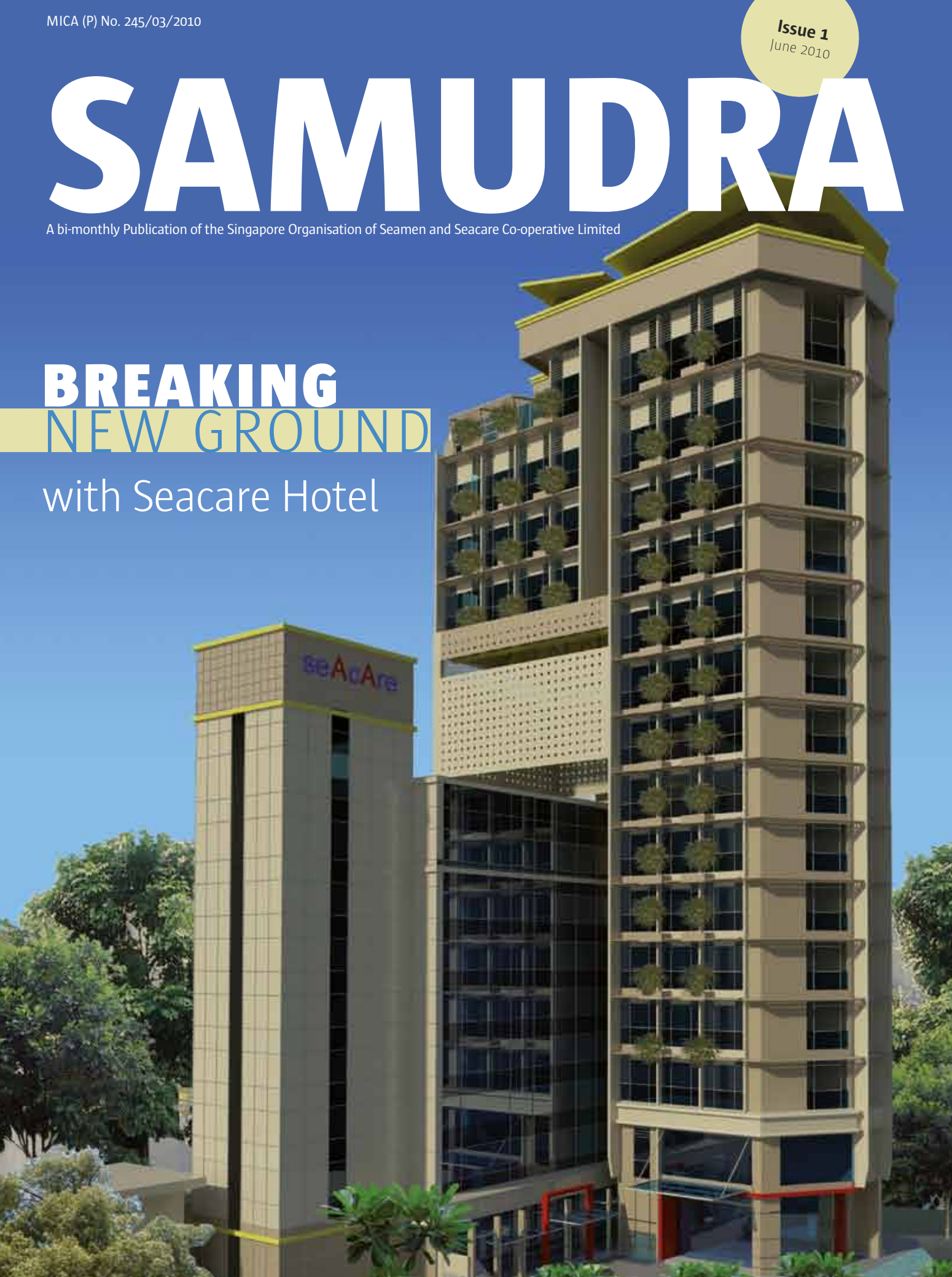


SAMUDRA

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

BREAKING NEW GROUND

with Seacare Hotel



Issue 1
June 2010

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HIGH FOREIGN MEMBERSHIP

is a Strength

SOS has the vision of foresight to extend its membership to cover all nationalities.

“You are very smart. If you have decided to just focus on Singaporeans, you would have lost out. As a result, you are now still relevant and still growing your asset,” said Mr Lim Swee Say, NTUC Secretary-General, at the informal meeting with the SOS and Seacare leaders on 3 June 2010.

While some unions focus on the difficulty in recruiting foreign members, SOS embrace the challenge and find out what the foreign members’ needs are to draw them in. His advice to the Union is to continue to be more pro-active, grow and be relevant.

“We cannot afford to let any sector in Singapore go unnoticed. Foreign membership is a strength of SOS and not a weakness at all. So keep up the good work in meeting the needs of foreign members.”

NTUC, as labour movement, is targeting to hit the 1 million membership. “It is not easy. Assuming that we continue to do more of the same thing, we will not be able to grow,” Mr Lim pointed out.



Thus the labour movement is going all out to be All CAN – all Collars, all Ages, all Nationalities.

“We have combed all over and have not found a labour movement that has succeeded in representing all CAN. NTUC die die must try. SOS is already ahead with many of your members signing on lifelong membership. And you represent all nationalities.”

Speaking on one of his pet topics, Mr Lim pointed out that productivity, or best defined by his signature slogan “cheaper, better, faster”, in a nutshell, is about finding where the bottlenecks are in each company and each work processes. Productivity, he highlighted, is about breaking the bottleneck.

On re-employment, the NTUC Chief shared that 85% of unionised companies already said yes to offering jobs to employees reaching the retirement age, thus enabling more people to continue working beyond the current statutory retirement age of 62, up to 65 in the first instance and, later, up to 67.

