, Nalupa said.

Expertise

Wärtsilä’s Sanjay Verma, General Manager, Business Development Decarbonization Services, and Sanjeev Thasari, TechSim Expert, Simulation Sales, shared their expertise on decarbonization and simulations.

Verma discussed how complex the decarbonization journey of the shipping industry and Wärtsilä’s initiatives to help achieve the net zero emission goals.

He underlined Wärtsilä’s approach to decarbonization of consuming less energy for the same work, and transforming the same energy more efficiently.

Furthermore, Sanjeev tackled Wärtsilä’s simulations and other platform solutions for the seafarers to “at least get the basic understanding of the new technologies and decarbonization concepts so that they can safely operate the ships when they are onboard.”

Other presenters at the seminar were Gaurav Bajaj, Product Lead of Wartsila Voyage Services and Raimo Nikkila, Director of Sales and Business Development of Mevea Ltd.

Cooperation

AWA Marine Philippines Director and Chairman Liam Murphy and Business Development Manager Reynaldo Tanudtanud and Shiela Seno, Simulation Product Manager and Wärtsilä’s Kumar Kiran, Product Sales Manager Simulation were all present to strengthen cooperation with stakeholders.

The seminar concluded with a reception that provided an opportunity for casual networking with clients and guests. **mw**



Crew Connect Global 2024 tackles key issues

The Crewing Thin Tank session: (from left) Crew Connect Global Chair Tommy Olofsen, BIMCO Manager Srinivasan, INTERTANKO Managing Director Stanzel, ICS SecGen Guy Platten and InterManager VP Sebastian von Hardenberg

■ By DAVE FLORIAN BALANON

Over 1,000 maritime leaders, shipowners, executives, seafarers, and cadets from more than 50 countries gathered for the Crew Connect Global Conference and Exhibition 2024, held from November 12 to 14 at Shangri-La The Fort, Manila. The event focused on critical issues in the maritime industry, including training standards, crew welfare, digital transformation, and decarbonization initiatives.

Key discussions highlighted gaps in workforce development, cybersecurity challenges, and the industry's preparedness for a sustainable future.

Training standards and workforce gaps

Migrant Workers Secretary Hans Leo Caccac delivered a keynote address emphasizing the pivotal role of Filipino seafarers in the global shipping industry.

"Filipino seafarers are the backbone of the global maritime workforce. Nearly 30% of all seafarers worldwide are Filipino, contributing more than \$6.5 billion in annual remittances. These figures reflect not only their economic contributions but also their indispensable role in keeping global trade afloat. However, to remain competitive, we must ensure that their training aligns with modern standards and their welfare is prioritized. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for our industry," Caccac said.

In a recorded message, International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, stressed the importance of global alignment in training and certification standards.

"The current training disparities

"Training programs must not only adapt to these new realities but must do so at scale and with speed. This is not optional – it's a matter of survival for shipping companies that want to remain competitive."

between nations present significant risks to crew safety and vessel operations. As we transition to a decarbonized and digitalized industry, all seafarers, regardless of nationality, must have equal access to the training and tools they need to adapt. This is not just a regulatory issue; it is a moral responsibility," Dominguez stated.

Crewing think tank

The Crewing Think Tank session brought together industry leaders to discuss workforce shortages and the challenges of preparing seafarers for future demands.

Katharina Stanzel, Managing Director of INTERTANKO, pointed out a critical gap in cadetship programs.

"Globally, less than 40% of cadets successfully complete their required onboard training. This is a major bottleneck in the supply chain for qualified officers. Without access to proper training berths, these cadets are effectively stuck in limbo, unable to progress in their careers. Collaboration between shipowners, training institutions, and regulators is urgently needed to solve this issue. If we don't address this now, the officer shortage will become a crisis," Stanzel said.

Capt. Ashok Srinivasan, Regional Manager South Asia at BIMCO, added insights on how decarbonization will require new skills. "Over the next five years, we anticipate that nearly 50% of newbuild vessels will incorporate alternative fuels like LNG or ammonia, requiring entirely new skill sets. The industry is simply not prepared for this level of technological change. Training programs must not only adapt to these new realities but must do so at scale and with speed. This is not optional – it's a matter of survival for shipping companies that want to remain competitive," he stated.

