


Issue 1  
15/16

# SAMUDRA

A bi-monthly Publication of the Singapore Organisation of Seamen and Seacare Co-operative Limited

MCI (P) 162/08/2015

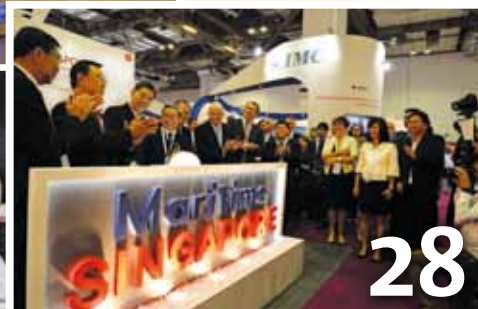


**Further Improving  
Quality of Life for Seafarers  
With New NTUC SG**

Issue 1  
15/16



## Contents



## SAMUDRA

### Features

- 03** May Day Message 2015  
Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong
- 04** SOS and Seacare Congratulate Newly-Elected NTUC SG
- 05** New NTUC SG's First Visit to SOS and Seacare
- 06** For Now, and for the Future  
SOS Leadership Renewal Workshop
- 18** Putting Others Before Self

### Training & Skills Development

- 16** Teamwork, Passion Key to Rewarding Seafaring Life
- 17** Maiden Sea Voyage To Colombo
- 22** Application for Certificate of Proficiency

### Membership & Welfare

- 20** Eat, Drink, Play, Be Merry
- 21** A Warm Welcome to the SOS Family

### International & Industrial Relations

- 08** ITF Offshore Task Force Group Meeting 2015  
St Petersburg, Russia
- 10** JSU / SOS and SMOU Unite at 4<sup>th</sup> Summit  
Working Hand-in-Hand With AMOSUP
- 11** ITF Fair Practices Committee Steering Group  
Steers FOC Campaign
- 12** Protection of Migrant Fishers
- 13** Helping Seafarers Recover their Hard-earned Wages

### Women & Youth

- 09** Strengthening Young Workers' Regional Networks
- 14** NTUC Youth Exchange with JBU  
Young NTUC Work, Live, Play in Taiwan
- 15** NTUC Women's Committee Workplan Seminar in Hong Kong

### Seacare Focus

- 24** Seacare Pioneer Members Laud Appreciation Gift Vouchers
- 25** Seacare Environmental Goes A Higher Level
- 28** SMMC and Seacare Hotel Participate in 5<sup>th</sup> SeaAsia
- 29** Sustainability Through Creativity



52 Chin Swee Road, #09-00, Seacare Building, Singapore 169875  
Tel: (65) 6379 5666 · Fax: (65) 6734 5525 · Email: [sosea@seacare.com.sg](mailto:sosea@seacare.com.sg)

[WWW.SOSEA.ORG.SG](http://WWW.SOSEA.ORG.SG) / [WWW.SEACARE.COM.SG](http://WWW.SEACARE.COM.SG)





# MAY DAY MESSAGE 2015

## PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEN LOONG

Our economy grew by 2.9 per cent last year. This year we expect between 2 per cent and 4 per cent. We have to get used to slower growth than before, because our economy is more mature, and we have tightened up on foreign manpower. But we must still be concerned with growth, because that is how we can afford to invest in healthcare, education and our people..

To grow despite tight manpower, we need productivity and innovation. It is the only sustainable way to raise wages and enhance careers. We have emphasised productivity for many years, starting in 1981 when founding Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew launched a National Productivity Movement. Many of us have participated in Work Improvement Teams and Quality Control Circles. Because Singaporean workers, unions and companies heeded Mr Lee's call and worked together, our productivity grew, our economy thrived, and our lives improved.

In the past few years, productivity has risen too slowly. This is in part due to the unsettled world economy, but also because our previous strategy is reaching its limits. Wages have been rising in the tight labour market, but this is not sustainable. If productivity continues to stagnate, after a while so will wages, which may even fall back.

We need a fresh approach. This is why we are working hard to make SkillsFuture a reality. SkillsFuture is about adapting to new technologies and trends, seizing new opportunities, creating new value, and equipping workers for the future.

The Government is taking the lead. In the Budget, we introduced the SkillsFuture Credit to encourage workers to take charge of their own learning. We are working with educational institutions and employers to create more pathways, develop new courses and modules for on-the-job training and self-initiated learning, and recognise skills through certifications and qualifications.

For SkillsFuture to take off, everyone has to play his part. Employers must support their workers, and where possible grant time-off to attend training. As workers upgrade their skills, employers should re-design and update their jobs to make good use of the new skills, and recognise and reward workers who contribute more. Workers must also take charge of their development and careers. As a society, we must be supportive and open-minded. We should not measure people by their paper qualifications, but by their skills and contributions.

Tripartism can help us make SkillsFuture work. Nowhere else in the world do Government, employers and workers work closely together, give-and-take and create win-win outcomes out of difficult circumstances. Unity is our biggest strength. Together, we can achieve growth, raise our wages and achieve better lives for all Singaporeans.

Happy May Day!

Photos credit: NTUC

# SOS AND SEACARE CONGRATULATE NEWLY-ELECTED NTUC SG

The National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) has unanimously elected Brother Chan Chun Sing as the Secretary-General (SG) with effect from 4 May 2015. Former Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for Defense Brother Chan would be taking over the reins from Brother Lim Swee Say who would be flowing on. The Central Committee agreed that Brother Chan is a "suitable Cabinet Minister who can strengthen labour relations at the NTUC and the link between the Labour Movement and the Government."

After eight years as NTUC SG, Brother Lim will be serving in his new capacity as Minister of Manpower. SOS wishes to thank Brother Lim for his selfless leadership and care towards the workers and hopes to work closely together with him and his ministry to fortify stronger tripartite relations.