The onus is on the employers to provide the jobs when workers choose to work longer. “With longer life expectancy, it is good to work as long as you can,” Mr Lim underscored.

NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say had an informal touch base session with SOS and Seacare leaders. It gave an opportunity for the Union and Co-operative to share with the NTUC Chief their latest projects and their progress. Mr Kam Soon Huat, SOS General Secretary and Ms Shena Foo, Seacare Group General Manager, gave Mr Lim a snapshot of SOS' and Seacare's benefits.



SOS AND SEACARE

Our Benefits

Seafarers' Provident Fund

A savings scheme established in 2000 for seafarers to promote continuous employment and loyalty.

Internet Seafarers' Provident Fund (iSPF)

An internet portal for SPF members to check your account, submit online withdrawal and more anywhere, anytime.

Seacare Medical Scheme

A host of medical benefits including free health screening and eye examination for qualified local SOS members and their dependents; and staff of local shipping companies.

Qualified foreign members get to enjoy free 12 basic medical consultation and examination benefits as well as medicine reimbursement benefit in SMMC affiliated clinics in Indonesia, Philippines, China, UAE, Vietnam and Singapore.

Seacare Maritime Training Scheme

The Scheme, which caters to training, re-training and pre-sea training needs of ratings, provides SOS CBA vessels with quality seafarers.

Seacare Sailors' Home Scheme

SOS members get to enjoy subsidised accommodation in Seacare Sailors' Home located at Sunshine Garden Condominium in Manila.

Seacare Drop-In Centre for International Seafarers

Located at Pasir Panjang Terminal Centre Building, the centre offers international seafarers services and facilities such as internet access, refreshments and many more at no charge.





“WHAT YOU DO IN SEACARE AND SOS IS SOMETHING OF GREAT INTEREST TO THE LABOUR MOVEMENT. WE ARE WATCHING YOUR GROWTH AND HOW THROUGH THE CO-OPERATIVE YOU HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE. YOU ARE RIGHT ON TRACK AND I AM VERY HAPPY TO HEAR THE GOOD PROGRESS YOU ARE MAKING.” – MR LIM SWEE SAY, NTUC SECRETARY-GENERAL

MOVING FORWARD



More training, more collective bargaining agreements (CBAs), retain local membership and enhance welfare benefits – these are the four main areas which SOS will be focusing on in years ahead.

In his presentation at the dialogue session with NTUC Secretary-General, Mr Kam Soon Huat, SOS General Secretary, shared that to promote lifelong learning and improve productivity, the Union will be playing a pro-active role in encouraging

members to attend training and upgrading courses with organisations such as e2i.

“SOS will be organising more seminars and talks to keep members informed on labour market trends as this would encourage them to re-skill and up-skill so that they can stay relevant and effective in their work,” said Mr Kam. “We want to help our members to be Cheaper, Better and Faster.”

In the area of welfare benefits, the Union will continue to review the welfare benefits provided and to ensure that they are of relevance to their current needs.

To retain local membership, SOS will actively add value to the members with the enhanced welfare benefits and introduce new perks to members.

In line with NTUC’s membership drive to recruit more members, the Union is aiming to secure more CBAs which will lead to an increase in the number of SOS members.

“The bottomline is – we want to give our full support to achieve LM 2011,” Mr Kam said.



Recovering Strongly, Looking Ahead

“Thanks to the efforts of Singaporeans, our economy stayed resilient during the global economic crisis last year. We were hard-hit, especially in early 2009. But unions, employers and government worked closely to help firms and workers ride the storm. Our focus on saving jobs paid off. Singapore’s employment actually grew amidst the downturn, a remarkable achievement.”

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong made this point in his May Day Message this year. Below we highlight excerpts of his message.

Firms To Be At Forefront of Productivity Effort

“They need to be well-managed, and focus on quality, not quantity. They need to restructure their own organisations – cut waste, streamline processes and automate routine work. We live in a world where firms have to constantly innovate and invent new products, fight for market share and strike out into new, unfamiliar territories. There are numerous ways for businesses to do things “Cheaper, Better, Faster”. Only when the firm is in the right business and is operating efficiently, will its workers be able to work productively.”

Worker Upgrading – A Marathon

“To support this effort, workers need to update and improve their skills, pick up new abilities, and achieve greater mastery at their jobs. Worker upgrading is a marathon without a finish line. Singaporeans are already working hard, and it is important to make every working hour count. During the downturn last year, workers actively attended training programmes. We must keep up such efforts now that the economy is growing again.”

\$5.5 Billion to Improve Productivity

“The Government will do its part too. We will spend \$5.5 billion over the next 5 years to boost productivity. We are building a first-class Continuing Education and Training (CET) system, which will do for adults what our schools and post-secondary institutions do for our young. We will provide tax benefits, grants and training subsidies to support skills development, innovation and economic restructuring. We are also raising foreign worker levies, to encourage businesses to improve their productivity and not rely excessively on cheaper foreign workers.”



Prime Minister's MAY DAY MESSAGE

Government's Special Attention on Low Wage Workers

“The Government will pay special attention to low wage workers. We have enhanced the Workfare Income Supplement and raised its income limit from \$1,500 to \$1,700. The new Workfare Training Scheme will encourage employers to send workers for retraining, and workers to complete their training programmes. Workers should take this opportunity to develop new and deeper skills, and contribute more value in their jobs, or move to higher value jobs.”

No Substitute for Hard Work, Ingenuity and Enterprise

“Our union leaders understand what Singapore’s prosperity, and our workers’ well-being, depend upon. They know that there is no substitute for hard work, ingenuity and enterprise. They have done much to help workers understand the economic trends affecting them, and to encourage workers to go for retraining and upgrading.