Revising STCW Standards

Another key discussion centered on revising the Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) framework. Moderated by Gerardo Borrromeo, CEO of PTC Group, the session included panelists such as Justyna Bartnicka, Policy Officer at European Commission and Andreas Nordseth, Director-General of the Danish Maritime Authority.

"The STCW convention, last revised in 2010, does not adequately address the realities of today's

maritime operations,” Nordseth said. “We’re dealing with ships that are increasingly automated, powered by alternative fuels, and subject to stricter environmental regulations. Yet, our training systems remain outdated. The industry cannot afford to wait another decade for a meaningful revision. It’s time for swift and decisive action to modernize this framework, ensuring that seafarers are equipped for the challenges of a changing industry.”

Day 2: Digitalization and Technology

Social Media and Crew Engagement

Day 2 opened with a session on the role of social media in recruitment and retention. Christian Guzman, a Deck Cadet and maritime content creator, shared his perspective on how social media has changed how seafarers connect and engage with the industry.

“Social media is more than just a communication tool—it’s a lifeline for many seafarers. It keeps us connected to our families, even during long voyages, and gives us a platform to share our experiences. I’ve had young people message me, saying my posts inspired them to pursue a career at sea. That’s the power of social media—it makes our work visible and relatable,” Guzman said.

Therese Mary Labilles, Head of Crewing, Philippines at Pacific Basin, shared how social media influences employer branding. “Sixty-five percent of younger seafarers in our surveys said they are more likely to apply to companies with a strong online presence. It’s not just about marketing—it’s about transparency and trust. Companies that actively engage online are seen as more approachable and employee-focused,” Labilles said.

Cybersecurity Risks in Digital Operations

A cybersecurity-focused session, “The Byte of Digitalization,” highlighted the growing vulnerabilities faced by the industry. Simon Frank, Vice President of Crewing Operations at NSB Group, shared alarming statistics.

“In the last two years, cyberattacks on maritime operations have increased by 45%. The average financial impact of a successful attack is \$1.8 million, but the damage to reputation and operational efficiency is often far greater. Cybersecurity must become a priority at every level, from IT teams to seafarers onboard ships. Training on



**DMW Secretary
Cadac**



**Vlogger
Guzman**



**Magsaysay
CEO Ho**



**SmartSea
CEO Panter**

cyber hygiene should be as common as safety drills,” Frank said.

Training and Technology

The session “Training vs. Technology: Who’s Winning the Race?” focused on addressing competency gaps in an era of rapid technological advancement. Neil Bennett, General Manager Sales at Wärtsilä Voyage, emphasized the importance of simulation training.

“Our data shows that simulation-based training reduces the time it takes for seafarers to reach operational competency by 25%. Additionally, it improves skill retention by 30%. This isn’t just about efficiency; it’s about safety. Advanced simulation tools allow seafarers to practice complex scenarios in a controlled environment, preparing them for real-life challenges,” Bennett explained.

Day 3: Welfare and Workforce Sustainability

Mental Health and Inclusivity

The final day highlighted the importance of mental health and inclusivity onboard ships. Ben Bailey, Director of Program at The Mission to Seafarers, shared concerning data.

“One in five seafarers reports experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety, yet only 10% have access to structured mental health support. We

need to move beyond treating mental health as a secondary issue. It directly impacts retention, productivity, and the overall safety of maritime operations. Employers must provide resources and foster an environment where crew members feel comfortable seeking help,” Bailey said.

Pam Kern, Director of Maritime Mental Health at Port Medical Management, discussed the impact of diversity and inclusion. “A lack of inclusivity onboard ships often leads to feelings of isolation, especially for seafarers from underrepresented groups. This isn’t just a social issue—it’s a business issue. Inclusive environments lead to higher morale and better team performance,” Kern said.

The Role of AI in Crewing

One of the conference’s most debated topics was artificial intelligence (AI) in crewing. Doris Magsaysay Ho, CEO of A. Magsaysay Inc., cautioned against over-reliance on technology.

“AI can improve efficiency in areas like crew scheduling and compliance, but it cannot replace the human judgment required for decision-making in dynamic and unpredictable environments. The empathy, adaptability, and leadership that humans bring to the table are irreplaceable. AI should be a tool, not a substitute,” Magsaysay Ho said.