Brother Chan is definitely an asset to the Labour Movement. He has made an impact on the lives of many Singaporeans over the years as the Minister for Social and Family Development. We look forward to working with Brother Chan to grow Brother Lim's labour of love and improve the quality of life for all seafarers.

– **SOS General Secretary Kam Soon Huat**



My years of in serving the interest of our workers were certainly the most meaningful period of my working life...As for me, I am grateful to be assigned to MOM...I will build on the solid foundation laid by Tan Chuan-Jin to help our people of all ages to pursue fulfilling careers. I assure my fellow unionists that I will continue to be pro-worker. And I also assure our management partners that I will be pro-business too. Mutually reinforcing, we can continue our journey towards a healthier economy, a more progressive society and a better Singapore for all. I look forward to strengthening Singapore Tripartism in my new capacity. Together, I am confident we can get there.

– **NTUC SG Lim Swee Say in his Facebook post**



Brother Swee Say's belief that a job is the best welfare and full employment is the best protection for our workers has led him to make a positive impact in the lives and livelihood of our workers. In his eight years with Labour Movement (LM) as Sec-Gen, Brother Swee Say has helped workers with employment and employability through various initiatives and programmes such as Skills Re-development and Job Re-creation...Labour Movement has been made stronger with Brother Swee Say's selfless leadership, and we will continue to build on his work. Thank you brother Swee Say, for your labour of love.

– **Newly-elected NTUC SG Chan Chun Sing in his Facebook post**







New NTUC SG Chan Chun Sing greeting SOS ExCo members during his first visit to the union on 21 April 2015



SOS and Seacare staff sharing some light moments with SG Chan over a light reception



## NEW NTUC SG'S FIRST VISIT TO SOS AND SEACARE

SOS officials and staff welcomed Chan Chun Sing, the new NTUC Secretary-General at the Seacare Building on 21 April 2015. Joining SG Chan on his first visit here were NTUC Centric Director Ong Chin Ang, a social media team staff and a cluster specialist. The visit was part of the NTUC Annual Union Visit initiative where NTUC officials interact with union officials to learn and understand more about the union structure.

While getting to know the SOS ExCo members and key officials, SG Chan attained a deeper understanding of SOS's history, roles, challenges, stance in tripartism, union membership and its solidarity to International Transport Workers' Federation and regional seafarers' unions. SOS ExCo members shared with SG Chan about their memorable seafaring experiences and contributed helpful ideas to improve union work. A light reception at Club@52 was prepared for SOS and Seacare staff to mingle with SG Chan.

# FOR NOW, AND FOR THE FUTURE

## *SOS LEADERSHIP RENEWAL WORKSHOP*



SOS Office Bearers, Executive & Standing Committee Members, Admin Secretaries and nominated staff at the Leadership Renewal Workshop 2015 in Bangkok

**T**he SOS's leadership pool and the grooming of young elected members were the main focus of the Union's Leadership Renewal Workshop in Bangkok from 16 to 19 May 2015.

Themed “For Now, and for the Future”, the workshop chaired by SOS Advisor Leow Ching Chuan reviewed the framework for the transition of its leaders, which aligns with NTUC's 3-Flow Model of leadership and development: “Flow In”, “Flow Up” and “Flow On”.

Some 60 participants – comprising Office Bearers, Executive & Standing Committee Members, Admin Secretaries as well as nominated SOS staff – shared their perspectives of good leadership practices and affirmed the importance of a seamless leadership transition.

They also acknowledged the urgency to induct young blood into the Union for a more inclusive leadership and reviewed approaches to grow the Union's leadership pool – such as amending SOS Constitution to enlarge the scope of



SOS Advisor Leow Ching Chuan chairing the two-day annual workshop

its representation and advancing female cadre members with strong leadership capabilities to senior leadership positions.

During the two-day workshop, a motion was proposed for adoption at the Union's 14th QGM in 2015 to allow veteran ExCo members who have reached the statutory retirement age during their term of office to continue their designation until their terms expires.





Having devoted tirelessly towards the betterment of their fellow seamen, a few of these veteran leaders will flow on to become mentors for various interest groups within the Union, such as in the areas of training, ship-visiting and bonding between members and staff.

Mr Kam Soon Huat, SOS General Secretary, who co-chaired the workshop, commented: "With the inclusion of

a younger pool of leaders, we want to retain the veterans. They are very experienced unionists who have dedicated decades of their lives to strengthen our Union's presence, both locally and internationally. They are very valuable assets and we want them to pass on their leadership qualities to our younger batch of leaders."



# ITF OFFSHORE TASK FORCE GROUP MEETING 2015

*ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA*

**S**OS Executive Secretary Daniel Tan, was among the union representatives to participate in the ITF Offshore Task Force Group (OTFG) Meeting 2015, held in St Petersburg, Russia from 27 to 29 April 2015.

The OTFG meeting saw the adoption of reports from the last meeting held in London from 17 to 19 June 2014 and reports from Offshore Regional Coordinators. The three-day meeting gave time for Campaigns in 2015/2016 to be presented and considered.

Due for review on 1 January 2016, OTFG members considered negotiations between the Norwegian Maritime unions and the Norwegian Ship owners Association for the Model Offshore Support Vessel Agreement, and any views it may have in relation to changes or increase in wages in the Offshore Standard (OSTD) CBA for 2016 and beyond.



Daniel also attended a conference, “The Arctic – Today!” organised by Seafarers’ Union of Russia. The objective of the summit was to raise the cooperation of trade unions in developing regulatory framework in labour conditions and labour safety, industrial and environmental safety at work on the continental shelf.