The Government will continue to give the unions full and mutual support in our tripartite efforts. We must maintain our cohesive spirit, in order to meet our goals for the next decade. We have to work together, uphold tripartism, focus on productivity, and give special attention to low wage workers. Then can we improve workers’ lives and sustain inclusive growth for all over the long term.”

From **UPTURNING THE DOWNTURN** to Riding the Upturn

This time last year, we were in the midst of the worst economic downturn in decades. Our rallying call was to “Upturn the Downturn” – cut costs to save jobs so as to avoid massive retrenchment and prevent a rapid rise in unemployment; as well as to be more ready to bounce back when the global economy turns around.

We have done remarkably well during the global downturn. Our challenge now is to do remarkably well again as we ride the global upturn.”



In the following excerpts of his May Day Message, NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say shows us how.

CHEAPER, BETTER, FASTER

“Post-recession, the global economic landscape will continue to transform. Countries that are cheaper are getting better. China, India, Vietnam and many others no longer compete on lower price alone but also on higher capability. Likewise, countries that are better are becoming cheaper. The US and European countries are faced with high unemployment. They are forced to become more cost-effective to create growth and attract jobs.

To compete in this new world, we have no choice but to be a CBF economy – Cheaper, Better and Faster. This is aligned with the call by the Economic Strategies Committee for Singapore to focus on Skills, Innovation, and Productivity.”

IDENTIFYING AND BREAKING BOTTLENECKS

“Many ask, What is productivity? Simply put, it is about maximising ‘useful’ outputs and minimising ‘wasteful’ inputs. And this is best done by identifying bottlenecks and breaking them.

For a production worker, his performance may be limited by bottlenecks in quality and packaging of raw materials, layout and design of production flow, or quality management. The factory will have to identify and break the bottlenecks for the workers to increase volume with higher quality.

For a sales assistant, her performance may be limited by bottlenecks in product offering and mix, product knowledge and display, or service standard. The store will have to identify and break the bottlenecks for the staff to generate more sales.

For an enterprise, its growth may be limited by bottlenecks in financial capital, market positioning, branding or capability. The enterprise will have to identify and break the bottlenecks to capture a bigger market share.”

BE A NATION OF BOTTLENECK BREAKERS

“Achieving a productivity growth of two to three per cent every year for the next 10 years will not be easy. But it is possible. We have done it before, and we must do it again. This time round, our productivity revival must be embraced by all sectors of the economy, all enterprises and all workers.

As we strive for incremental improvement in everything we do, we must also strive for quantum leaps in as many sectors and enterprises.

Above all, we must share the gains with workers. Only then will productivity and innovation be sustainable and inclusive. Only then will we become ‘a nation of bottleneck breakers’.”



SOS/SEACARE

extends their heartiest
congratulations to



Brother Teo Siong Seng

Managing Director,
Pacific International Lines (Pte) Ltd

on being conferred the Upturn the
Downturn Award at the May Day Dinner
on 29 April 2010



Celeste Holding Pte Ltd

on being conferred the Plaque of
Commendation Award at the May Day
Dinner on 29 April 2010



Hong Lam Marine Pte Ltd

on being conferred the May Day CBF Model
Partnership Award at the May Day CBF Model
Partnership Awards Ceremony on 29 May 2010



SOS AND FKSU

Forge Close Ties

SOS welcomed unionists from the Federation of Korean Seafarers' Union (FKSU) when they were in Singapore from 24 to 28 May 2010.

The visit by FKSU provided opportunities between the two unions toward a deeper understanding of each other, for the exchange of ideas and the sharing of views. The outcome further strengthened ties with FKSU whom SOS have enjoyed strong bonds with all these years.

During the meeting held at Seacare Building, SOS Officials led by General Secretary, Mr Kam Soon Huat and FKSU delegates deliberated over issues ranging



over the years and future challenges faced by the maritime industry in the Asia region. SOS also shared developments of Seacare Co-operative's businesses, its social mission and how it has benefited members.

Unionists from both organisations agreed to maintain strong ties and to tap on each other's strengths for improvement of seafarers' welfare in the region.

from developments in each union's structure; new programmes and benefits for members; major milestones achieved



SOS also arranged for FKSU delegates to visit NTUC's International Relations Department; toured to Singapore's two new integrated resorts; and to "tuck" in fine Singapore hospitality.

Mr Bang Dong Sik, President,
Federation of Korean Seafarers' Union

Mr Kim Pil Doo, President,
STX Pan Ocean Seafarers' Union

Mr Seo Young Ki, President,
Korea Trawl-net Seamen's Union

Mr Yeom Kyeong Doo, President,
Korea Ocean-going Industrial Union

Mr Chung Tae Kil, President,
Korea Purse seine Seamen's Union

Mr Ha Sung Min, President,
Hanjin Shipping Seafarers' Union

Ms Kim Hae Kyoung, Coordinator
Representative, Federation of Korean Seafarers' Union

SOS LEADERS AT ITF APRC & APSRC Meetings

Organised by the host union – Associated Marine Officer's And Seamen's Union of the Philippines – Philippine Transport and General Workers Organisations – International Transport Workers Federation (AMOSUP-PTGWO-ITF), over 70 delegates were seen at the ITF Asia Pacific Seafarers' Regional Committee (APSRC) and the Asia Pacific Regional Committee (APRC) meetings held from 12 to 14 May 2010 in Manila, Philippines.

Comprising seafarer member organisations from the region, countries represented included Australia, Burma, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Singapore and Taiwan.

SOS was represented by General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat, Executive Secretary Mr Daniel Tan and Vice President Mr Mohamad B Abu Bakar.

In addition to members from the maritime industry, APRC's membership



includes members from all other transportation sectors within the ITF – Dockers, Railway, Inland Navigation, Civil Aviation and Road Transportation.