Julian Panter, CEO of SmartSea, offered a contrasting view: “AI is not about replacing people—it’s about enabling them to do their jobs better. By using AI-driven analytics, we’ve seen a 20% reduction in recruitment times and a 30% increase in placement accuracy. These are tangible benefits that can’t be ignored, but they depend on how effectively the industry embraces this technology.”

Conclusion

Chris Morley, Group Director of Seatrade Maritime, summarized the conference’s outcomes in his closing remarks. “Crew Connect Global is a platform for real solutions. The discussions and commitments made here will shape the future of maritime operations, addressing everything from training gaps to welfare improvements and technological adoption. These are challenges we can no longer postpone.”

The event solidified its position as the leading forum for addressing maritime workforce challenges, setting a clear path for the industry to adapt to an evolving landscape. **MW**

**The participants
with the Crew
Connect event
organizers**

Maritime professionals and cadets came together on November 12, for the Seafarers and Cadets Breakfast Forum held at Shangri-La The Fort, Manila. The event, organized as part of the Crew Connect Global conference, featured discussions on the future of the Philippine maritime industry, challenges in seafaring careers, and cadet aspirations.



Seafarers and cadets discuss industry challenges



Carl King shares his perspectives



The one-hour forum brought together key figures in the maritime sector, including seafarer vloggers, industry leaders, and cadets from the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC).

Therese Mary Magbanua-Labilles, Head of Crewing, Pacific Basin Philippines, underscored the need for maritime professionals and cadets to adapt to industry changes. "The maritime industry is evolving rapidly. We must ensure our cadets are prepared with the skills needed to face modern challenges," she said during the discussion.

Robert John Landero, a seafarer vlogger, emphasized the importance of mentorship and peer support in seafaring careers. "Events like this provide an avenue to inspire and guide cadets who aspire to excel in this demanding yet rewarding field," Landero noted.

IMEC cadets participated in the discussions, highlighting the importance of collaboration between training institutions and employers.

Jake Amog, IMEC Training Manager, said, "The maritime sector thrives when education aligns with industry demands. This forum

strengthens the bridge between cadets and professionals."

Carl King, Founder of the Seafarer Social, highlighted the importance of building a supportive global seafarer community. "The key to addressing the challenges in seafaring lies in fostering connections and sharing experiences. Together, we can create a stronger, more inclusive maritime community where every seafarer feels valued and heard," King shared.

Key challenges facing Filipino seafarers, including career development and mental health, were tackled during the session.

Jebsen Gamido, Founder of Positibong Marino, emphasized the role of community initiatives in addressing these issues. "We must foster a culture of support and positivity for our seafarers to thrive both onboard and off," Gamido said.

Mark Philip "Chief Makoi" Laurilla, President of STI Maritime Training Academy, highlighted the critical role of maritime education and training. "Our training centers must aim to produce not only skilled seafarers but also future industry leaders," Laurilla stated.

Sherwin Chantengco, another

prominent seafarer vlogger, urged cadets to view seafaring as a long-term profession. "Seafaring is more than a job; it's a career that offers countless opportunities for growth and meaningful contributions to the global economy," he said.

The event also drew attention to the global reputation of Filipino seafarers.

Desi Zlatkova, Seatrade Maritime Event Manager, remarked, "Filipino seafarers remain a vital force in global shipping. Their skill and dedication are recognized worldwide, and forums like this ensure continuous improvement."

Helen Stoddart, Seatrade Maritime Conference Producer, expressed gratitude to all participants. "This forum is a valuable platform for exchanging ideas and fostering connections that drive the maritime industry forward," Stoddart said.

The breakfast forum concluded with a renewed commitment to strengthening the maritime sector. The discussions underscored the importance of collaboration between cadets, maritime professionals, and stakeholders in addressing challenges and shaping the future of the Philippine maritime industry. **MW**

Yogesh Pasrija

Wallem on digitalization and cybersecurity

The world's first third-party ship manager Wallem Group takes digitalization and cybersecurity seriously. Global Head of Crewing Yogesh Pasrija was interviewed by *Marino World* following his participation as panelist at the Crew Connect Global Conference on November 13 at Shangri-La The Fort, Manila.

Yogesh emphasized that while the company and seafarers get the benefits of digitalization, there is a need to safeguard the ships from cyberattacks.