# STRENGTHENING YOUNG WORKERS' REGIONAL NETWORKS



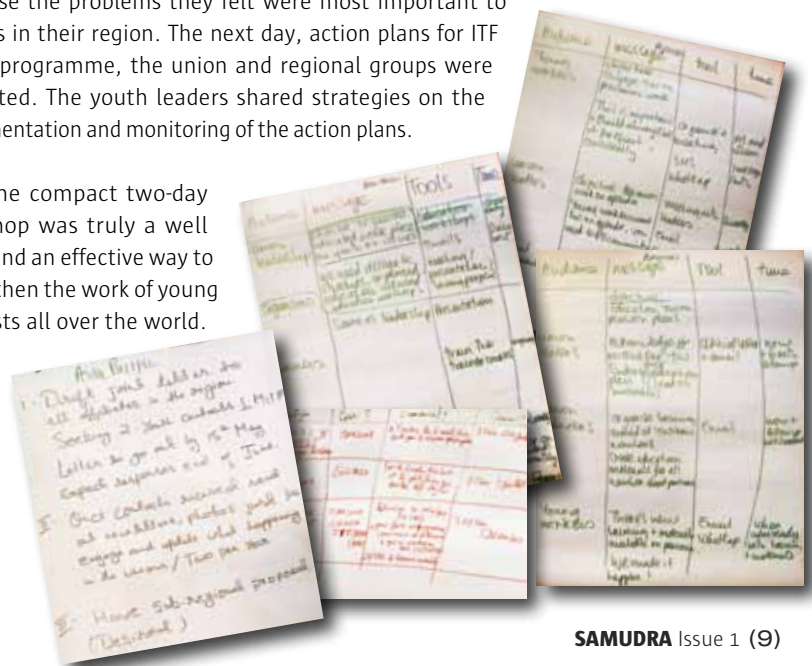
Some 20 regional representatives from Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Caribbean, Arab world, Latin America, as well as ITF Secretariat from the UK, convened for a regional network planning workshop, held at the ITF House, in London, from 21 to 22 April 2015.

In her capacity as Co-chair of ITF Youth Committee, Executive Board Member and Asia Pacific representative in the ITF Youth Committee, SOS Assistant Director Sharon Li, engaged with fellow youth affiliates from the regional transport sectors.

The two-day workshop kicked-off with a deeper understanding about ITF. Young transport workers activities were mapped out according to regions, where reports from Africa and Asia Pacific, highlighted problems that affiliates face when trying to organise young transport workers.

Young transport regional representatives shared what they had achieved in their own youth committees, the issues faced, and spelled out what affiliates are expecting from an ITF regional young workers network. The afternoon session focused more on the success stories of Latin America and the Arab World in forming their own youth committees. Discussions went headway as regional groups identified problems faced by young workers in their respective region and those faced by unions when trying to organise young workers. The constructive discussion helped delegates to prioritise the problems they felt were most important to address in their region. The next day, action plans for ITF global programme, the union and regional groups were presented. The youth leaders shared strategies on the implementation and monitoring of the action plans.

The compact two-day workshop was truly a well spent and an effective way to strengthen the work of young unionists all over the world.







## JSU / SOS AND SMOU UNITE AT 4<sup>TH</sup> SUMMIT

“The solidarity among Asian affiliates is of paramount importance and the JSU, SOS, SMOU Summit is the right platform in moving forward and strengthening bilateral ties,” said Mr Kam Soon Huat, General Secretary of SOS.

Visiting All Japan Seamen’s Union (JSU) Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, Mr Kam, Industrial Relations Senior Executive



Chen Chuanyi and SMOU delegates were welcomed by JSU President Yasumi Morita. Mr Morita expressed his belief that strengthening bilateral relationship would lead to new initiatives and solutions for the unions. The summit, held on 10 April 2015, sought to resolve issues, establish cooperation and a common understanding to create a better working environment for seafarers.



## WORKING HAND-IN-HAND WITH AMOSUP

Strengthening cooperation with regional seafaring unions, Mr Kam Soon Huat, Mr Chen Chuanyi and Mr Alan Kor called on the Associated Marine Officer’s and Seamen’s Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) headquarters in Manila on 25 May 2015.

During the meeting, the officials from both unions discussed opportunities for further bilateral collaborations in areas such as training and membership. AMOSUP officials gave a lowdown on its existing welfare benefits and provided a tour to their Sailor’s Home and Hospital’s facilities.

A union with approximately 80,000 ratings and officers, AMOSUP aims to fulfill the growing needs of its general membership through better welfare, benefits and employment. The visit ended with a dinner hosted by AMOSUP and a bilateral agreement signing to enhance the relationship between the Philippines and Singapore unions.





# ITF FAIR PRACTICES COMMITTEE STEERING GROUP STEERS FOC CAMPAIGN



*Photos credit: Maritime Union of Australia*

**T**he International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) held its Fair Practices Committee Steering Group (FPC-SG) in Perth, Western Australia from 10 to 14 May 2015.

At the biennial meeting, SOS General Secretary Kam Soon Huat, met with dockers and seafarers' unionists to tackle issues that surround seafarers and dockers on a global level. The series of meetings covered a wide range of current issues relevant to SOS members and seafarers such as updates on the Flags-of-Convenience campaign, addressing the problems faced by unions in different regions, updates on the offshore

industries and how to ensure that more seafarers working in the offshore industries are covered under Collective Agreements, resolving anti-union discriminatory practices and to press for the improvement of their working conditions. The committee also set aside time to identify post-ITF Congress priorities, shared the outcome of the ITF/International Bargaining Forum (IBF) agreement for compliance and discussed about narrowing the gap between benchmark minimum salaries and real wages earned by officers in the global maritime labour market.

# PROTECTION OF MIGRANT FISHERS

According to the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation statistics (FAO, 2012), over 87 per cent of the world's fishermen and 73 per cent of the global fleet of fishing vessels come from Asia. The issues of work in fishing have thus brought increasing attention to several countries in Southeast Asia, where illegal and exploitative labour practices prevail.