The ITF APSRC and APRC meets annually in between ITF Congresses,

to discuss and resolve relevant issues within the different sectors, elect the regional chairperson and vice-chairperson following sub-regional classifications and sectoral representations (including women's group) and determine regional representation in ITF's Executive Board.

Issues such as the 'Global Economic Crisis', 'Climate Change', 'Education' and 'HIV / Aids' were discussed at the APRC meeting and 'Piracy and Armed Robbery', 'Criminalisation', 'ILO Ratifications and Developments' and 'Year of The Seafarer' at the APSRC.

Resolutions adopted by the regional committees have been submitted to the Congress for implementation. The 42nd ITF Congress will be held in Mexico in August this year.

Mr David Cockroft, ITF General Secretary, Mr Eduardo Chagas, Overall Regional Coordinator and Mr Mahendra Sharma, Asia Pacific Regional Secretary were among the ITF top officials in attendance.





JOINT EFFORT

TO RECLAIM UNPAID WAGES

US\$ 49,000 recovered



For nine of its Indonesian and Myanmar crew members, their despondent facial expressions said it all as the seafarers were owed salaries ranging from seven months to over a year on Korean cargo vessel – Maritime Queen.

Following a complaint launched with the ITF in Korea and the Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) by crew members against their ship owner, a cohesive and coordinated joint effort ensued with the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) and Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) joining the fight to help the helpless crew members reclaim their wages.

After strong urgings to the ship owner to settle his crew claims, JSU and the ITF Inspector in Korea remitted the crew's salaries through ITF contact in Singapore. The balances of additional wages were paid out through local crew manning agents after the crew's repatriations on 18 and 19 April 2010.



Their visit came as a breath of fresh air, as Mr Mohamad B Abu Bakar, SOS Vice President and SMOU representatives arrived on hand to personally hand the crew their owed wages on 16 April 2010 when the vessel docked in Jurong Port. It was a sweet victory celebrated by all as beaming faces and signs of relief were the order of the day.

4TH SEACARE QUALITY RATING TRAINING GRADUATION+



SMTS celebrates

More than 140 ratings from the People's Republic of China have benefited from the Seacare Quality Rating Training (SQRT); with the latest batch graduating on 4 May 2010 in Wuhan, China.

The 4th SQRT batch of 45 trainees were put through a 4 week course on safety, health, specialised topics for deck, engine and gallery and more – fully conducted in English.

At the graduation ceremony, SOS General Secretary Mr Kam Soon Huat pointed out that the increase in PRC Seafarers on board Singapore Flag Ships and the accompanying increase in the number of

SOS PRC members led to the setting up of the Seacare Maritime Training Scheme China Training Project in 2008, despite the financial crisis then.

“Our aim is to man SOS Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) vessels with quality seafarers and to cater to the training, re-training and pre-sea training needs of ratings.

The favourable responses from the shipping companies encouraged us to continue training in China,” said Mr Kam Soon Huat.

Besides Wuhan and Dalian, SOS is exploring other parts of China to conduct the training of ratings. Shipping companies

who have participated in the SQRT in China were Neptune Shipmanagement Services Pte Ltd (NSSPL), PACC Ship Managers Pte Ltd (PACC), GBLT Shipmanagement Pte Ltd, Glory Ship Management Pte Ltd and AP Moller (S) Pte Ltd. For the 4th SQRT, the participating companies were PACC and NSSPL. The Wuhan University of Technology – Skaugen Training and Consulting Co., Ltd (WSTC) was the training provider and the programme was facilitated by Singhai Marine Services (S) Pte Ltd.





“We have 20 first time graduates from PACC Ship which is the in-house ship management arm of Pacific Carriers Limited (PCL). PCL operates more than 100 vessels – including long carriers, tankers and container vessels and about 40% of our crew and officers are employed from China. This is increasing year by year since China’s economy is developing quickly and is a reliable source for quality crew with reasonable proficiency in English which is commonly used in the seafaring industry. In the past, maritime training was often left to the responsibility of ship owners and managers, but SOS has generously shared their training ideas in order to avail and benefit the larger seafaring community. Today’s ceremony is testimony to their effort, for which we are extremely grateful.”

MR LIM TAU KOK, DIRECTOR OF PACC SHIP MANAGERS PTE LTD

“I am Chinese and was trained by NSSPL. Subsequently I became Ship Manager and am now Manager of the company. I would like to thank my employers for providing me with good training and a good working environment as well as WSTC and SOS for initiating such an effective training programme here in Wuhan, China. I believe this will generate more quality seafarers and PRC ratings for overseas companies. In fact, NSSPL has benefitted much from SOS and WSTC trainings with more than 20 ratings already in. And because China is developing fast and NSSPL needs more PRC ratings, I am confident WSTC and SOS will supply us with good and skilled seafarers.”

MR RUI CHAO SHENG, MANAGER OF NEPTUNE SHIPMANAGEMENT SERVICES PTE LTD

“There are many Chinese seafarers who come from Wuhan. We recognise them to be extremely diligent and quick learners. So we would like to train more Chinese crew for ship owners not only from China, but throughout the world as well.”

MR MICHAEL YEO, CHAIRMAN OF SKAUGEN TRAINING AND CONSULTING CO LTD

“I am deeply moved by the welfare shown to our Chinese seafarers and am confident that our seafarers will benefit greatly from our bilateral cooperation with SOS.”

MS SARAH TAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL MANAGER OF WUHAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND SKAUGEN TRAINING AND CONSULTING CO LTD

“Training is critical as over 50% of crew members onboard ships are Asian. So SQRT is a very good project as it is also very relevant for our countries. I appreciate the efforts of SOS/Seacare. We will be working very closely to help SQRT grow from strength to strength.”

