

Issue No. 1 (June 2008)

samudra

Award and Applause for Seacare on May Day



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WELL DONE, SEACARE!

Three years ago, Seacare Co-operative Limited (Seacare) took to the stage to receive a Plaque of Commendation from the Singapore National Co-operative Federation. On 29 April 2008, Seacare was given due recognition by the National Trades Union Congress at the May Day Awards 2008, held at the Suntec Convention Hall.

The Plaque of Commendation was conferred on Seacare for its significant contributions to the Trade Union Movement. The accomplishments included its age-friendly employment practises by Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd and Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd as well as its provision of regular training and skills upgrading courses for its employees, including free training courses to its

Manpower staff. In addition to these, Seacare had also provided generous donations to the NTUC Education and Training Fund.

When it comes to welfare, Seacare offers free full health screening and eye checks to local Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) members and their dependants at the Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd (SMMC) and its affiliated clinic, under the Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS). Through SMS, Seacare also provides free medical consultation and examination to SOS Filipino and Indonesian members and their dependants at SMMC affiliated clinics in their respective countries.

One can say that Seacare's endeavour to promote good industrial relations,

workers' training and care for SOS members and the community is a lifetime commitment. Seacare continues to secure job opportunities for unemployed SOS members and Singaporeans aged 40 and above and conducts regular training courses for them and its staff. Seacare's establishment of affiliated clinics through SMMC allows SOS to extend its SMS to more members in the region, now covering Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam and China. Seacare maintains its ongoing contributions to the senior citizens near Seacare Building's vicinity and study awards offered to SOS members' dependants.

For their unending passion, Seacare can truly be commended! Well done, Seacare!

"We SOS and Seacare are indeed honoured and at the same time humbled to be nominated by the NTUC and to receive this prestigious award. This marks a milestone in Seacare's growth as a responsible and relevant Co-operative that adds value to the lives of the people we serve. With the commendation from the trade union movement, we are encouraged to do more, give more and serve more."

Seacare Chairman Mr Leow Ching Chuan



Citation for Seacare Co-operative Limited

"Seacare Co-operative Limited was jointly founded by the National Trades Union Congress and Singapore Organisation of Seamen in 1994. It comprises two holding arms - Seacare Holdings Private Limited and Seacare Foundation Pte Ltd.

Seacare's founding mission is to help and benefit Singapore seamen and their families through more work opportunities and appropriate investment projects.

Seacare and its group of companies are committed to supporting NTUC in fulfilling its social objectives. Jointly with SOS, Seacare donated \$500,000 to the NTUC Education and Training Fund in 2001. It also houses the Tripartite Centre for Fair Employment at its Seacare Building.

Two wholly-owned subsidiaries of Seacare Holdings Private Limited - Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd and Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd - practise age-friendly employment. They have between them more than 420 workers aged 50 and above. Of these, 117 are 62 years old or older.

Since 2006, Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd has been providing regular training and skills upgrading courses for workers. To date, 467 of its staff have undergone training at no cost to them.

Seacare Manpower is also an NTUC Membership Recruitment Agent. Since 2001, it has recruited 130,901 members for the General Branch.

Under the Seacare Medical Scheme, 700 local members of the SOS and their eligible dependants are able to obtain full health screening at the Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd (SMMC), a subsidiary of Seacare Foundation Pte Ltd, and full eye screening at SMMC's affiliated clinic. SOS's Filipino and Indonesian members and their dependants get free medical consultation and examination at SMMC's affiliated clinics in their respective countries.

In recognition of its outstanding contributions to the labour movement, the National Trades Union Congress is pleased to present Seacare Co-operative Limited with the Plaque of Commendation."



WE WILL OVERCOME THE CHOPPIER WATERS

In the recent May Day Rally, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong highlighted the current economic situation to the people, acknowledging the choppy waters ahead.

Reviewing 2007, PM Lee described it as a good year where many economic progresses were made, 234,900 jobs were created, retrenchment was at its lowest in 14 years and wage increase in the unionised sector was the highest since 2000.

The robust economy that we had last year is testament, that we can all "Do Well, Do Good, Do Together and Do More" for the year ahead.

PM Lee commented that this year's economic uncertainty, due to the sub-prime crisis in the United States would mean that priority has to be given towards gearing efforts to keep the economy competitive. However, the growing economies in the tourism, construction and marine engineering industries will cushion us from the effects of the US recession. To overcome the choppy waters, PM Lee stated that we should all keep in close touch with the situation in the US and react accordingly.

Our strong and unique tripartite system will enable us to overcome any hurdle that may head our way. The Government will be issuing out more than \$3 billion to Singaporeans in 2008. In order to reduce the effects of higher cost of living due to higher food prices, this year's Budget has included the Growth Dividends, Personal Income Tax Rebates, Medisave Top-ups, among many other measures that were aimed at helping lower and middle income Singaporeans to cope with the changes.

Secretary-General of NTUC, Lim Swee Say rationalised that the best way to help workers cope with the changes is through job creation. In order for us to lead a more meaningful life, it is important to keep unemployment at its low. In view of this, SG Lim mentioned that the NTUC aimed to do more to help more mature workers continue with their employment, beyond the official retirement age of 62. It is also important that help is rendered towards female Singaporeans, for them to return to the workforce. The efforts to realize this re-employment of mature workers and back-to-work women are already in place and these are not possible without the strong tripartite relationship that is present here in Singapore.

Together, the Government, Unions and Employers will continue to play an important role in helping workers tide through the phase and do well towards a competitive economy in the year ahead.

"Overall, however the US financial problems play out, I am confident of our ability to cope. The global environment is in flux, and we are sailing into choppy waters. But our economic fundamentals are sound and we are in a strong position. Let us gird ourselves and keep our spirits up. Together, we will overcome the challenges ahead, and continue improving our lives."

Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong

"In time to come, our vision for Singapore is to be one of the very few nations with triple achievement of full employment, higher growth rate compared to the global economy, and one of the highest employment rates for all ages and both genders of workers in the world. This triple achievement will not come easy. However, we have a better chance of succeeding than most countries and economies because of our unique strength in tripartism."

NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say





May Day Resolution 2008

ON THIS MAY DAY 2008, WE, IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Note that Singapore's economic fundamentals remain strong and the employment situation remains healthy in the face of a slowing global economy and rising worldwide inflation.

Recognise that the best way to sustain our economic growth, and help workers cope with the rising cost of living, is to enhance the competitiveness of our economy and further strengthen the employability, productivity and adaptability of our workforce.