Migrant fishermen are known to work for long hours and periods away from home; and endure brutal working and living conditions on unseaworthy vessels. Some were reportedly abused physically and were made to work between 17 and 24 hours a day. With limited inspections of conditions on these fishing vessels, migrant fishermen thus have limited access to grievance procedures or complaints mechanisms.

At the Second Regional Meeting on the Protection of Migrant Fishers: ASEAN Information Sharing on 'Guidelines on Flag State Inspection of Working and Living Conditions on Board Fishing Vessels' held from 28 to 29 April in Jakarta, national policies and legislative framework in the fishery industry were comprehensively reviewed to mitigate the exploitation of migrant fishermen.

The two-day meeting brought together the participants from Labour ministries and

government departments with responsibilities in the Fishing Sector from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam - as well as from national and regional employer and workers' organisation, ILO staff and civil society organisation from ASEAN Countries.

Among the key outcomes of the meeting was identifying concrete follow-up measures for national level capacity building, as well as bilateral and regional cooperations on the protection of these fishermen.

"It is crucial to protect migrant fishermen, because many of them do not have legal work or stay visas... which means they have no access to established legal processes when their rights are infringed," said SOS Vice President Mohamad Abu Bakar, who was among the regional union representatives to share their experiences in tackling such challenges.

"We have to create a safer, fairer and sustainable future for fishermen. I hope more countries can ratify ILO's Convention 188, which establishes minimum standards to protect fishermen in all aspects of their work, very much like how the MLC 2006 has benefitted seafarers," he added.



# HELPING SEAFARERS RECOVER THEIR HARD-EARNED WAGES



IR Executive Alan Kor (left) verifying the information from the crew on board Chemical Tanker Imbak



Alan Kor and Mohamad Abu Bakar speaking to the ratings to address their concerns and inquiries on the day of the arrest

**T**housands of miles from home, penniless and abandoned. Twenty crew members were stranded onboard Chemical Tanker Imbak, which was arrested and remained anchored in Singapore waters since 22 April 2015.

It was a time of distress for these seafarers from India who have since been waiting for the recovery of their hard-earned money and the arrangements for their repatriation.

According to SOS Vice President Mohamad Abu Bakar, about three months of unpaid wages or some US\$250,000 was owed to the crew after the vessel was abandoned by its owner.

“It was an unfortunate incident where the shipowner remained uncontactable and has failed to pay the crew’s salaries for months. We will work with the authorities to help recover their salary,” said Mohamad.

Mr Mohamad, who boarded Imbak with IR Executive Alan Kor on the day of its arrest, spoke with the ratings and addressed many of their enquiries. Together with officers from SMOU, they also conducted a short briefing with the crew and filed their concerns.







## NTUC YOUTH EXCHANGE WITH JBU

Some 30 Young NTUC delegates met 150 delegates from Japan Federation of Basic Industry Workers' Unions (JBU) for a gainful exchange session on 14 May 2015.

Held at Orchid Country Club, the event started with the sharing of recovery efforts for the Great East Japan Earthquake and activities implemented by JBU, an industrial union with workers from steel, shipbuilding, construction and aerospace, industrial machineries, refining, information-related and distribution industries.

SOS Youth Committee members, Priscilla Han Weiping and Chen Chuanyi were among the local delegates.

The young NTUC delegates gave an introduction of Young NTUC and its activities. The Q&A group discussions between the two organisations were interactive and fruitful as the delegates were eager to learn from each other the common issues such as work-life balance, flexi-working hours, employment terms and benefits and maternity leave.

## YOUNG NTUC WORK, LIVE, PLAY IN TAIWAN



Chuanyi and Priscilla (first and second from right) with fellow NTUC Youth Chapters Representatives



SOS Youth Committee members, Priscilla Han Weiping and Chen Chuanyi joined 49 other Youth Chapters Representatives and Young NTUC Activists for a four-day Young NTUC Annual Workplan Seminar in Taipei, Taiwan. Kickstarting the Workplan Seminar, Young NTUC Activist Mike Chen led teambuilding activities that seek to break down

boundaries and facilitate communication among the participants. The Workplan discussion covered recaps of national level programmes and programmes pertaining to Work, Live and Play.

Some of the highlights of the seminar included talks by invited speakers from the Chinese Federation of Labour, Taiwan (CFL) and the non-profit organisation, 350 Taiwan. It also included a learning journey visit to Tzu Chi Foundation Recycle and Love Station where they learned how Tzu Chi volunteers were involved in recycling efforts with a mission to conserve the Earth and create a better place for future generations.





# NTUC WOMEN'S COMMITTEE WORKPLAN SEMINAR IN HONG KONG



This year's NTUC Women's Committee Workplan Seminar brought 42 female unionists from 29 unions to Hong Kong for a four-day seminar and learning trip. First on the agenda was a learning journey to Hong Kong Labour Department (HKLD) where representatives presented on Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW), maternity and paternity benefits in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region as well as building a family-friendly workplace. The unionists, including SOS Assistant Director Sharon Li also visited G2000 Hong Kong to learn about its exceptional customer service practices in the retail industry and various human resource initiatives for the benefit of its employees.

During the seminar, the Women's Development Secretariat recapped on the milestones for the past four years and the Family Development Unit updated everyone on current projects and upcoming events. The participants then went on to discuss on integral topics such as:

- **Leadership:** How to attract and create a sustainable pool of women leaders/activists.
- **Membership:** How to attract rank and file employees and Professionals, Managers and Executives (PMEs) to become members; how to contact, connect and convert rank and file employees and PMEs.
- **Advocacy:** Stronger advocacy for Back to Work initiative, Flexible Work Arrangements and other women related issues.