MR TERENCE ZHAO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SINGHAI MARINE SERVICES (S) PTE LTD



A WORD FROM THE 4TH SQRT'S TOP GRADUATES ON

+ Learning English

MR CUI MING XIAO

I have learnt many useful words to describe personal appearances and the weather together with some basic vocabulary and special phrases used onboard vessels. The course has improved my general and professional use of English.



Trainers and Instructors +

MR LIU LIRAN

I really enjoyed speaking to the foreign trainers, Chinese instructors and studying with my classmates. The foreign trainers speak good English and have good pronunciation. They helped me correct my pronunciation and taught me how to communicate with crew members of other nationalities. Communicating with the trainers is always very interesting.

+ Subjects Covered

MR XIE HUI FENG

The topics covered were very useful especially 'Bunkering', 'Entering Enclosed Spaces', 'Fighting Ship Fires', 'Names of Safety Equipment', 'Names of Tools in the Engine Room', 'Maintenance and Repair'. We learnt how to clear drills and safety orders. I had hoped that they would also teach us more conversational English and how to ask for directions while at the airport!



“For 2009, the negotiations were tough for the unions because it was a belt-tightening set of guidelines given the economic situation. This year, it’s a totally different economic situation. The expectation is for wage increases.”

Mr Ong Ye Kung
NTUC Assistant Secretary-General

RECOMMENDS

Singapore’s National Wages Council (NWC) urges companies that are doing well to grant their employees a pay rise, but the increase should take into account the company’s performance and prospects.

The recommendations drew immediate support from the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF) and the Labour Movement. In its annual wage guidelines unveiled on 25 May 2010, the NWC noted that the global economy is on the recovery, supported by the improved outlook in the US and continued strength in China. The recovery of the Singapore economy has been strong and broad-based. The tightening labour market will place upward pressure on wages, especially since many employees had accepted wage freeze and cuts as well as other cost cutting measures during the downturn to help companies reduce costs and save jobs.

“For 2009, the negotiations were tough for the unions because it was a belt-tightening set of guidelines given the economic situation. This year, it’s a totally different economic situation. The expectation is for wage increases,” said NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Mr Ong Ye Kung.

Considering the situation of companies that have not fully recovered, the NWC suggested that companies could opt for variable payments for their employees instead of pay rise. NTUC’s Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say said: “The National Wages Council recognises that not all industries and enterprises would perform the same level. The quantum of wage increases, in

terms of total wage increase, would depend on individual companies. But what is important is that based on the performance, most enterprises would give a fair share of gains, at the same time keep the wage increase flexible. This means not all must be in the built-in wage increase, some can be on year-end bonuses.”

With the recent government revisions to the employer’s CPF contribution rate - to be raised by one percentage point in two incremental stages on 1 September 2010 and 1 March 2011, the NWC also recommended that companies should take this into account in their consideration of an overall wage package.

Calling for future pay rises to be pegged to a firm’s productivity growth to stay cost-competitive, the NWC urges companies to give low-wage workers more attention when granting wage increases.

The main thrust of this year’s recommendation is to reward workers, especially for their sacrifices during the downturn, and to highlight the need to keep boosting productivity in order to maintain wage increases over the years.

The following are the key guidelines:

- Companies to give wage increases in keeping with their business performance and prospects.
- Peg future pay rises to productivity growth.
- Implement flexible wage structures by building

NWC GUIDELINES 2010

SUSTAINABLE PAY INCREASE

“The National Wages Council recognises that not all industries and enterprises would perform the same level. The quantum of wage increases, in terms of total wage increase, would depend on individual companies. But what is important is that based on the performance, most enterprises would give a fair share of gains, at the same time keep the wage increase flexible. This means not all must be in the built-in wage increase, some can be on year-end bonuses.”

Mr Lim Swee Say
NTUC Secretary-General

up the monthly variable component (MVC) from wage increases, and rewarding employees for their contributions through variable payments linked to performance and productivity.

- Factor in the impending increase in employers' Central Provident Fund contribution rate in wage negotiations.
- Set out clearly the key performance indicators that would take into account workers' contributions to productivity growth and reward them accordingly.
- Give low-wage workers a specified amount in dollars when granting a pay rise or bonus.
- Help low-wage, contract and casual workers benefit from government initiatives, such as the workfare schemes aimed at boosting their income and upgrading their skills.
- Firms that need manpower should hire and retain older employees and encourage more women to return to work.

These recommendations set the direction for wage policies from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Both the Singapore National Employers Federation and the Labour Movement have endorsed the council's guidelines. The government has accepted the NWC's guidelines, and said it will push ahead with initiatives to help the more vulnerable segments of the workforce. The government is working closely with the tripartite partners on various initiatives including implementing re-employment for older workers, and encouraging more women to join the workforce. To help low-wage workers, the government has enhanced the Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) scheme and will be introducing the Workfare Training Support (WTS) scheme to encourage them to upgrade their skills and to incentivise their employers to send them for training.

HEAVE HO!



International Sportsweek for Seafarers 2010



SOS and Seacare strongmen gritted their teeth, flexed their muscles and dug deep to pit their might and brawn in a good old game of Tug-of-War. For their valiant efforts, SOS/Seacare came in first runners up in the local team category.

Tug-of-War was one out of the many events at the International Sportsweek for Seafarers held on 11, 12, 14 and 15 May 2010 at the Yio Chu Kang Stadium.

The stadium was a hive of activity as it saw 1,023 competitors from 13 ships of nine different nationalities, six ship flag states and nine maritime related organisations

participate in sporting events like Soccer, Track & Field, Tug-of-War and Tele-matches. All ships in port during the four days were cordially invited to participate.