At the Crew Connect Global conference panel discussion, the Thetius report commissioned by CyberOwl was presented with the following facts:

- 900% increase in maritime cyberattacks over the last 3 years
- 200% increase in cost of cyberattacks to shipping companies since 2022
- \$550k average cost of cyberattacks to shipping companies
- 354% increase in ransom payments since 2022
- \$3.2M paid on average during ransomware attack
- 23% of shipping companies have been tricked into transferring funds
- 33% of the maritime players and less than \$100k a year for cyber security management
- 95% of incidents linked back to unintentional insiders (ship and shore)
- 60% of onboard computers have either unapproved software and/or not properly patched

Change

Yogesh shared Wallem's initiatives, "We are having a lot of engagements. We are training seafarers, shore staff. We are looking for enhanced networking security."

Yogesh cited their 65-year-old chief engineer, who is well knowledgeable about new technologies, as an example of a positive mindset toward change.

"The new generation are very good with the technology. But the old generation, who are 60 years old above and still sailing, how will they cope up with the technology? We need to train them. We need to educate them,"



Yogesh Pasrija Global Head of Crewing

"We can make their life easy by providing them the distance tools. Same for us onshore. If we have dashboards, if we have data converted to excel points then you get reports which you don't have to manually prepare, makes life easy."

Yogesh said.

He stated, the technologies should be used to ease the life of the seafarers who are staying far from home and working day and night. "We can make their life easy by providing them the distance tools. Same for us onshore. If we have dashboards, if we have data converted to excel points then you get reports which you don't have to manually prepare, makes life easy."

He continued, "Then we have to tell them why they need to learn cybersecurity because all these things are to their advantage but if they misuse it, there can be wrong."

Regulations

One key area of consideration in the review of the STCW Convention and Code is to consider an approach to addressing the need for cybersecurity awareness for seafarers, especially as maritime operations become more reliant on the digitally integrated and automated system.

Yogesh stressed, "As shipmanager or owner, we have to follow the regulations in place including cyber security."

He said, they are training their seafarers and shore staff, but this is not enough because the regulations are not yet in place. "Today they learn the basics; but the hackers are on next level, they are very advanced."

Yogesh suggests using AI to identify the threat. "There's a system in place use the AI, you automate the systems, make life easy and bring some value." Furthermore, a cybersecurity response team should be prepared to respond properly in the event of an attack.

Protection

Yogesh shared that at Wallem, they conduct cybersecurity drills and have developed a system for doing assessments. "We need to first train the trainers, so their assigned specific officer working on cybersecurity also undergone trainings on cybersecurity."

He noted that Wallem's global IT team is dealing with it, performing monthly checks and monitoring the systems aboard the vessels. "They visit the vessels also and of course they keep up trend with the latest industry regulations and then make sure onboard compliance is there."

Yogesh acknowledged that safeguarding the vessels from cyberattacks would incur additional costs, but none of their shipowners objected because "everybody wants to safeguard, otherwise they have reputation at stake; they have vessels at stake which are like millions of dollars." **MW**



With WMU President Max Majia, Jr and IMO Secretary General Arsenio Dominguez at the WMU graduation ceremony

Before going to WMU, I had a self-reflection that if I were to do this, I needed to do it with a purpose in mind. Not just to add another framed diploma to our house wall but to use this opportunity to affect a positive change, especially in the maritime industry, especially to my fellow seafarers.

Interestingly, with all the buzz around decarbonization and digitalization in the maritime

My WMU Journey:

Towards the Realization of My Advocacy



Spoke at the forum arranged by the Japan Maritime Center and WMU on the concerns of seafarers about future technologies

■ By 2/E MAO TZE BAYOTAS

It was May 2023, and I had already taught for almost three years in my dear alma mater, the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP), when I finally decided that maybe it was time for me to return to sea.

Then, all of a sudden, I came across an announcement offering a scholarship to the World Maritime University, which will be sponsored

by our umbrella organization, AMOSUP (Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines). This could be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study for free at this world-renowned institution, which led to my reexamination of my earlier decision to reunite with Poseidon.

Standing at the crossroads between WMU education and earning more Benjamins at sea, I finally decided (after much consultation with my fiancé, family, and friends) to postpone working onboard the ship and waddle back my feet in the lake of academia.