# TEAMWORK, PASSION KEY TO REWARDING SEAFARING LIFE



SOS Manager Shirley Lai (left) and Schemes Administration Executive, Seri Suriyani onboard APL Houston to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

The mouthwatering food onboard was not the only thing that surprised both SOS Manager Shirley Lai and Schemes Administration Executive Seri Suriyani who boarded APL Houston to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on 25 April 2015.

While they were on cloud nine to discover Sambal Silverfish, Beef Rendang and Briyani Chicken on the Chief Cook's Asian menu, they were equally impressed by the crew's teamwork and passion for their job.

"You can sense a strong teamwork, trust and respect among one another, despite performing different job functions and having come from different cultures and nationalities," said Shirley.

Seri agreed, adding that the crew's attitude and passion for their work could have strengthened the team's morale and efficacy. "I didn't have the chance to ask them how they all managed to work so well together; it's something I find very interesting and endearing."

During their three-day ship familiarisation, both had fun exploring and orientating around the different sections of the vessel using the signages and floor plan on each level. On guided tours, they experienced what it is like to perform watch-keeping in pitch darkness and had the chance to test

the engines of lifeboats, during a fire- and lifeboat drill.

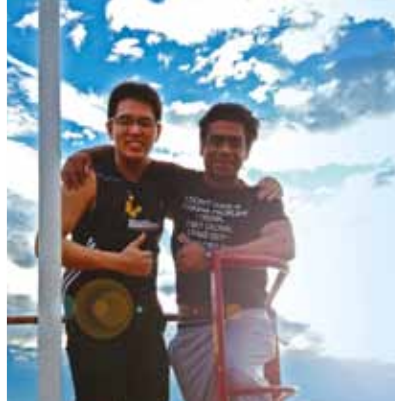
"We were learning many new things every day and we thoroughly enjoyed the learning process," said Seri, who has never boarded a merchant vessel. With explanations by officers from different departments, they understood clearer the functions of the reefer containers, where frozen goods are stored; the life boats storage points; and the bow of the ship where ropes and anchors are located.

They also visited the galley and engine room, where they were educated about their functions and uses. "The engine room was really hot and noisy. It housed a 3-storey high engine that keeps the ship moving. I salute all the Engineers and Technicians," said Shirley.

"We were very lucky to see flying fish at the bow of the vessel; they were chasing the waves. The crew prepared a mini parting celebration on our last night onboard. We had rounds of table soccer and a KTV session. We also went stargazing on the Bridge Wing. Overall, it was a really memorable and enjoyable learning trip for both of us," she added.

"I'm glad to be able to experience how our members live and work onboard because as staff of a seafarers union, we need to have a feel of what our members are going through, to better assess and address their concerns," said Seri.





# MAIDEN SEA VOYAGE TO COLOMBO

**S**OS IR Executive Alan Kor and Schemes Administration Executive Chang Kai Jie set off on their maiden sea voyage to Colombo, Sri Lanka, on board container vessel APL IRIS on 30 April 2015.

Having no prior seafaring experience, Alan and Kai Jie both agreed that living and working onboard a vessel turned out very differently from what they had earlier thought.

“It was a unique experience to begin with. We got to experience the serenity of living and working in the middle of the ocean and away from the distractions in our everyday living on shore,” said Kai Jie.

“But that also meant that we have to be accustomed to the occasional solitude and monotony at sea. Time can pass really slowly onboard, but I guess it’s part of the package as a seafarer,” he added.

Alan, who recently joined SOS, felt that the familiarisation trip was an eye-opening experience for him. Having learnt about the different job functions and specific roles performed by each of the crew, he believes that the trip “has given him a better understanding of seafarers’ daily lives and contributes to his daily IR work, which cannot be found in books.”



IR Executive Alan Kor (left) and Schemes Administration Executive Chang Kai Jie (right) with the Chief Engineer on board APL Iris to Colombo, Sri Lanka

“It was both our first time onboard a merchant vessel and we were very excited to learn new things. We were guided by different officers who toured us around various parts of the ship. We visited the engine room, where we were shown the water distillation system that converts seawater to potable water. We also visited the galley, the stores and the freezers, where the Chief Cook showed us the different ways of storing, preparation and managing food,” said Alan.

The two also had the opportunity to learn Night Navigation during their visits to the Bridge. They also learnt about the common nautical terms and international abbreviations used to facilitate communication on sea.

“It was really an eye-opener for us. The Captain and officers, with their trained night vision, could detect faint lights from ships from afar, something which we could only see with binoculars,” said Kai Jie.

“We were almost reluctant to leave when our ship arrived in Colombo. The crew was very friendly and their companionship had made our short trip all the more memorable.”

The SOS Ship Familiarisation Programme, in collaboration with Neptune Shipmanagement Service Pte Ltd (NSSPL), aims to familiarise staff with ship operations, the latest maritime technology and the working conditions of seafarers onboard.



# PUTTING OTHERS BEFORE SELF



In the engine room of a vessel back in 1981



“I feel that for seafarers to have a strong union behind them is most beautiful and most fortunate,” said Mr Bon Sheun Ping, 65, Vice-President of SOS and a pioneer leader of the Union.

Brother Bon took up seafaring in 1973. At that time, seafaring was one of the best paid jobs in Singapore – it attracted men of different ages, races and ethnic groups to earn a comfortable living onboard merchant vessels.

Singaporean crews were preferred for their English literacy – often becoming translators for the crew. There were few union delegates onboard then, and many seamen were unaware of their basic rights.

Three years into seafaring, Brother Bon decided to be an SOS delegate to help settle disputes between seamen and their employers. “It wasn’t easy, our time was very different from now where everything is well taken care of,” said Brother Bon, who have sailed in various cargo ships. His active involvement ultimately led him to become one of the union’s ExCo members.