Arranged by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), the games were organised in pursuance of the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) recommendations to encourage recreational activities amongst seafarers and to promote understanding and co-operation among seafarers of different nationalities.

Senior Assistant Director of Admin & Facility Department, MPA, Mr Chan Keng

Nee who was Guest-of-Honour during the Closing Ceremony and Prize Presentation on 15 May 2010 together with Assistant Director for Projects, MPA, Mr Leong Chee Keong, gave away prizes to the winners of the Sportsweek.

Addressing the contingent during the closing ceremony, Mr Chan in his speech thanked the shipping community, the various seafarer organisations, participating seafarers and all other parties for their support by way of participation and assistance, which had contributed in no small measure towards the success of this year's Sportsweek.



Learning about **SECURITY**



Ranging from entry requirements to different learning modules, manners of assessment to course fees, contrary to the stereotypes many had of professions in the security industry, members emerged more appreciative of the qualities required of a security officer and the demands of the job.

Catered with the ongoing employability of members in mind, two security courses were recently added to Training Schedule III as previously

mentioned in the February 2010 issue of *Samudra*. They are the Certificate in Security Operations and Advanced Certificate in Security Supervision – both conducted by Security Industry Institute (SII) and Employment and Employability Institute (e2i).

Interested members were invited to a Security Course Preview conducted by Ms April Wong, Assistant Manager for Career Services & Business Development, SII at the SII, Singapore Post Centre on 15 May 2010 to learn more about the content and scope of these two courses.

These include standing for long hours, writing incident reports, shift work, patrolling and clocking. Members were also shown how to employ the proper use of security equipment such as CCTVs, alarm systems, motion detectors or sensors, etc.



Instead of focusing on academics, potential candidates would more importantly be tested for their ability to think on their feet and respond to different scenarios and varied situations.



SEACAREFOCUS



SEACAREFOCUS

SEACAREFOCUS



Seacare Hotel Groundbreaking
Ceremony, 20 May 2010

SEACARE HOTEL

A GROUNDBREAKING MOVE



The turning of soil with a shovel marked yet another major milestone in the journey of SOS and Seacare. The Seacare Hotel Groundbreaking Ceremony, held on 20 May 2010 was conducted in the presence of Guest-of-Honour, Mr Arthur Fong, MP West Coast GRC and SOS Advisor; Mr Leow Ching Chuan, SOS Executive Advisor and Seacare Co-operative Limited Executive Chairman; Mr Kong Mun Kwong, Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd Chairman; Seacare Directors, Exco members, SOS members and staff, project consultants and contractors.

The story of how Seacare Hotel was sited as an annexe to the present Seacare Building was filled with many hurdles at the onstart. Mr Leow explained the complexity and the challenges that went into the Seacare Hotel project.

"We have tried since 2007 to acquire an existing premise suitable or adaptable for use as a hotel under the Scheme but without success. Finally, the management of the SOS and Seacare decided to consider the option of reviewing the feasibility of using the Seacare Building as an integral part of our proposed hotel project to break the impasse. A favourable factor had been the increase in the regulatory plot ratio from 1.6753 to 3.5 for the construction of a building on a given piece of land. What this means is that the Seacare Building could now be rebuilt, enlarged or extended with an additional gross floor area of 36,000 square feet on its existing plot of land."

For their tenacity and boldness to face mounting challenges in the project, Mr Arthur Fong applauded the union and co-operative for showing "out of the box" thinking, single-mindedness, prudence and determination.

At the momentous event, Mr Arthur Fong commended SOS and Seacare for maintaining their mission of looking after the interest and welfare of seafarers and congratulated them for a successful launch of the Seacare Sailors' Home Scheme, which had already been put into effect in Manila early this year.



"I would like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks and appreciation to Mr Hector Chia of Archispace Designs for his ingenuity, dedication and commitment in helping to make the hotel project a reality, to Mr Raymond Chia, Chairman of Seacare Properties Pte Ltd for generously giving us his guidance, advice and time despite his busy schedule and to Mr Kong Mun Kwong, Chairman of Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd, for his wise counsel. I wish also to thank Mr Arthur Fong, our Guest-of-Honour, for kindly agreeing to grace this ceremony, all our distinguished guests and friends for witnessing the ceremony and lastly, but not the least, the organisers of this ceremony." **Mr Leow Ching Chuan, SOS Executive Advisor and Seacare Co-operative Limited Executive Chairman**



With the support of Seacare, SOS set up the Seacare Sailors' Home Scheme to offer another tangible benefit for seamen working on board SOS CBA ships. Under the scheme, SOS seeks to provide, with the participation of the relevant shipping companies, affordable accommodation for seafarers in Singapore and other international ports.

With the expected completion of the Seacare Hotel in September 2011, it will add affordable accommodation available to seafarers under the Seacare Sailors' Home Scheme. This is a groundbreaking move worth marking in the history books of SOS and Seacare.

“As a social enterprise, Seacare looks after the interest and welfare of seamen. Providing affordable accommodation to the seamen will benefit the shipping community and support Singapore’s development as the leading international maritime centre. Besides meeting the needs for suitable and affordable accommodation for the growing seafaring community we will also be creating more jobs for our members.”

Mr Leow Ching Chuan, Seacare Executive Chairman

SEACARE HOTEL STANDS TALL

Hailed as the first co-operative-owned hotel – the answer to accommodation shortage for seafarers, there arises a new development, the brainchild of Seacare.

Complementing SOS’ mission of helping and ensuring that all seamen, including foreign seamen, are duly rewarded for their sacrifices and hard work, Seacare has kicked off the development of a hotel, calling it the Seacare Hotel.