Standing at the crossroads between WMU education and earning more Benjamins at sea, I finally decided (after much consultation with my fiancé, family, and friends) to postpone working onboard the ship and waddle back my feet in the lake of academia.

industry, I was chosen to specialize in the Maritime Energy Management program. This was where my advocacy for capacity development was initiated. Standing just outside the beautiful facade of WMU, I told myself that beyond awards and diplomas, I would go on this WMU journey with the purpose of realizing my advocacy.

Starting out our foundation term, I had the opportunity to settle in the welcoming city of Malmö and bask in the new culture and sceneries around me. It was also a fun experience meeting and making friends with my classmates from all across the seven continents and learning about their respective cultures and aspirations.

Wading through waves of academia, learning about the nuances of IMO along with snippets of international law mixed with concepts of ocean governance blended with complex principles of organization



Euro tour escapade in Iceland

management stirred with the numbers of maritime economics, and finally rinsing with some fundamentals of research methodology, I was slowly but surely starting to see the direction of where my advocacy is going at.

Then, the first opportunity, a huge one, came along. I was invited to participate and speak at the Conference of Parties 28 in Dubai,

One memorable highlight of my COP experience was that I was invited to the launching of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force, which shared a common advocacy of upskilling and reskilling of seafarers for a just and equitable transition. I also had the opportunity to observe their sessions.

UAE, where one critical discussion point was about the Just Transition for Seafarers. I mustered all the confidence that I could take and voiced out the grievances and the concerns of seafarers amidst the decarbonization movement that is happening in the industry so that the other stakeholders could take heed and not leave my brothers behind.

Aside from speaking on the world stage, I also had the good fortune of networking with other climate leaders and stakeholders and gaining more information about the current landscape of the industry, which was very valuable in strengthening the foundation of my advocacy.

One memorable highlight of my COP experience was that I was invited to the launching of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force, which shared a common advocacy of upskilling and reskilling of seafarers for a just and equitable transition. I also had the opportunity to observe their sessions.

Amidst the towering skyline of Dubai, I started writing out my dissertation outline for Filipino seafarers' capacity development program in preparation for decarbonization and digitalization.

Moving into the specialization term, when we were already taking courses focusing on our selected specialty, we ventured into the technicalities of the decarbonization effort of the IMO and other stakeholders. Numbers had been our breakfast, international regulations for lunch, and, to top it all, the engineering of new technologies for dinner with energy management principles for dessert.

Every step of the way, I was already slowly building up the details of my dissertation, which will serve as the crowning glory of my advocacy. Juggling the academic requirements with my duties as the WMU Student Magazine publication head, I still found time to write more papers that will incrementally lead to my dissertation.

First, I explored several methods to improve the maritime education and training curriculum by integrating Global Citizenship Education (GCED) through curriculum revision and elective course development.

Second, I wrote a paper about a critical assessment of the landscape and the roadmap for the Philippine domestic shipping landscape toward decarbonization. I've also had the opportunity to present these studies in Barcelona, Spain, at the 10th International Maritime Conference



Visited the headquarters of the NSB Group in Buxtehude, Germany, to share the findings of my dissertation they have supported.



United Nations
Climate Change



COP28UAE

DUBAI 2023



Attended the launch of the Maritime Just Transition Taskforce at COP28, after which I became an observer in their various sessions.

and the 29th International Maritime Lecturers' Association (IMLA) Conference in Istanbul, Turkey.

To compile all these findings into one omnibus paper, I wrote a paper about the current innovations in maritime education and training. I was privileged to share it at the 2nd International Congress & Exhibition on Current Trends on Science Technology Education in Mugla, Turkey.

In addition to sharing these discoveries, I also had the pleasure of learning from the established personality of the industry and establishing avenues for future collaboration, which could upscale my initiatives. All this was made possible because of the untiring support of our president, VAdm Eduardo Ma R Santos, and MAAP, as well as my WMU family and friends.

Studying abroad is not always being in front of a book, typing endlessly on your laptop, writing papers, and listening to boring lectures. There are also lots of moments of recreation and fun activities. Aside from the various events the university is hosting, being in Europe allows you to experience and enjoy the scenery and culture of the different Western countries, one cheap ticket away.