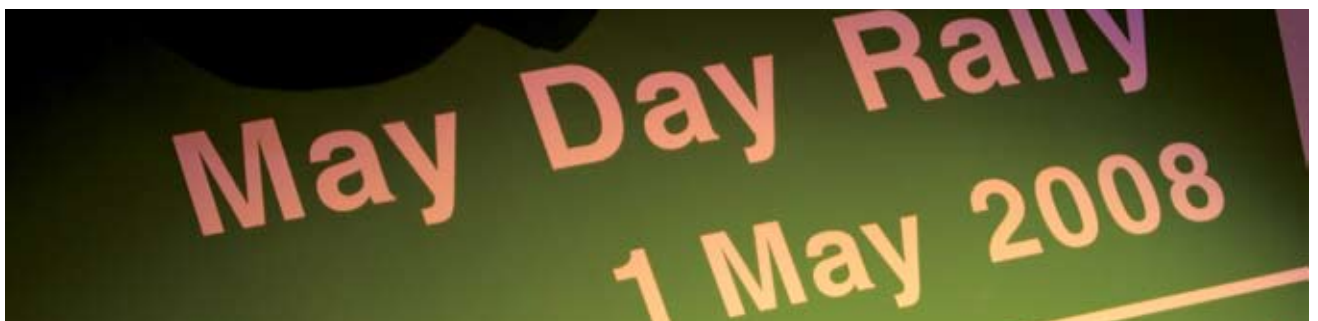
WE THEREFORE RESOLVE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR TRIPARTITE PARTNERS TO

- Continually upgrade and re-train our workforce to help boost current sectors and grow new sectors.
- Raise the employment rate of women and older workers by creating more flexible work options and re-employment opportunities.
- Improve the well-being and working conditions of low-wage workers by re-designing jobs, upgrading skills and increasing productivity, so that they too can have better jobs and better pay.
- Further enhance safety at the workplace and the health of our workers for a better quality work life.

WE FURTHER RESOLVE TO

- Leverage on the strengths of our NTUC Social Enterprises to help workers stretch their dollar and live a better life.
- Work together with all our affiliated unions and associations to nurture youth activists and build strong communities for a more inclusive Labour Movement, as we strive towards serving one million members of all collars, ages and nationalities by 2015.
- Re-affirm our solidarity with the international labour movement.
- Renew our strong symbiotic relationship with the People's Action Party.

On this May Day, we pledge to work together for a better and more meaningful life for all working people of Singapore.



NTUC REVEALS NEW



27 April 2008 was an eventful day where the NTUC unleashed its new friend, the new logo that replaces its 37-year-old predecessor which was highly recognised by its eight cogs and wheel.

The new U is representative of the Union's fresh perspectives and has managed to capture the different messages and meanings within its U hallmark. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong launched the new NTUC logo at the Downtown East, in the presence of some 1,500 ministers, unionists, tripartite partners and guests.

An Overview

The new logo serves to project new identity and aspirations that comes with a new tagline – "NTUC For U" as well as these accompanying messages.

Working for U: by ensuring good working conditions and a fair return for labour, and providing ways to train and upgrade the skills of working people

Caring for U: by providing good quality products and services at affordable prices that help to stretch the dollar for working people and

Fun for U: by offering high quality recreational facilities and services that are affordable and conveniently located for working people of all collars, all ages and all nationalities.

The italicised new U hallmark is also indicative of a contemporary, fresh design that blends in well with the current. Its unique features, such as the invisible U which is located between the small and big U, stands beside the working people and their families at work, live and play. This hallmark is also flexible in terms of its representation. Its adaptability in design promote the diversity of the Labour Movement and promotes a modern appeal to the youth, tying in well with the next generation working, living and at play in Singapore.

Keeping the Old Within the New

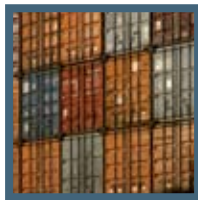
The passing of the old welcomes the new. Yet the values and traditions practised within the Union remains intact, to be passed on to the new generation. Within the New U, lies the old logo, which aims to better serve and deliver the commitment and vision that NTUC upholds.

"Our new look reflects our aspirations for the future – to be an inclusive and dynamic movement for all working people of Singapore. It shows our collective commitment to serve the workers and union members, and to stay united as one labour movement."

NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say



EXTERNAL AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT WORK PLANS FOR 2008 / 2009



The SOS External and Industrial Relations (IR) department has an array of work plans for the period spanning from 2008 to 2009. The change of name, from Industrial Relations to External and Industrial Relations, is a first step forward, to include the more enhanced work plans to move ahead with the department's goals and progress. Taking the lead from the previous year's performance, the department is confident that 2008 will be a year that will propel them forward to achieve their goals.

Below is a summary of the plans that the External and IR department has drawn out.

SOS EXTERNAL & INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS WORK PLAN FOR 2008 / 2009

SOS COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

* To constantly update the Singapore Flag Agreement, TCC new benchmark and IBF Agreement to meet the changing regulations

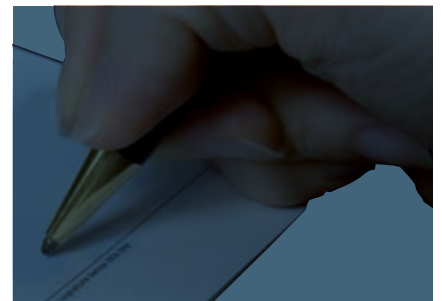


GLOBAL RELATIONS / CENTRIC

- * SOS will actively participate in ITF's review of FOC policy
- * To promote Bilateral Relations & Exchange Programmes
- * To monitor the ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006
- * To actively engage in the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare (ICSW)

AGREEMENT & SHIPBOARD SERVICES

- * To enhance Ship Visiting Programme
- * To develop more Agreement Services
- * To improve services in the Drop-In Centres



WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE NATIONAL CHINESE SEAMEN'S UNION TO HELP RESOLVE WAGE ISSUES

SOS IR Senior Manager Mr Mohamed Idris Bin Mohamed Ibrahim witnessed the safe repatriation of nine Filipino crew members and ensured that the wages owed to them were paid and issue resolve.

The crew members, who were working on board the Panama-flagged vessel, Ocean Frontier, had sought the help of the National Chinese Seamen's Union – an International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) affiliate, to settle the issue of unpaid wages. Some of the crew members were owed more than four months' salary. The Union contacted Mr Mohamed Idris to intervene when the vessel docked in Singapore.