Brother Bon believes that unionists must have a very positive attitude. His guiding principle of ‘sacrificing time to do things that may not have anything to do with you’ stood the test of time and has become a testament to his 40 years of service to union members.



A veteran SOS unionist at the age of 65, Mr Bon works as a Safety Co-ordinator





“At that time, our seamen had all kinds of problems, some were illiterate and needed help to read letters, some had relationship issues, some encountered financial problems and some were accused of not doing their jobs well... they would call our office for help,” he recalled, citing cases from housing application to divorce settlement.

“Our welfare officers would pick up the phone and probe. They would really look into their problems. It’s hard to find this type of support anywhere else... We see each other as family members.”

Commitment and teamwork may have been the most distinctive attributes Brother Bon has inherited from the founding members of SOS. “I feel that we are really blessed to have very honest and committed pioneer leaders, like Lim Keng Ho, R A Hami and Abdul Karim who groomed and led us,” he said, while adding praises to younger pioneers such as Mr David Sim, Mr William Tan and Ms Lim Sia Hoe (who is now with NTUC Eldercare).

“I learn a lot about teamwork from them. You cannot achieve anything by yourself, what you really need is teamwork. For example, we will feed information (of the crew) to them and they react accordingly based on our information. We are constantly helping each other.”

“When we were involved with social activities and needed manpower, everybody would help out, we were not that calculative... the sort of sacrificial and service mentality must be there, that is why I say it’s teamwork. You must enjoy helping seafarers, once you enjoy it, you will find a lot of fun in it.”

“Most of us remained members until today because our union takes care of us, even after we retired from the sea. It accepted us as associate members for life. I don’t think you can find another union like this,” he added.

Assisting others in times of need continue to be Brother Bon outlook in life, long after he retired from seafaring. Currently working as a Safety Co-ordinator, he is an active learner and constantly pursues a wide range of skills to stay relevant in the workforce.

“Learning in life can never stop. Up till today I am still upgrading myself. In fact, I will be attending a course in two weeks time. You must learn even if it’s something beyond your job scope, be it fire fighting or first aid”, he said, adding, “You never know when you will use it one day, you may well be helping someone or even saving lives.”





# EAT, DRINK, PLAY, BE MERRY



It was a night like no other. On 9 May 2015, Club@52 was filled with shouts of joy and laughter from some 160 SOS staff and members at the SOS Members' Night. Hosted by emcee Farid Rashid, members were invited to play two games to get their adrenaline pumping – 30-seconds 'Shake Your Body' challenge using a pedometer and the 'Goal or No Goal' game that required participants to guess if the soccer shot was a goal or no goal. The members had a delicious buffet dinner while listening and watching performers as they danced and sang live.

SOS ExCo Members Shena Foo and Kamis Hussain presented NTUC FairPrice vouchers, SOS t-shirts and Hock Hua gift sets to lucky draw winners. A special mystery prize

consisting of an iFan Air Cooler and an SOS t-shirt was also given away. The annual SOS Members' Night allowed members to gather, catch up with each other and build solidarity among members over good food, drinks and games.





# A WARM WELCOME TO THE SOS FAMILY

Seen two new faces around in the Seacare Building? The SOS family proudly introduces Mr Alan Kor who joined SOS as External & Industrial Relations Executive and Ms Magdalene Ng as Schemes Administration Executive.

Mr Kor helps in drafting Collective Bargaining Agreement, handles grievance cases and maintains harmonious relationships between seafarers and shipping companies while Ms Ng assists in the daily operation of Seafarers' Provident Fund refund applications, particularly answering members' enquiries and processing their SPF applications.

Welcome onboard!

I have a few years of experience working in the hospitality industry and have some exposure in the entertainment and events industry. I enjoy watching movies, working out at the gym, trying different kinds of food and exploring new places.

– **Mr Alan Kor, External & Industrial Relations Executive**



I enjoy the simple things in life. On weekends and in my free time, I listen to oldies and soft rock music, sampling different types of cuisine and reading health articles online.

– **Ms Magdalene Ng, Schemes Administration Executive**



# REMINDER

## APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY



All Singaporean Ratings must apply for the Certificate of Proficiency by **31 Dec 2016**, as required by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA).

The enhancement is part of MPA's effort to continuously improve its services to the shipping community. It includes improving services for the issuance of certificates in compliance with the requirements of the 2010 Manila Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW).

This Certificate of Proficiency is valid for 5 years.



**To apply, submit the following via MARINET account or via the e-application form from MPA's website:**

- **Past Training certificates**  
(e.g. From Seacare Thrift or TS Singapura)
- **Sea service** (Copy of Discharge book)
- **Photo**
- **NRIC**

Cost of application and certification: **\$25**

*Please contact your company HR or Training department for details and enquiries.*







SEACAREFOCUS

SEACAREFOCUS

SEACAREFOCUS

SEACAREFOCUS



# SEACARE PIONEER MEMBERS LAUD APPRECIATION GIFT VOUCHERS

Many of the Seacare Pioneer Ordinary members have been coming with their family members to receive gift vouchers since 28 May 2015- given as a gesture of appreciation by Seacare Co-operative under its Pioneer Appreciation Scheme, which recognises members' loyalty and support, since its incorporation in 1994.

"These vouchers come in handy," said voucher recipient, Abu Mudjin Abdulla, who came with his wife. "Now is the Ramadan month and it will be Hari Raya soon. With these vouchers I can buy some clothes or some books for my daughter, who is still studying. I'm very happy to receive them."

The Seacare Pioneer Appreciation Scheme was earlier announced by Seacare Co-operative's Executive Chairman Leow Ching Chuan at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) last September.

Mr Leow said the members' preference for not just household items, but also lifestyle products justified the Co-operative's decision to include CapitaVouchers in the scheme, which can be used in 2,000 stores across 18 CapitaMalls, island-wide.