Studying at the WMU offered me and my fiancé the rare opportunity to traverse the cobbled streets of Tallinn, Estonia, climb the famous clock towers of Riga, enjoy the ambiance of the cafes of Poland, marvel at the sophistication of Vienna, get lost in the canal maze of Venice, stunned at the beauty of the Danube in Budapest, froze in the happy city of Helsinki, Finland, experienced royalty in the castles of

Stockholm, stared at the masterpiece of Munch in Oslo, Norway, check the time at the Big Ben in London, and so much more.

The WMU journey has also allowed me to brush shoulders with the giants of the industry, from the Secretary General of the IMO to the shipowners, administration leaders, and much more.

Nearing the end of this roller coaster ride is the most challenging time for a WMU student, as you must face the music and write your dissertation in three grueling months. Having already laid out the brick-and-mortar of my study, I just built on what I had done during the previous months with a stick of good luck.

My proposal was selected by the NSB Group to be granted funding to ensure the success of my study as they believed that the objective of my research aligns with the innovative culture and pursuit of sustainability that they so much coveted.

Thus, going through the various stages of gathering my data through surveys, interviews, and literature review, I developed a capacity development framework catered to Filipino seafarers to prepare them for the upcoming trends such as MASS, advanced materials, decarbonization, and digitalization.

Believing that a research study's ultimate objective continues beyond theoretical, I pushed it one step further to bridge theory with practicality. This paved the way for developing a workshop that will be test-run to 150 seafarers and 100 cadets to raise awareness of the new regulations, current and future trends, and how

they can prepare themselves to be future-proof.

With the funds provided by NSB and the infrastructure provided by MAAP, I built a learning management platform that will make the said course accessible to all Filipino seafarers and cadets whenever and wherever they are. Another reason I ought to do such a comprehensive study is that I was looking way past the future beyond WMU and saw the opportunity to expedite my advocacy by executing the initial steps while I was still here in the four walls of this hallowed institution.

Days before our graduation, while I was about to submit the final draft of my dissertation, I reminisced about the experience of interacting with my fellow seafarers and cadets. I remembered the anxiousness in their face while simultaneously relieved that they had come across such initiatives, helping them become updated with the industry trends to properly prepare themselves to remain effective in their work for years to come.

At that moment, I realized that I stayed true to the promise that I told myself that my main mission here at WMU is to affect positive change in my simple little way.

With it came unexpected bonuses; I was able to graduate with flying colors, being the best graduate of the Maritime Energy Management specialization and the recipient of the NSB Group Dissertation Fund.

Reflecting on my journey, it is true that if you strive for the betterment of your community and others, all the good things will come to you. And it was good indeed. **MW**



(Standing) PNBC Pres Faannessen with the panelists (seating from right) IRI's L. Bolivar, Odfjell Enesio, Klaveness' Villanos, and ShipMoney's M. Bolivar



PNBC seminar explores crewing challenges

■ By DAVE FLORIAN BALANON

The Philippines-Norway Business Council (PNBC), in partnership with the Norwegian Training Center (NTC) and ShipMoney, hosted a seminar focused on workplace loyalty amid mergers, acquisitions, and the growing trend of work-from-home (WFH) setups on November 15, 2024, at Shangri-La The Fort, Manila.

The event, titled "Creating More Currents," featured three panel discussions with maritime executives addressing modern workplace challenges.

In his keynote address, Norwegian Ambassador to the Philippines Christian Halaas Lyster, emphasized the importance of addressing workplace loyalty in the context of changing business environments.

"Loyalty in the workplace is not just about holding on to employees, but about building a culture where both employers and employees can thrive through changes in the workplace environment," Lyster said. "In a world that is rapidly shifting, it is crucial that we understand the impact of mergers, acquisitions, and remote

work setups, and how these elements can affect workplace loyalty."

His remarks set the stage for the discussions to follow, underlining

the event's central theme of navigating organizational change while maintaining strong employee engagement and loyalty.

Loyalty during mergers and acquisitions

The first panel focused on the challenges of maintaining

employee loyalty during mergers and acquisitions (M&A) Julia Anastasiou, Chief Crew Management Officer at OSM Thome, shared insights from the company's acquisition of Klaveness Ship Management.

"Acquisitions are about people, not just numbers. Communication and reassurance are critical to retaining

trust and loyalty from employees," Anastasiou explained.