On 27 May 2008, Mr Mohamed Idris personally met up with the seafarers and saw to it that their unpaid wages were settled before they left for home. The crew received their wages up to the end of April 2008 and they have been informed that the remaining wages for the month of May 2008 will be paid by the El Greco Ship Manning and Management Corp.

SOS CBA PROCESSING- MORE EFFICIENT; MORE INTEGRATED; MORE SEAMLESS

The upgraded IR module to be developed by Seacare Evolution Pte Ltd will take SOS's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) processing to another level of efficiency.

"We are constantly upgrading and looking for ways to be even more efficient and more integrated in the way we work," said Mr Kam Soon Huat.

To be released later this year, the upgraded software will further assist the IR team to better manage the life cycle of each CBA. For instance, the improved system will enable staff to peruse agreements and other documents related to each CBA.

"We are fine tuning the seamless, one stop approach in CBA processing. We want to future enhance productivity," said Mr Kam.

Built using the latest technology and a robust backend database engine, the IR module can reflect historical data based on shipping companies, vessels and funds in relation to the CBA that was signed. The information can then be used to further improve relation with shipping companies.

IR module is currently in its user-testing stages. User-testing and feedback cycle is now in progress.

SOS IRO MOHAMAD

DROPS BY....

In the months of April and May this year, a total of 24 vessels were visited by Industrial Relations Officer Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar.

The IRO, who is ever-ready to drop by the ships to find out more on the welfare of the members, aims to bring the Union closer to the members. As a representative of SOS, he feels that it is important to keep in touch with the members when their vessels come to call at the ports in Singapore, as the physical presence of someone who cares will bridge the bonds from Union to members. The visits provide the union with honest feedback, straight from the seafarers themselves.

Each visit, Mr Mohamad brings along cakes, posters, corporate planners and calendars. Aside from that, he also delivers some of the latest news to keep the seafarers updated with the real world.







SOS ATTENDS MUA CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY

International unionists from the seafarers, dockers and the Mining and Energy industries came together at Sydney Convention Centre from 7 April to 11 April 2008, to attend the 4th Quadrennial Conference organised by the Maritime Union of Australia.

The conference was graced by Deputy Prime Minister of Australia Ms Julia Gillard and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Mr Anthony Albanese, MP. Also included in the guest list were Mr David Cockroft ITF General Secretary and Mr Frank Leys, Secretary of ITF Dockers. Representing Singapore was Industrial Relations Senior Manager Mr Mohamed Idris Bin Mohamed Ibrahim. Over 150 guests from various countries such as China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Denmark, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Sweden, Netherland and America were present.

Besides taking stock of its past key achievements, the Conference also mapped out strategies ahead for the next four years focusing on main principles such as effectiveness, respect and influence; social and financial support, participative and empowered membership.

The conference also focused on bridging the unions globally, marshalling the strength of all dock workers and seafarers, with international speakers echoing the campaign on Port Of Convenience and Flag Of Convenience, and the need to put in place a database on all the four Global Network Terminals (GNT) – a project currently undertaken by MUA.

SOS COLLABORATES WITH AJSU TO HELP THE CREW MEMBERS OF THE TOPAZ (PANAMA)

SOS is always concerned with the welfare of all seafarers. Be they local or international seafarers, the Union is swift and stringent when it comes to dealing with matters pertaining to their rights and entitlements.

In a recent event, SOS worked together with the All Japan Seamen's Union (AJSU) as well as the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) to look into the issue of salary and loss of employment compensation which was highlighted by the 250 crew of The Topaz (Panama).

Two hundred of the crew members were repatriated at the Port of Yokohama in Japan after receiving their salary and compensation. The 50 remaining crew sailed to Singapore to be repatriated.

SOS Industrial Relations Senior Manager Mr Mohamed Idris Bin Mohamed Ibrahim, together with Capt R Maruyama from the Japan Seamen's Centre, were onboard the vessel when it docked in Singapore to witness the payment proceedings.

In an interview with Samudra, Mr Mohamed Idris said: "The Union does not take issues pertaining to the well-being of seafarers lightly. It is through awareness and the feedback given by the seafarers that the Union was able to extend our help.

SOS urges seafarers who are in any form of dispute or experiencing any unfair treatment with regards to wages, working conditions and welfare, to raise the issues to the Union."

NTUC ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL SENG HAN THONG TOUCHES BASE

Joining the SOS Exco and Standing Committee members as well as the Managers and Head of Companies of Seacare at Club@52 on 22 April 2008 was a special guest - Mr Seng Han Thong, NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and Centric Director, Union.

Also present were Mr Donovan Lau from the NTUC Youth Committee, representatives from the Membership Department Ms Joyce Kok and Ms Sharon Low, Mr Tan Wee How from Employment Enhancement Department, Ms Shirley Gwee from the Leadership Department and Ms Faridah Mahmood from the Industrial Relations Department.

It was with great honour for SOS and Seacare officials to have spent an evening to touch base with Mr Seng and the



representatives from NTUC. During the visit, Mr Seng shared his thoughts on the new NTUC logo, explaining the rationale behind the design and on how it has managed to encapsulate the new and the old, going together with the LM2011 as well as reiterate the notion of the 4Ds: Doing Good, Doing Well, Doing More and Doing Together.

As the active exchanges went on, questions on youth matters, welfare schemes, issues on managing ageing membership as well as the various channels that can be used to reach out to mature workers on their employment problems were brought up. Besides engaging one another in the discussion, the meet has also brought closer ties between SOS, Seacare and NTUC.



MEMBERS' DEPENDANTS APPRECIATE FREE HEALTH SCREENING



Dependants of SOS members are signing up to enjoy the complimentary basic health screening at the Singapore Maritime Medical Centre (SMMC) – a generous benefit offered in the Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS).

Samudra dropped by SMMC clinic at Tanjong Pagar on 4 June 2008 and found SOS member Mr Wee Jew Poh and his wife undergoing their health screening.

“There is no such Union that I know of in Singapore is as thoughtful as SOS. The Union not only takes care of me, but my wife as well. I really thank SOS for this benefit,” said the 77 year-old retired seaman.

His 67 year old wife added: “SOS has treated us well and has a soft spot for the retired members and their families. Even though my husband is retired, we still enjoy the different benefits, such as the three-day Penang trip. Now, even I can tap in and get my health in check through this medical scheme.”

The free health screenings have also raised the awareness on the importance of keeping their health in check for both Mr and Mrs Wee. To keep fit, Mr Wee believes in a daily regime of light exercises. He wakes up at 5.30am every Monday to Friday to go for his morning walks. Mr Wee also clocks in three sessions of tai chi to keep him relaxed and in balance with his health.