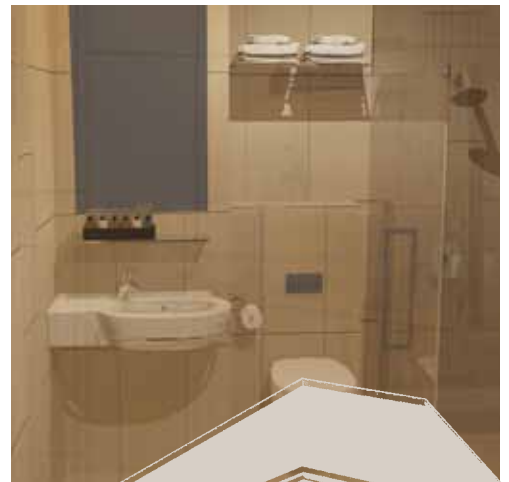
The Seacare Hotel project was in response to the need for proper and affordable accommodation for seamen due to increasing demand and acute shortage of seafarers’ accommodation. This benefit is made available for union members, local or foreign, under the Seacare Sailors’ Home Scheme.

Room shortage for seafarers has been a subject of concern in the maritime industry and is likely to worsen in the years to come. The hotel will





Standing tall at 16 storeys, the 103-room Seacare Hotel will share the same site with SOS and Seacare as an annex to the existing Seacare Building, conveniently located near Chinatown. Perfect for both seafarers on transit and seafarers on leisure with families, the hotel offers comfortable, well-furnished rooms, state-of-the-art fitness facilities and a quaint cafe, creating the ultimate environment to unwind or relax.



address the unique needs of the shipping industry for affordable accommodation at relatively short notices for crew change and transit. Presently, such requests at short notice are both expensive and uncertain; particularly so during peak seasons. Providing affordable accommodation to seamen will benefit the shipping community and this, in turn, will help to lower operating costs. A greater supply of rooms will further value add to Singapore's good connectivity to the neighbouring countries and sea ports and enhance Singapore's position as an International Maritime Centre.

16
STOREYS

103
WELL-FURNISHED
GUEST ROOMS

FITNESS CENTRE

CAFE

3-3.5
STAR RATING

FACTS

MUCH BUZZ

ABOUT THE NEW 'ADDITION' TO THE SEACARE BLOCK

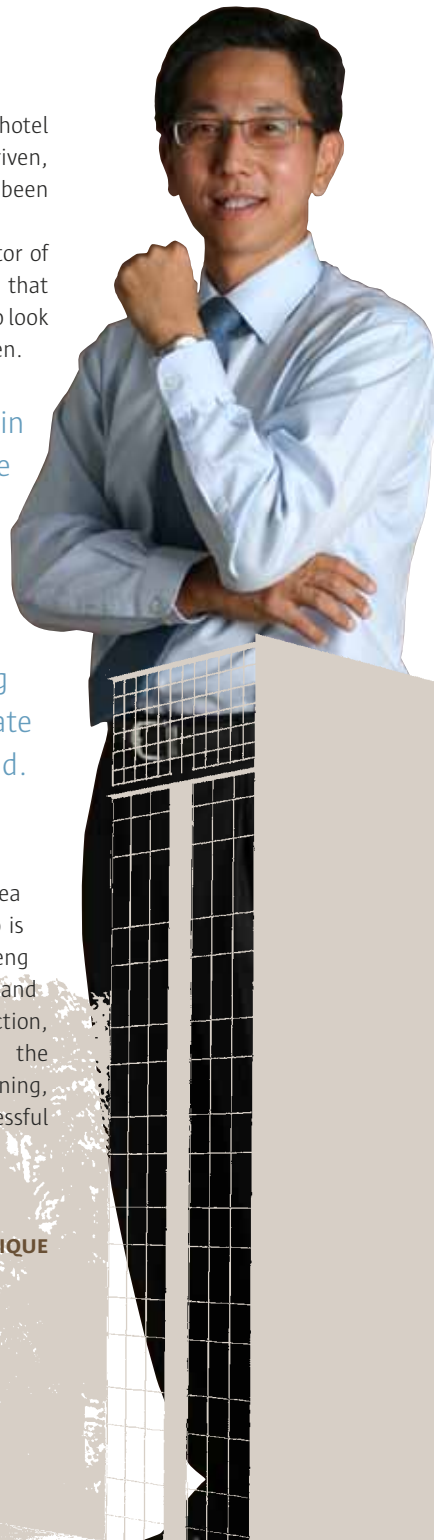
Seacare is probably the first co-operative to own a hotel in Singapore. Far from being commercially driven, the underlying motivation for such a move has been nothing short of noble.