Joseph Yu, CEO of SN Aboitiz Power, discussed his experience with a major acquisition in 2021, emphasizing transparency.

"We made transparency a priority, keeping our 1,200 employees informed about the transition. This open communication was crucial to ensuring that employees felt secure and engaged," Yu said.

Capt. Allwyn Lobo of SailorCom Solutions discussed the role of leadership during mergers. "Mergers test leadership. Aligning employees with shifting company goals is essential, and leadership must be proactive in keeping employees engaged during periods of change," Lobo noted.

Loyalty vs. family connections in the workplace

The second panel addressed the ethical dilemmas companies face when family members are involved in decisions regarding layoffs or restructuring. Agnes Enesio, President of Odfjell Philippines, Inc., emphasized the importance of fairness.

"While personal relationships are important, company policies and fairness must guide decisions. We must ensure that actions are in the best interest of the organization," Enesio stated.

Chona Villanos, of Klaveness Shore Services, discussed the difficult decision her company faced

Third panelists (from right) Sailorcom's Lobo, OSM Thome's Anastasiou, CGI's Jeanette Solberg, and Aboitiz's Yu



when determining her role and her husband's during a period of transition.

"There was a point when the company decided that I should stay in my position, and my husband made the personal choice to leave. It was a tough decision, but we both understood the need for the company to make decisions based on its needs, not personal connections," Villanos shared. "Loyalty to the company should always come before personal relationships, and this is something we both stood by."

Leo Bolivar of the Marshall Islands Registry and his son Marko Bolivar of ShipMoney shared their perspectives on managing family relationships in the workplace.

"Clear expectations and professional boundaries prevent conflicts," Leo Bolivar said.

The second panel addressed the ethical dilemmas companies face when family members are involved in decisions regarding layoffs or restructuring. Agnes Enesio, President of Odfjell Philippines, Inc., emphasized the importance of fairness.

Marko added, "Relatives in the industry must prove themselves based on merit, not just family ties."

Loyalty in work-from-home setups

The third panel focused on how WFH arrangements are affecting employee loyalty and engagement. As remote work becomes more prevalent, companies face new challenges in maintaining productivity and engagement.

Jean Vincent Abobo, President of Solstad Offshore Crewing, advocated for office-based work to strengthen employee relationships.

"Face-to-face collaboration builds stronger teams. The in-office setup helps foster better communication, which is key for building loyalty," Abobo said.

However, Daryl Sevileno, ROHQ Manager of Solstad, supported hybrid work arrangements, recognizing the flexibility that WFH offers.

"Offering employees the flexibility to work from home enhances both productivity and loyalty. It's about balancing personal and professional commitments," Sevileno explained.

Dona Marchadesch, Vice President for Consulting Delivery at CGI Philippines, presented survey data showing that WFH has led to a 65% increase in employee engagement.

"WFH arrangements have led to greater engagement, but maintaining strong communication is critical. Companies must ensure regular check-ins to keep employees connected and focused," Marchadesch explained.

Key takeaways and closing remarks

Carl Martin Faannessen, President of the Philippines-Norway Business Council, concluded the event by summarizing the key insights shared during the seminar.

"Loyalty today requires active effort from both employers and employees, especially during transitions. Companies need to communicate clearly and support employees to ensure sustained engagement and trust," Faannessen remarked.

The seminar provided valuable insights on navigating workplace loyalty during mergers, acquisitions, and the shift to remote work, offering actionable strategies for companies to maintain strong employee engagement in an evolving business landscape. **MW**



(From left) Solstad's Abobo, Marlow Navigation Owner's Rep Joost Mes, G Travel Strategic Sales Manager Helge Oliversen, CGI's Marchadesch, Solstad's Sevileno and PNBC's Faannessen

Shipowners' Club launches enhanced health measures for seafarers

■ By DAVE FLORIAN BALANON

Capt. Hari Subramaniam, Regional Head of Business Relations of the Shipowners' Club, has announced new health initiatives aimed at addressing the rising number of illness and injury claims among seafarers. Speaking during the Crew Connect 2024 held in Manila, Subramaniam detailed how the club is enhancing medical testing protocols to improve crew safety and reduce operational risks for shipowners.

"After COVID-19, we observed a significant increase in illness and injury claims. Many of these issues are linked to pre-existing conditions that could have been detected and treated before deployment," Subramaniam said.