From 1 April 2008, each paid up member and their partner are entitled to two free basic health screenings and two free comprehensive eye examinations each under the current term of office, which will end on 16 November 2011. Each benefit must be utilised from 1 April 2008 to 31 December 2009; while the other, from 1 January 2010 to 16 November 2011. This is to encourage members to plan their health checks accordingly and optimize the free benefits within the four-year period.

Health Screening

The health screening is offered at the SMMC situated at The Amara and covers various areas of health checks such as the consultation and complete physical examination, biophysical



measurement, liver profile, endocrine profile, urinalysis, imaging studies, hepatitis profile as well as bone and joint profile. In addition to that, the free health screening also includes checks through the full blood count, lipid profile, kidney profile, general profile and a medical review. Upon completion of the health screening, beneficiaries are also entitled to a \$15 voucher that can be used for purchases at any Unity Pharmacy stores in Singapore.

Booking of Appointment

Qualified local members can book appointments for themselves and their dependants by calling SOS Welfare Division at 63795670.



This issue, Samudra will introduce some general tips and information on how best to keep you in the pink of health.

What is a Kidney Profile?

The free health screening offered to SOS members and their spouse, includes various health checks, one of which is the kidney profile.

The kidney profile is an analysis of the kidney function. It is a test that measures the blood urea nitrogen (BUN) and creatinine in a venous specimen. This analysis can detect kidney damages that are related to illnesses such as kidney stones, diabetes, hypertension and kidney infection.

Taking care of your kidneys

People with high blood pressure, diabetes or have a family history of kidney failure are more susceptible to develop kidney disease. It is important to understand how the kidneys function and what contributes to its health.

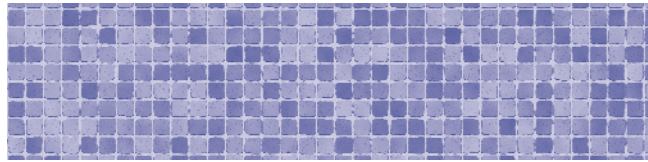
The kidneys function as a filter for our blood. As such, it is responsible for removing waste and excess water, moderating the amount of chemicals in our bodies.

Essentially, maintaining a fit and regular exercise regime is the key to healthy kidneys and body. Avoid smoking, alcohol, drugs and have a balanced diet. Reduce the amount of caffeinated drinks such as coffee, tea and soft drinks as they dehydrate the body and add stress to the kidneys, as they would have to work harder to remove toxins and fluids from the body when these wastes become dehydrated due to the effects of caffeine.

Lastly, top up on fruits and juices. Fruits help to remove bacteria from the urinary tract by preventing them from sticking to internal tissues that can result in infection. A few glasses of fruit juice can promote healthier kidneys and overall health.



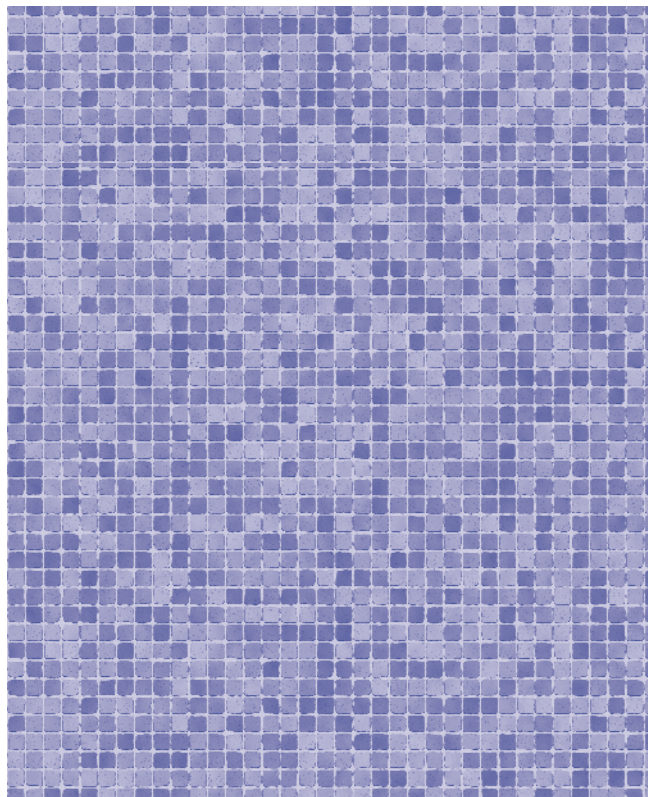
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SEACARE STAFF GETS MORE OUT OF GB MEMBERSHIP

“The initiative was done to encourage more Seacare staff to join the Union and be part of the Labour Movement. There have been many positive feedback, and I feel that the GB Membership Recruitment Drive has managed to showcase the benefits one will reap from being a member of the Union. Indeed, the Drive has provided the staff an avenue where they can actually see and learn more about the Union, and the benefits they will gain from being a member of SOS, through the interaction and explanation from our existing members.”

Mr Leow Ching Chuan, General Secretary of SOS.



A new taskforce has been formed to gather more keen individuals who are working under the Seacare Group of Companies, to join SOS under the General Branch (GB) membership.

An ongoing SOS (GB) Membership Recruitment Drive is in full swing till the end of August 2008. This Drive was initiated to reach out to the employees of the Seacare Group of Companies and has in place, a line-up of benefits that has been planned by the Union, exclusively for the Seacare staff.

All along, SOS has been receiving encouraging response with regards to new sign-ups, leading to its growing membership base. The Union has looked into ways and measures to improvise these benefits and enhance them to maximize the membership as well as to make it more appealing for others to join the Union. Working together with NTUC, SOS is aiming to gather more employees to be part of the Labor Movement.

This time, new GB members will get to enjoy some exciting perks from the Union upon their sign-up.

Each new member will get to enjoy a waiver of membership subscription fee for three full months! New members can also expect to receive a Welcome Gift - an NTUC FairPrice voucher worth \$15. To add to that, a contract workers' Medical Benefit Card issued by the Unit for Contract and Casual Workers (UCCW) will also be part of the benefits prepared for the new GB members.