Under the scheme, 803 eligible members will be entitled to \$1.50 worth of vouchers for every Seacare share they own. The total value of the vouchers will be rounded up to the nearest \$5.

"I was earlier very surprised and of course very happy when they mentioned the vouchers at the AGM," said former Ships Cook, Yusof Abdul Rahman. "It's very good to be a member of SOS and Seacare because my family and I receive a lot of benefits."



Fellow members, Tan Ai Beng and Samsuri Dolkapa also agreed. Samsuri spoke with gratitude: "Although it has been almost 22 years since I stopped sailing, I find it unbelievable that Seacare is still looking after us as members. It's a good thing and it's also very surprising. In a sense, they don't leave me behind, it's good to be part of Seacare's progress."

This is the second time that Seacare Ordinary members have received gift vouchers. At a joint SOS-Seacare anniversary celebration in 2011, they were awarded \$1 worth of NTUC Fairprice gift vouchers per share.



Some of the members who came to collect their gift vouchers at the SOS office



# SEACARE ENVIRONMENTAL GOES A HIGHER LEVEL



(From left) SEPL General Manager Alan Toh, Manager Teo Yong Hui and new Chair Shena Foo

Since its set up in 1995, Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd (SEPL) has firmly established its reputation as a strong brand name in the cleaning industry. Today, SEPL is known for its quality cleaning and maintenance services delivered through professionally trained staff. SEPL has provided cleaning services for almost 200 sites.

Further establishing itself, SEPL attained certification of the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System by certification body from the United Kingdom Accreditation Scheme, proving that it has the capability to meet customer and regulatory requirements in the provision of quality cleaning and maintenance services.

Samudra speaks to newly appointed Chair of SEPL, Shena Foo, who took the reins on 1 April 2015. Shena shares about the company's expansion plans.





***What's the company's status - in terms of the size of business, staff strength and the scope of its services?***

SEPL is a small medium enterprise with a staff strength of slightly below 40. The number of sites cleaned by SEPL has grown over the years to about 200 sites now.

SEPL currently offers tailored/specialised cleaning/environment care programmes/solutions to suit the needs of its customers who are concerned over cleanliness and hygiene of their premises, which is a basis for the well being of their staff/persons under their charge/patrons.

Our scope of services include:

**• For Indoor Environment**

- High-rise areas: ceiling/wall fans, high cabinets, lightings, piping, windows/window grills
- Carpet vacuuming/shampooing
- General cleaning

**• For Outdoor Environment**

General cleaning of common areas

The type of cleaning equipments used are floor scrubbers, carpet extractors and backpack vacuum cleaners.

SEPL provides services to childcare centres, eldercare centres, educational centre, medical clinic, office premises, hotel and commercial buildings.



### **Are there any niche services that SEPL can embark on?**

Cleaning of high-rise areas, including areas above five feet in an indoor environment, over and above the general cleaning services such as carpet vacuuming/shampooing, mopping of floors, cleaning of windows, office furniture.

### **What are the plans ahead?**

We intend to expand the breadth and depth of our cleaning service offerings and to enhance our existing and potential customers' experience with SEPL at every touchpoints.



### **What do you want the company to be known for?**

It is my hope and aspiration for SEPL to be known as a leading cleaning and maintenance specialist, specifically in the cleaning of high rise areas of an indoor environment.

As the new Chair, I hope to work together with fellow board members, the management and team to bring SEPL to the next level of growth.



*Ever heard the proverb, "Cleanliness is next to godliness"?*

*The expression reiterates how important cleanliness is. On a practical level, cleanliness means hygiene and disease prevention. The importance of a clean environment – indoor or outdoor, for work, play or rest, can never be overlooked as trivial and non-relevant.*

*More than ever before, home owners, employers, property managers, are recognising the value of having a safe and clean environment, for themselves, their children, workers and users.*

*Having a clean space may not affect us directly. However, when we work, live, play in an environment for most part of the day, an unclean space can have unknown negative effects. For the worker, it may severely affect productivity and well being. For children, an unclean environment may pose danger to health risk and affect their development. Allergies, asthma, spread of diseases, lung cancer and heart problems have been closely linked to poor air quality. That's why it is of utmost importance to ensure that everyone are occupying sanitary environments.*

*As a cleaning and maintenance company, Seacare Environment Pte Ltd (SEPL) is committed to offering exceptional cleaning services to keep your space, free from air pollutants, sources of virus, dust mites, mold etc.*

*Don't let a badly maintained environment get you down.*

*Let SEPL do all the dirty work for you! That's what we do best.*



Dr Chia Yih Woei (left) with Capt. Say Eng Sin at the SMMC booth



From left: Seacare Hospitality Admin Executive Shermin Lim, Dr Chia Yih Woei and SMMC Senior Manager Eugenia Pek



Transport Minister Liu Tuck Yew (third from left) was the Guest-Of-Honour at the opening of SeaAsia 2015



## SMMC AND SEACARE HOTEL PARTICIPATE IN 5<sup>TH</sup> SEAASIA

Participants at the 5th SeaAsia held from 21 to 23 April 2015 at Marina Bay Sands got an opportunity to learn more about the services of Seacare Maritime Medical Centre (SMMC) and The Seacare Hotel.

At the SMMC and Seacare Hotel booth, SMMC CEO Dr Chia, Chairman Capt. Say Eng Sin, Senior Manager Eugenia Pek and Seacare Hospitality Admin Executive Shermin Lim were present to answer participants' queries about Seacare Hotel's accommodation services and SMMC. Accredited by OGUK, UKP&I Club, American Club and various flag states, SMMC is a one-stop 24 hour medical centre that offers pre-employment medical examination, medical evacuation and repatriation for seafarers and offshore personnel.