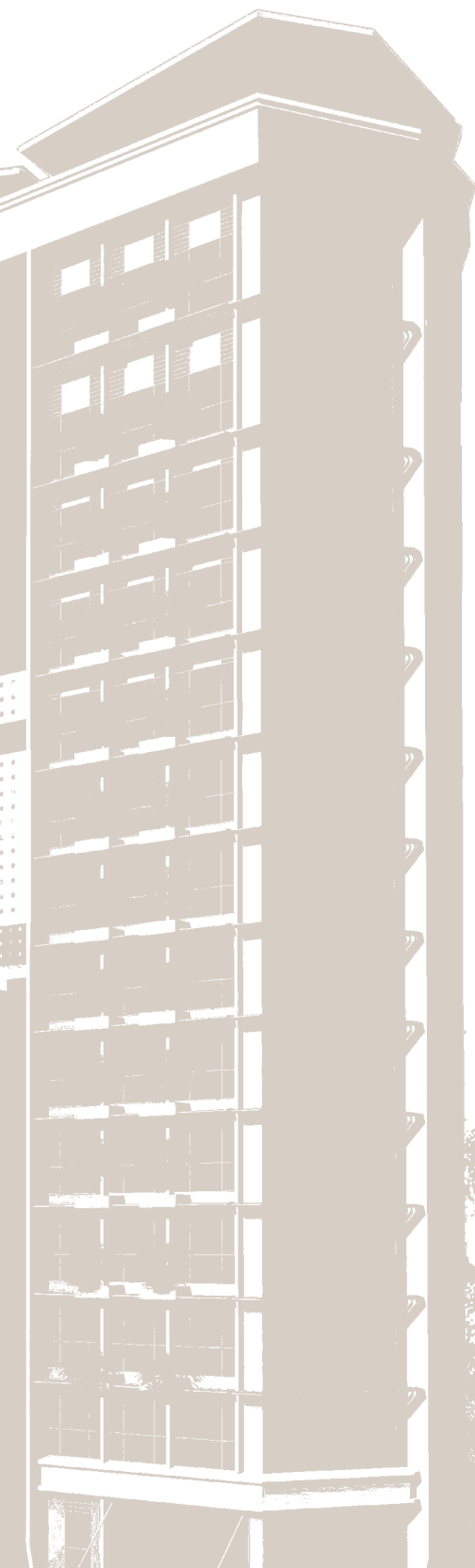
Chairman of Seacare Properties Pte Ltd and Director of Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd, Mr Raymond Chia explained that the bold move by Seacare was motivated by its mission to look after the interest and welfare of local and foreign seamen.

“Seacare has made a very good move in considering the welfare of seamen because in the property market, hotel rates fluctuate. At times it can be very unaffordable and difficult to find rooms. Seacare made a good and sound decision to take care of the seamen or provide at least some temporary form of housing. Besides providing accommodation, the hotel development will also create employment for retired seamen,” he said.

For that reason, Mr Chia fully supported the idea when it was first mooted few years ago. Mr Chia, who is also the Group Chief Executive Officer for Chip Eng Seng Corporation Ltd, one of Singapore's leading construction and property group with businesses spanning across construction, property development and property investment, is the perfect man for the role of overseeing the project's planning, development, construction, management till its successful completion.

**MR CHIA PROVIDED A SNEAK PEEK OF SOME UNIQUE
FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF THE SEACARE HOTEL ...**





A HOME FOR SEAFARERS

“The hotel provides seafarers that touch down in Singapore a sense of assurance and certainty in terms of hotel rates fluctuations or availability of rooms. They can take comfort in knowing that they will always have a room to stay and a place to house them whenever they stopover in Singapore.”

SELF-SUSTAINABLE; WELFARE DRIVEN

“We expect the hotel to be run on a self-sustainable model. This shall be a challenge for Seacare – on one hand, it has to be commercially viable; on the other hand Seacare has to take into consideration the welfare of the seamen by keeping hotel rates affordable. So far, Seacare has been able to do a good job of balancing these two concerns.”

UNIQUE, VISIBLE, PRESENTABLE

“The uniqueness of this hotel is that it will stand at 16 storeys along Chin Swee Road which enjoys good visual exposure. By virtue of its visibility, the hotel’s architectural façade and internal finishes has to look aesthetically modest and presentable.

There will be a fitness centre facility and an outdoor dining area at the roof garden for

the cafe. Since there are so many buildings around, having a roof garden will offer seafarers a sense of spaciousness.

I have personally viewed the showroom and I am pleased with the space, layout and finishes of the guest room. The quality of the 103-room hotel will certainly befit and outclass the rating of 3 – 3.5 star rating.”



TECH TOOLS

VEHICLES IN INFORMATION AGE

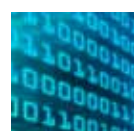
SEACARE MANPOWER SERVICES AND NTUC LEARNING HUB
EQUIP SUPERVISORS IN ICT



Building upon the positive response to its last WSQ Employability Skills Systems (ESS) Workplace Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Applications (Operations) Course, Seacare staged another successful run of “WSQ ESS Workplace ICT Applications (Supervisory) Course” in June.

Developed for supervisors who would like to know how to identify and resolve problems with ICT tools, analyse the use of electronic storage media and facilitate the acquisition of appropriate ICT tools and machines, the course had 55 participants from 45 schools, spread into three classes of 17 and 19 participants each, over three days to ensure optimum instructor-participant interaction.







Conducted by NTUC Learning Hub, trainees were instructed on common ICT applications such as e-mail, and office applications like MS Word and Excel to create documents and reports at intermediate and advanced levels.

Through identifying and resolving problems with ICT tools and machines, trainees learnt to identify common problems with computer systems, networks, and peripherals, as well as suggest practical ways to resolve these problems.

In analysing the use of electronic storage media or sharing of resources, many appreciated the value of electronic documents over paper-based documents and were able to list technology used in electronic storage media. In addition, they were able to discover firsthand how an information driven environment with ICT as its vehicle has evolved to impact the sharing of resources in any given workplace.

Having successfully completed the course and emerging as “newly minted” tech savvy experts, each participant returned home with a Statement of Attainment (SOA) from the Workplace Development Agency (WDA).

Seacare Manpower Services will continue to create more of such opportunities to help bolster the skills and professional development of workers.





Seacare Sailors' Home

A stone's throw away from Boni station and located at the corner of Arayat and Cordillera Streets, Sunshine Garden is a Singaporean lifestyle loft in the heart of Metro Manila in the bustling district of Mandaluyong.

Be it **temporary accommodation** while waiting to sign on ships, a **short stay-in** at the Sailors' Home with family or a **stop-over** in Manila after signing off and before heading home, you can be sure that the Sunshine Garden Condominium units have been furnished with you in mind.

Seacare Sailors' Home – **Fully furnished** with the comfort and convenience of **full condominium facilities and services**.

*Come home away
from home
at the Seacare Sailors' Home
@ Sunshine Garden
Condominium.*

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Fax: (632) 571-7724

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