Enhanced Medical Screening

Subramaniam explained that the club now offers advanced medical testing at no extra cost to seafarers. These enhanced tests go beyond the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC).

"Basic medicals do not check critical parameters like blood sugar, cholesterol, or kidney function. Seafarers think they are fit because they pass the standard tests, but underlying conditions often go unnoticed," Subramaniam stated.

The enhanced tests include dental exams, kidney scans, and advanced cardiac assessments. "Kidney stones, for instance, can be detected early. If untreated, they can lead to serious complications onboard. We've also introduced a cardiac risk scoring system to predict heart issues within two to five years," he added.

Post-COVID Workforce Challenges

Subramaniam highlighted the shift in seafarers' career preferences after COVID-19, with many choosing to work ashore in non-maritime industries. "Seafarers who stayed



Capt. Subramaniam

ashore found jobs with companies like Grab and Food Panda. They are now questioning the need to return to sea," he said.

This has led to a smaller pool of seafarers and increased stress on those who remain onboard. "By improving health measures, we aim to create a safer and more supportive environment, which benefits both seafarers and shipowners," he added.

Focus on Physical and Mental Health

The initiatives also aim to strengthen the link between physical fitness and mental health. "You cannot address mental health effectively without

first ensuring physical health," Subramaniam said.

He emphasized the need for regular exercise, even onboard. "Simple activities like stretching, brisk walking, or light workouts can improve physical and mental well-being. Encouraging seafarers to adopt these habits is part of our long-term strategy," he explained.

Family Support Programs

To address mental health challenges, the club collaborates with organizations such as The Mission to Seafarers and Sailors' Society. Subramaniam stressed the importance of reducing the stress seafarers' face in managing family issues remotely.

"We encourage families to use available helplines and counseling services. Seafarers should not feel burdened to solve every problem at home while they are at sea," he remarked.

Nautical Institute Partnership

Subramaniam also underscored the importance of career development through organizations such as The Nautical Institute, which he heads as Chairman in Singapore.

"Membership provides access to mentoring, professional networks, and training programs, helping

seafarers advance their careers and reduce stress related to career uncertainty," he said.

Industry Impact

The Shipowners' Club invests up to \$1 million annually in these health initiatives. "Shipowners report fewer claims and a more positive onboard atmosphere as a result of these measures," Subramaniam stated.

He concluded by calling for industry-wide collaboration. "Improving seafarer welfare requires action at all levels. By working together, we can create a safer and healthier maritime industry," he said. **MW**

SECURING GROWTH THROUGH COMPETENCE



GigaMare

Training that makes a difference!

gigamare.com



Bldgs. 2082/2083 Corregidor Highway
Ilanin Forest-East District SBFZ, 2222
Phone: +63 47 252 6402 | sales@gigamare.com

WE STAND FOR EXCELLENCE!



START YOUR SMART TRAINING WITH US!

For over 30 years, NTC has remained the leading provider of highly specialized training and delivered the best deck, engine, and ETO cadets to the maritime industry. NTC is committed to providing the highest quality training and cadetship programs that meet international standards and adapt to the ever-changing industry landscape.

FEATURED COURSES:

- ✓ G5 Offshore Crane Training Course
- ✓ Fixed Hydraulic Crane Operator Course
- ✓ Marine High Voltage (STCW)
- ✓ Battery Handling
- ✓ DP induction
- ✓ Virtual Reality Simulator Courses
- ✓ Ship to Ship Lightering
- ✓ Maritime Risk Management and Incident Investigation
- ✓ Crane Training with Personnel Transfer Operation
- ✓ Gas Measuring Equipment Course
- ✓ TM Master V2 Onboard Course
- ✓ Tank Preparation for Chemical Tankers
- ✓ Large Vessel Ship Maneuvering and Handling
- ✓ Automation and Control Technology
- ✓ FRAMO Maintenance and Important Rules of Operation
- ✓ Kongsberg ECDIS Familiarization
- ✓ Oil and Chemical Tanker Cargo and Ballast Handling
- ✓ Tandem Mooring with STS
- ✓ Ship Simulator and Bridge Teamwork with BRM
- ✓ BRM with Shiphandling
- ✓ Electrical Equipment and Schematics
- ✓ Engine-Room Management Simulator Course