In addition to these, any new member who signs up within this period will also be entitled to receive a year end gift. Upon membership approval from the NTUC Membership Department, new GB members who sign up between May and August 2008 are eligible for the following:

- **NTUC FairPrice Voucher worth \$10**
- **Four Grand Draws spanning across 4 months**
 - May 2008 1st Prize: 1,000,000 LinkPoints
 - June 2008 1st Prize: 1 Year Free Groceries (Capped at \$100 / week)
 - July 2008 1st Prize: 1 Year Free MRT/Bus Rides (Capped at \$50 / week)
 - August 2008 1st Prize: A Trip Round the World (5 destinations around the World)



- Earn Cashback Rebates from NTUC FairPrice and get great discounts at over 250 LinkPoints Gold Dining Outlets
- Get up to 25% off Shaw Movie Passes
- Enjoy 50% discount for NTUC Club Chalets
- Save Up to \$15 for visits to Wild Wild Wet & Escape Theme Park
- Savings Accounts with high interest rate of 2% per annum or more

NWC RECOMMENDS ONE-OFF SPECIAL LUMP SUM PAYMENT

The Singapore Government welcomes the National Wages Council (NWC)'s recommendation of a one-off special lump sum payment by companies to their rank-and-file workers, with heavier weightage for low wage workers, to further help them cope with the higher inflation this year.

It agrees with the NWC that this payment should take into account the Government's assistance measures and the company's ability to pay.

Another NWC's recommendation that received strong support is the granting sustainable built-in wage increases and making greater use of variable payments to reward workers. This will make our wage structure more flexible and responsive to sudden changes in the business environment, and will in turn

help our economy to remain competitive and achieve continued employment growth.

To enhance productivity, the NWC strongly urges the government, companies and workers/unions to work together in a concerted effort to improve productivity through innovation, job re-design and stepping up of the training of workers through the enhanced Continuing Education and Training (CET) system.

Another key highlight of the NWC is the strong support the Council gives to the re-employment of older workers beyond age 62. In this regard, the Government will work closely with the tripartite partners to help companies make appropriate adjustments and prepare for the introduction of the re-employment legislation by 2012.

"This year's NWC guidelines serve three objectives: Help companies cope with an uncertain business outlook, ensure worker will be fairly compensated and rewarded, and help low-wage workers cope with higher inflation."

– NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say



SEAFARERS' PROVIDENT FUND

The Seafarers' Provident Fund (SPF) is a term synonymous with "the shelter for your rainy days" for SOS members.

Since its inception in 2001, the SPF has continued to grow; bringing along with it an array of benefits. Starting with just 2,329 accounts, the Fund now boasts of a seven fold increase in the number of accounts.

With 15,971 accounts as of 2008, the SPF is poised to attract even more seafarers and shipping companies to contribute towards the Fund. In financial year 2007 / 2008, SOS members working onboard 514 vessels from over 66 shipping companies now hold the SPF account.

Rain or shine, the truth remains – seafarers have benefitted from the Fund as it not only serves as an umbrella for their retirement and rainy days, but also acts as a platform where they enjoy growth in their savings, from the attractive annual interest payment.

Introduced by SOS, the SPF was set up as a saving scheme to safeguard the members' future needs. It is catered for SOS members working onboard vessels that have Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Union.

The monies saved can be withdrawn when a seafarer reaches the age of 50 or above, and maintained the account for at least three years. Special withdrawal can also be made by the account holder or his dependant under circumstantial events such as in the case of permanent injury or death of the account holder. The SPF's saving plan also encourages seafarers to remain employed so that they can enjoy the gains from the interest rates applied yearly.

Seacare Thrift Pte Ltd is the main body that operates and administers the SPF. An Administrative Committee that comprises representatives from SOS, shipping companies and other organisations was formed to manage the scheme. Its track record of detailed administration through its professional management of the Fund has called on more shipping companies to place their trust on the scheme.

SOS member Mr Raja Md Said Bin Raja Md Shafik commented that the SPF scheme has been beneficial to the seamen and has encouraged him to put in more towards his sea career. "I started sailing in 1966 and back then, the scheme has yet to be introduced. Ever since SPF started, I felt more committed to my job and this encourages continuous employment with the company."

Others, such as Mr Wong Fuw Siong, said that the Fund has been helpful for seafarers like himself, because of its savings plan.

Clearly, the SPF has over the years, benefitted many seafarers who have remained grateful for the scheme. With its constant growth and stringent management of the Fund, SOS members can rest assured that their savings are in safe hands.



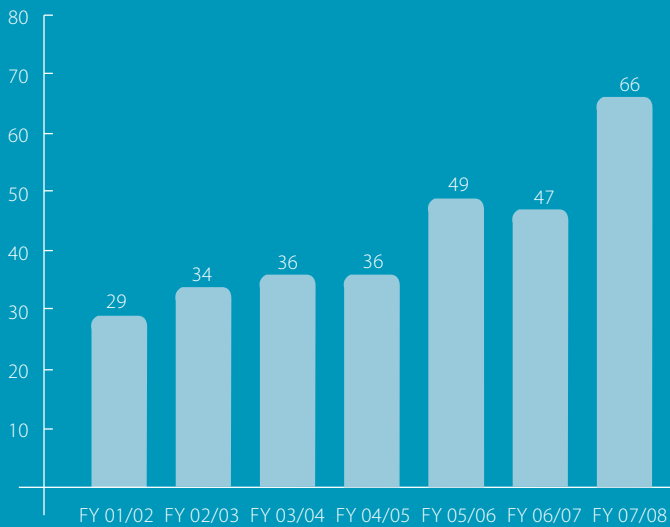
SOS member Mr Raja Md Said Bin Raja Md Shafik with SOS IR officials.



SOS member Mr Wong Fuw Siong, is appreciative of the SPF scheme.

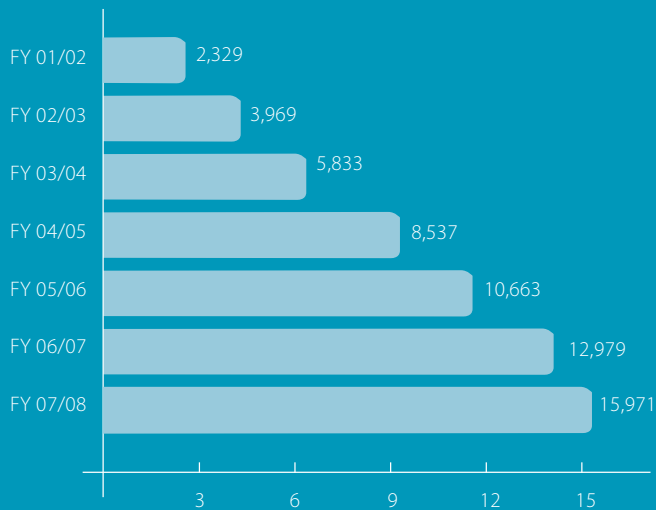
ACCOUNTS HIT CLOSE TO 16K

Number of Companies



For further information and enquiries on SPF, members can contact Seacare Thrift Pte Ltd at 52 Chin Swee Road, #08-00, Seacare Building, Singapore 169875 or visit www.sosea.org.sg. You can also call us at (65) 6379 5666, fax your questions on SPF to (65) 6836 3976 or email us at thrift@seacare.com.sg.