Co-organised by Seatrade and Singapore Maritime Foundation with the theme "The Asian Voice in World Shipping – Charting Asia's Future Growth", SeaAsia attracted over 14,000 participants from more than 60 countries and saw influential leaders discussing about key trends, opportunities and challenges in the near future. The event served as a focal point for global and local maritime communities to network, explore new businesses and showcase latest maritime innovations, equipment and services. Minister of Transport Liu Tuck Yew graced the event as the guest-of-honour.

Singapore continues to cement its position as an international maritime centre and the increasing Prominence of SeaAsia in the global maritime calendar demonstrates the country's importance in addressing the sector's challenges and opportunities.

– Mr Michael Chia, Chairman, Singapore Maritime Foundation







# SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH CREATIVITY



“A good organisation employs the most qualified persons to boost productivity and profit, but a great organisation empowers the whole team and embraces creative thinking to boost sustainability,” said Serene Lee, Seacare Manpower Manager. Serene, who was among the 10-member of Seacare delegation attending this year’s SNCF Annual Co-operative Leaders’ Conference (ACLC) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, was all praises for the conference speakers.

“I especially enjoyed Fanny’s presentation of the wild animals of Masai Mara, where she used different hunting techniques as analogies of high individual or team performance.” Recalling lessons from the wild, delivered by speaker Fanny Lai, Ex-Group CEO of Wildlife Reserves Singapore, Serene learnt about greatness: “If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way.”

This year’s ACLC, themed ‘Sustainability Through Creativity’ invited renowned social entrepreneurs, such as Benny Se Teo, Founder and CEO of Eighteen Chefs; Johnny Lau, Founder of Mr Kiasu; and Jay Che Founder and Principal Instructor of Circus In Motion, to share unconventional ways of achieving business breakthroughs with a worthy social cause.

Hailing from different industries, these speakers shared common traits that helped them achieve their goals – a never-say-die attitude, creative-thinking, and a noble aspiration to help the less fortunate.

“I believe that if you are passionate enough to believe in something, with your heart, your soul, your mind, everything is possible,” said Singapore’s Celebrity Chef Benny Se Teo, who



Seacare Co-operative Secretary, Shena Foo and Group Corporate Services Manager, Ong Zhiwei, presenting their groups' discussion on 'Creating Creativity Culture'

owns a restaurant chain with over \$10 million turnover per year. An ex-convict, who was turned down at one job interview after another, upon his release in 1993, Benny said he hopes to inspire delinquents to turn over a new leaf. "I didn't keep count, I guess I have helped a lot of ex-offenders to learn a skill, get a job and move on in life."

"For an ex-offender to get a job is tough. This is also one of the reasons why I started Eighteen Chefs – to run a good business and at the same time train a group of ex-offenders to become chefs, managers... This is something I love to do. I will say that I am not only selling food; I am also selling a culture."

Ex-national netball star Zhang Tingjun, who co-founded The Chain Reaction Project (TRP), felt that organisations with prominent founders should focus more on empowering staff than on creating succession plans. In nourishing creativity among employees, Tingjun conveyed her ideas with success stories of empowering individuals "to make them feel part of the creative process." Elaborating further, she said, "The more people you have empowered to feel a part of this process, the more their sense of ownership and creativity. It's about how you want to have them own a piece of it, I think that's the key (in ensuring sustainability)."

The former Channel NewsAsia Reporter also shared inspiring videos of 'catalysts of change' or individuals who helped transform lives, through physical challenges and humanitarian efforts, in some of the world's least-developed nations.

"Tingjun's active outreach for like-minded people to join her charity work through knowledge and resource-sharing inspires me to constantly communicate with colleagues to work towards our common goal," said Shirley Lai, Seacare Group Corporate Services Manager and first-time ACLC attendee. Shirley now has a clearer picture of Singapore's co-operative scene and how they are able to remain sustainable.

Kathryn Ang, Seacare Senior Manager agreed, "You have to know your market, your competitors and craft out strategies to ensure your business can go on and stay competitive and sustainable." She particularly liked the way speaker Jay Che imparted his 'entertainment' skills to 'hyperactive and naughty' students and successfully channeled their energies to learning life skills. "This is a fine example of how you can remove the limits to what your business was perceived, and channel it to a desired market."

The two-day conference included presentations on the use of social media to engage stakeholders and customers, and a panel session with the guest speakers titled: 'No Future Without Creativity'. The 100-strong participants from different co-operative sectors also engaged in a lively breakout session to brainstorm ideas to achieve sustainability in their co-operatives. ACLC 2015 was a fruitful and memorable conference for both the speakers and the participants.



Seacare representatives with artist and social entrepreneur, Johnny Lau (far right), the creator of well-loved comic series 'Mr Kiasu'





Club . Pool . Karaoke

# Ladies Night Out

Every  
Wednesday  
Lucky draw  
for all the ladies  
in the house!

## General Inquires

6379 5642

6379 5636

## Event booking

David Sim 9734 1037

E-mail: david\_sim@seacare.com.sg

Club rules apply

[www.club52.com.sg](http://www.club52.com.sg)



# *Bringing **Quality Services** to Your **Doorstep!***

- Customised cleaning and maintenance programmes for businesses and residential
- Professional carpet care and preventive maintenance
- Restoring and polishing of marble and granite floor
- Upholstery cleaning and maintenance



## **Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd**

A member of the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) and Environmental Management Association of Singapore (EMAS)

52 Chin Swee Road, #04-00 Seacare Building  
Singapore 169875

### *For enquiries:*

Tel : (65) 6379 5610

Tel : (65) 9626 2048 (Mr Alan Toh)

Fax : (65) 6836 3203

Email : [admin\\_env@seacare.com.sg](mailto:admin_env@seacare.com.sg)

Website : [www.seacare.com.sg](http://www.seacare.com.sg)