Number of A/C Holders



SOS PACKS A PUNCH!

Glistening faces in the hot sun, roaring cheers and stiff competition were evident throughout the last week of May.



They stretched, they flexed and they won. Team SOS kept the adrenaline pumping as they participated in the International Sports Week for Seafarers 2008, held from 26 May to 31 May. Organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), the International Sportsweek was well-received, as each participant sweat it out to get his team to the finals.

The SOS team put their muscles to good use, pushing themselves to the limits and cheered on one another throughout the various games. The sporting spirit and camaraderie made it a harder competition for all teams that participated. Most importantly, the highlight of the week was primarily the spirit of fun showcased by each team.

The SOS soccer team bagged the third placing while SOS member Lim Thizi Chee came in third, for the individual 100-metre sprint.

Held at the Yio Chu Kang Stadium and Sports Hall, the Sportsweek gathered many keen sports enthusiasts from the maritime community, to showcase their fitness and compete for the throne. All ships that were in port during the week were also invited to join in the fun and games.

Comprising of seven sports events – soccer, basketball, table-tennis, badminton, track and field items, telematch and of course, the crowd's favourite, the tug-of-war, the Sportsweek is a yearly event that was organised to encourage healthy recreational activities amongst seafarers. It is also a way in which the MPA shows its appreciation for the important contributions of seafarers towards the global maritime industry.

Indeed, the Sportsweek has not only promoted a healthy lifestyle, but has brought together seafarers of different nationalities and backgrounds, to meet and participate in the various friendly competitions, instilling the spirit of teamwork among one another.

An appreciation dinner was held especially for SOS members who had participated in the Sportsweek and did the Union proud. Twenty-one members turned up for the dinner at the Kintamani Indonesian Restaurant on 16 June 2008. Each member was given a door gift consisting of a track suit each. Also present at the dinner were SOS General Secretary Mr Leow Ching Chuan, SOS President Mr Tan Jing Bock and SOS Assistant Treasurer Mr David Sim. Mr Leow commended the good team spirit showcased by the members and the camaraderie shared among them.







HOUSEWIVES TAKE THE DAY OFF...

The ladies have left their men at home. No, not for good, but for an afternoon of fun, food and entertainment – just for them.

Scarlet City at the Ang Mo Kio Hub welcomed some 90 home-makers as they made their way there to spend the Housewives' Gathering together.

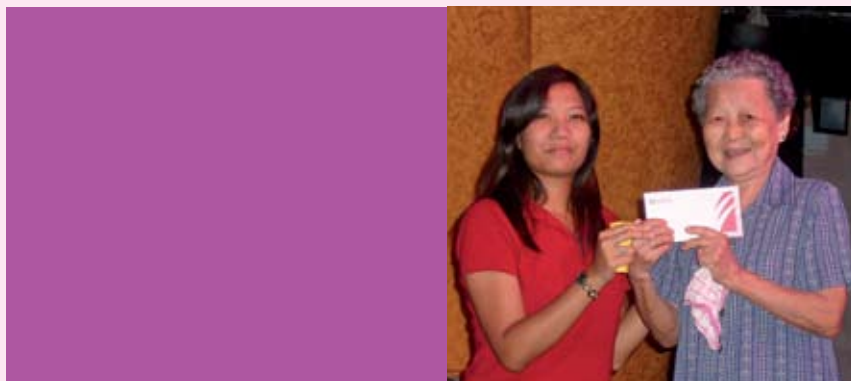
The Housewives' Gathering, organised by SOS especially for its members' spouses, took place on Saturday, 26 April 2008. The day began in full energy, as housewives chatter in excitement, at what was in store for them. Make-up demonstration and grooming session were held giving the ladies tips to keep themselves looking the best. A member received a free "mini-makeover" as she volunteered to be the model for the make-up demonstration.

The event, which commenced at 2pm, also showcased recreational activities such as belly-dancing as well as modern and Chinese traditional dance items that were put up to entertain the crowd.

The ladies also dug in to the hi-tea buffet spread. It was a day off healthy diets, as they willingly sink in their teeth to the wonderful delights prepared for them!

A yearly event, the Housewives' Gathering never failed to engage the ladies and children with fun and games and serves as a platform for socialising and forging new bonds with one another. This year, a total of 59 housewives and 31 children were present.

As the day drew to an end, 20 participants received lucky draw prizes comprising of NTUC FairPrice vouchers.

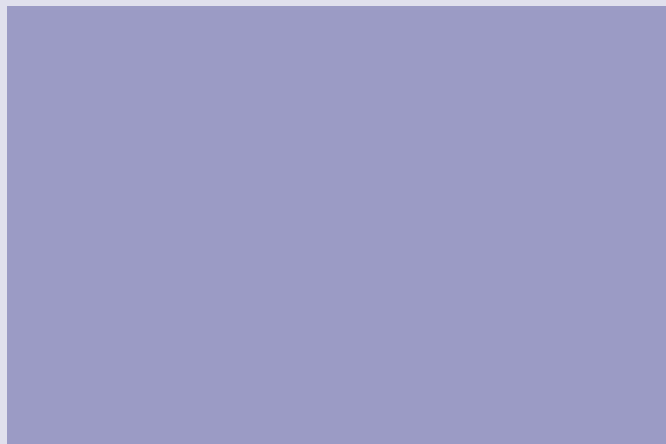


EXTENDING CARE THROUGH HOME VISIT

When it comes to welfare, SOS does not restrict itself to just caring for the well-being of its members and their families. The Union also extends its concern to the community at large. On 22 May 2008, representatives of SOS visited the Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) to spend some time with the residents there.

Leading the team was Mr Tan Jing Bock, Chairman, SOS Welfare Committee and four Exco members; Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar, Mr David Lim, Mr See Boon Kwang, Mr Nazarudin Nandok. Representing the Welfare Committee was Mr Ramjeet Jadoh. The SOS team arrived at the Home shortly before lunch time to prepare and set up a buffet style lunch especially for the residents. A total of 120 residents joined in a buffet spread, served by Mr Tan and the Committee members.

The brief meet and greet session at AWWA was meaningful as it gave SOS the opportunity to reach out to the community and bridge that special bond between the Union and the residents.



COMING EVENTS



Tombola Night

Date: 22nd August 2008



Study Grant Presentation

Date : 6th September 2008

Venue : NTUC Auditorium, Level 7, NTUC Centre

World Maritime Day Celebration

Date : September 2008

Venue : Club@52



SOS/Seacare Members' Night

Date: 27th September 2008

Venue: Club@52

◇◇◇◇ WHAT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN... ◇◇◇◇

On page 18 of the Feb – Mar 2008 issue of Samudra, we featured a quote from our member Mr Mohd Sharizal. It should have been Mr Hassan Bin Ibrahim. We apologise for the mistake.



Seacare Focus



SMMC - SERVING THE NEEDS OF SEAFARERS IN SHANGHAI

The healthcare needs of the maritime industry are unique and Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd (SMMC) knows that well.

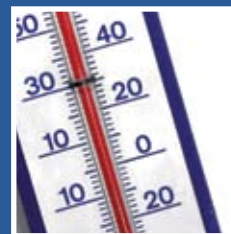
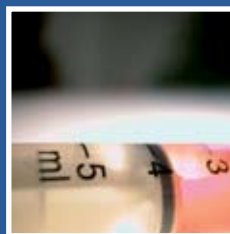
As a healthcare provider which distinguishes itself by specializing in maritime healthcare services, SMMC in Shanghai has what it takes to understand and meet the medical needs of its core group of clients in the shipping community.

International seamen calling at the ports of Shanghai can now be assured of quality, efficient and fast-tracked services specifically catered for them at the SMMC in Shanghai.



“We understand that shorter port stay and restricted port access can deter seafarers from receiving timely medical attention. We are also in the position to advise shipowners of mandatory vaccinations and health checks for their seafarers. Thus SMMC in Shanghai tailor our services according to the maritime needs.”

Dr Chia Yih Woei, CEO, SMMC





Being In Tune with Seafarers' Needs

"The seafarers' healthcare needs are our priority. Every seafarer who seeks medical treatment at SMMC in Shanghai will be given special attention, to ensure that their needs are promptly met," Dr Chia assures.

With a team of professionally-trained senior physicians and support staff who work round the clock, seafarers will be treated with precise care. Be it a short outpatient treatment or an ailment that requires a longer term care, the in-house specialist services that range from X-ray, laboratory and pharmaceutical services to orthopedics, urology and surgery, are also available should the need arises.

Delivering Our Medical Services To You

Shipping companies that have their vessels calling at the ports of Shanghai can now rest assure that a 24-hour medical service is available for their crew members.

Ship call consultation can also be done should the need arises. The fast and efficient transfer via our dedicated ambulance services answers all calls with regards to the shipping of seafarers who are in need of medical attention. The management of medical referrals and crew hospitalisation are also part of the services offered at SMMC in Shanghai.

Seacare's Asia Healthcare Network

Seacare has also expanded its operations in Asia by the appointment of carefully chosen affiliated clinics in this region. SMMC affiliated clinics are found in Jakarta (Indonesia), Manila (Philippines), Cebu City (Philippines), Imus Cavite (Philippines), Iloilo City (Philippines), Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam) and Shanghai (China). Through this healthcare network, clients can enjoy quality medical care for their sailors in the region.

Our Maritime Healthcare Services

- Office Consultation and Ship Call Consultation
- Medical Referral and Crew Hospitalisation Management
- Imaging Facilities including X-ray and Ultrasounds
- Pre-employment Medical Examination for Seamen
- Vaccination and International Travel Advisories
- Medical evacuation of sick crew from ship to shore
- Medical repatriation of crew to home country
- Dental services
- Medical specialist services

Should you require more information on the services provided at SMMC in Shanghai, or need assistance with regards to healthcare issues when your ship visit the ports of Shanghai, please contact us at:

SMMC Singapore

165 Tanjong Pagar Road #04-19 The Amara
Singapore 088539
Tel : 62227728 or 62222961
Fax : 62246387
Email : smmc@seacare.com.sg

JOBS FOUND THROUGH



The line, "I found a job," was probably the buzz word flying around the venues where Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd conducted a series of recruitment drives.

The recruitment drive, aimed at providing job placements for individuals seeking to return to the workforce and for those seeking part-time and flexible working arrangements attracted 74 jobseekers for job placements in schools during the month of April at South East Community Development Council (CDC).

Another mass recruitment drive held at the NTUC Centre on 27 May 2008, organised in partnership with National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and Women's Development Secretariat (WDS), saw more than 300 jobseekers registering for positions ranging from administrative, technical and operations support. Seacare Manpower also held a recruitment roadshow on 12 to 14 June 2008 to reach out to the heartlands of Jurong East.

If you are looking for part-time and full-time placements, call Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd hotline at 63795632, or visit 52 Chin Swee Road #06-00 Seacare Building, Singapore 169875. Email your resume to manpower@seacare.com.sg or fax: 68366285.

Seacare Manpower Gets Grants For Employment Efforts

Seacare Manpower promptly responded to the Government and labour movement's call to recruit new workers on part time and flexible work arrangement and create jobs for the mature workers.

For its swift efforts, Seacare Manpower became one of the companies to receive grants under the Flexi-Works! Programme as well as the Advantage Scheme.



SEACARE MANPOWER

"We met the criteria for both schemes and were successful in getting the grants. This shows our sincerity in wanting to create more jobs and our ability to translate words into action. Creating jobs is the mission of Seacare Manpower."

Managing Director Mr Lee Van Chong

Flexi-Works! Programme

Developed by the Women's Development Secretariat (WDS) and NTUC.

Scheme offers a grant of up to \$100,000.

This grant is given to support companies' efforts to hire new workers on a part-time or flexible work arrangements. Workers to be recruited must not have been in the workforce for at least the past six months and must be aged 35 and above.

Advantage Scheme

Developed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), in partnership with its Tripartite Partners, NTUC and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF).

Scheme offers initial grant of up to \$20,000.

This grant is given to companies with at least 20 mature workers, who are Singapore Citizens or permanent residents, aged 55 years and above. It is given to support companies' efforts in the recruitment of new workers aged 40 years and above, retention of existing workers aged 55-61 and re-employment of existing staff aged 62 and above. This is to encourage companies to have early adoption of the re-employment policy while they develop projects to facilitate the re-employment of their mature workers.



SEACARE ENVIRONMENTAL SECURES NEW PROJECT



Come 1st May 2008, Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd will commence its cleaning services to East Asia Institute of Management. EASB's new establishment is a campus located at 9 Ah Hood Road in Balestier.

The two-year contract will include the provision of manpower from Seacare Environmental to ensure that the institute's cleanliness is maintained.

These services include the provision of one team leader who will facilitate in the management of cleaners for six days a week. Four full-time cleaners will also be mobilised to the campus daily. In addition to that, two part-time cleaners will render their services to the school on weekdays, starting 4.30pm to 8.30pm.

This is not the first time that Seacare Environmental and EASB have collaborated. Another school under EASB, located at the Henderson Road, is also under the care and maintenance of Seacare Environmental. EASB at Henderson Road covers an area of 74, 400 square feet and contains 21 classrooms of varying sizes, ranging from those that can accommodate 40 students to others that can accommodate up to 60 students.

Besides the basic cleaning and maintenance works, Seacare Environmental also provides a monthly high pressure wash of the surrounding driveway. This is to further ensure that the environment is clean and conducive for the students studying at the new campus as well as the staff working at EASB.

Certainly, the new project has brought Seacare Environmental to another level. In time to come, Seacare Environmental, which also provides pest control, mural cleaning, restoration of mobile or granite floorings, professional carpet or upholstery care and preventive maintenance as well as grass-cutting services, hopes to reach out and spread its services across more facilities and establishments.



THREE CHEERS FOR MR CHER!



For the last four years, Mr Cher Nghee Hwa has been ensuring that the Seacare Building is spick and span. Employed as a cleaner by Seacare Environmental Pte Ltd, Mr Cher takes charge of the cleanliness and hygiene aspects of the building.

On 27 April 2008, he was on stage to receive his well-

deserved May Day Model Workers' Award from the Guest-of-Honour, Acting Minister for Manpower, Mr Gan Kim Yong. His wife, Mrs Cher, was there to witness the proud moment.

General Manager of Seacare Environmental, Mr Alan Toh describes Mr Cher as someone who goes beyond his call of duty and showcase a positive attitude at work. Clearly, the 55-year-old grandfather who is still as fit as a fiddle loves to help his colleagues and described them as warm and nice people.

"He goes the extra mile, even helping to remove the heavy barrels of drinks from the Club, every morning," said Mr Toh.

Described as hardworking and responsible worker, the efficient cleaner is particular when it comes to his work. He ensures that every corner, every nook and crook is clean and even stays back after his normal working hours, to ensure that the building, especially the club, is in tip-top condition.

"Working here is very good, my manager is helpful and I enjoy working within the Seacare family here. Everyone here is my friend," said the Model Worker.

For all the hard work he has put in, the Model Worker deserves the incentive trip to Bangkok and Pattaya, Thailand. Congratulations Mr Cher!



We Specialise Ins and Outs of Cleaning

Bringing Quality Service to Your Doorstep!

- ◆ Daily cleaning and maintenance programme for commercial/industrial buildings, hotels, condominiums and residential units
- ◆ Professional carpet care and preventive maintenance
- ◆ External wall and mural cleaning
- ◆ Restoration of marble/granite flooring
- ◆ Carpet upholstery maintenance programme
- ◆ Pest control and fumigation, grass cutting



seAcAre

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52 Chin Swee Road,
#05-00 Seacare Building
Singapore 169875

Tel: 6379 5610

Fax: 6836 3203

Email: environmental@seacare.com.sg

Website: www.seacare.com.sg



SMMC Brings Quality Medical Services to Shanghai



We Serve
with CARE



OUR MARITIME HEALTHCARE SERVICES

- Office Consultation and Ship Call Consultation
- Medical Referral and Crew Hospitalisation Management
- Imaging Facilities including X-ray and Ultrasounds
- Pre-employment Medical Examination for Seamen
- Vaccination and International Travel Advisories
- Medical evacuation of sick crew from ship to shore
- Medical repatriation of crew to home country
- Dental services
- Medical specialist services

SMMC Affiliated Clinics

SMMC Singapore

165 Tanjong Pagar Road
#04-19 The Amara
Singapore 088539
Tel : (65) 6222 7728
(65) 6222 2961
Fax : (65) 6224 6387

SMMC Shanghai

Room 509, Apollo Building
No. 1440 Middle YanAn Rd,
Shanghai
Tel : (86-21) 6133 1878
Fax : (86-21) 6133 1879

Indonesia

SMMC / Klinik Baruna
Jln. Cikini Raya
No. 60 R/S Jakarta 10330
Tel : (62-21) 391 8730
Fax : (62-21) 315 1065

Singapore

NEW Optometry & Ocular Care
Centre
300 Margaret Drive
Singapore 149302
Tel : (65) 6471 1771

SMMC / Galenus Clinic Inc.

3rd Floor, Ferguson Park
Tower, M.H. Del Pilar cor. A
Flores St.Ermita,
Manila 1000, Philippines
Tel : (63-2) 528 4185
Fax : (63-2) 536 9716

Vietnam

SMMC / Australian Clinic
& Pathology Diagnostics
273-275 Ly Thai To Street, Ward 9.
District 10, Ho Chi Minh City
Tel : (84-8) 834 9941/42
Fax : (84-8) 834 9940

Philippines

SMMC / Micah Medical Clinic and
Diagnostic Laboratory
3rd Floor Marc Building, 1971 Taft
Avenue, Malate, Manila, Philippines
Tel : (63-2) 536 5289 / 536 5900
Fax : (63-2) 536 5280

SMMC / Ilano's Medical & Dental Clinic

Ilano Bldg I, units 4,5 and
6, Nueno Avenue, Imus
Cavite, Philippines
Telefax : (63-46) 471 3428 /
471 5051

Shanghai

Seacare@Shanghai
10F, No. 2 Building, No. 259
Xi Kang Rd, Shanghai
Tel : (86-21) 3222 0949
Fax : (86-21) 6289 2983

SMMC / Gillamaes Diagnostic & Medical Laboratories Inc.

Don Gil Garcia St.
Capitol Site Cebu City,
6000 Philippines
Tel / Fax : (63-32) 416 6000

SMMC/ Medicus Daignostic Center & Medical Clinics (5 branches)

Mezzanine Floor, AJL Build-
ing, Gen Luna St.
Iloilo City
Telefax : (63-33) 337 8547