



NEWS RELEASE

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Sectoral Tripartite Committee for Transport (Sea) Rolls Out Key Initiatives to Promote and Profile Maritime Careers

Funding to be drawn from S\$115 million Maritime Cluster Fund – Manpower Development (MCF-MD) and National SkillsFuture Budget

Fresh measures to attract and help Singaporeans deepen skills and advance their careers in seafaring and shore-based sectors will soon be rolled out. These include bringing various SkillsFuture programmes to the maritime sector and introducing new measures to support Singaporean careers in seafaring. In addition, a new national-level initiative – the Maritime Singapore Connect (MSC) – will give Singaporeans easier access to maritime job openings, and information on maritime education and training options.

2 Mr Teo Chee Hean, Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Home Affairs, announced these initiatives at the Singapore Shipping Association's (SSA) 30th anniversary gala dinner today.

3 These initiatives were drawn up by the Sectoral Tripartite Committee for Transport (Sea) led by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA). Comprising two taskforces, the committee aims to address current gaps and recommend new initiatives to strengthen manpower development efforts for both seafaring and shore-based sectors. In the next five years, they hope to attract more than 1,200 Singaporeans to join the maritime sector as seafarers and port operations officers. Funding for these initiatives will be drawn from the Maritime Cluster Fund and national SkillsFuture budget.

4 In drawing out the initiatives, the committee focuses on three main areas; namely profiling and promoting maritime careers highlighting the multiple entry points and good career progression pathways; growing a pool of maritime talents through structured training programmes; and encouraging skills deepening and mastery. Initial measures that will be rolled out are aimed at encouraging more Singaporeans to take up key positions in seafaring and in the port operations sector. Measures targeting other maritime sub-sectors, such as shipowning/operating, shipbroking, shipmanagement and ship agency, will be rolled out when ready.

5 Mr Andrew Tan, Chief Executive of MPA, said, “The maritime industry offers many exciting and rewarding opportunities to Singaporeans looking for challenge in their careers. The maritime sector is global in nature and in need of good talent. MPA is committed to working closely with our industry stakeholders, associations, unions and other government agencies to attract more Singaporeans into both the seafaring and shore-based sectors. This local core will support the growth of Singapore not only as a premier global hub port, but also a leading international maritime centre that offers a wide range of maritime services including chartering, broking, ship management, finance, legal and insurance.”

Maritime Singapore Connect (MSC) to profile and promote maritime careers

6 To further raise awareness and public interest in the opportunities in the maritime sector, a new set-up – the **Maritime Singapore Connect (MSC) Office** – will be formed under the Singapore Maritime Foundation to work closely with maritime employers, schools and the relevant government agencies and industry associations to elevate the current profiling efforts of the maritime industry.

7 The MSC Portal, which would allow members of the public to access maritime career opportunities and training-related information, is one key initiative expected next year. In addition, the MSC Office will offer maritime-related education and career guidance, and help to link the maritime industry with schools for internship and job opportunities. Organising outreach events

and publicity campaigns would also be a part of what the MSC Office offers. MPA is investing S\$4 million to support the set-up of the MSC over a period of four years.

Manpower initiatives to be extended to the maritime sector

8 To encourage Singaporeans to deepen and broaden their skills in the maritime sector, the **SkillsFuture Earn and Learn Programme** will be rolled out for the maritime sector by the second quarter of 2016. Targeted at fresh polytechnic graduates, the programme features a year-long structured work-study arrangement, leading to industry-recognised certification. Each Singaporean will receive a sign-on incentive of S\$5,000 upon successful completion of the programme. Employers who sign up for the programme will be eligible for a grant of up to S\$15,000 per trainee.

9 Beyond this initiative, the tripartite partners are also working together to extend similar support to all other Singaporeans from the Continuing Education & Training (CET) track and to shipping employers employing them, so as to offer all Singaporeans the same opportunity to deepen their competencies in the maritime sector.

10 To support Singaporeans who are currently in the maritime sector to develop deeper specialist skills, MPA will adopt the **SkillsFuture Study Awards**, which will open for application in the fourth quarter this year, and **SkillsFuture Credit** in the first quarter of 2016. The SkillsFuture Study Awards will provide each recipient S\$5,000 to help defray the cost of attending work-related training, while the SkillsFuture Credit will provide Singaporeans aged 25 and above with an initial credit of S\$500 to cover fees for a wide range of work skills-related courses.

Added measures to improve pipeline of Singaporean seafaring talents

11 More focus will also be placed on training Singaporeans in seafaring jobs so that they can develop good careers in the sector. The Tripartite Maritime Manpower Taskforce for Seafaring hopes that these efforts will encourage more locals to take on a seafaring career and facilitate their up-

skilling, further helping to improve retention of seafaring talent. The MPA has committed S\$4 million over the next three years to subsidise three programmes that will cover training costs for employers and offer study awards to Singaporean seafarers. These programmes will be implemented from October 2015.

12 The first is the **Cadet Allowance Reimbursement** programme. The MPA will reimburse companies up to half the monthly allowance which they pay Singaporean cadets undergoing the certificates of competencies (CoCs) training. Currently, employers pay about S\$800 in monthly allowance to Singaporean cadets who are pursuing their CoCs as part of the diplomas in nautical studies and marine engineering programmes. The cost will be lowered by up to S\$400 in future.

13 The second is the **Achievement Award** programme. A monetary award of up to S\$2,000 will be offered to candidates who complete shipboard training to become junior deck and engineering officers. There will also be other achievement awards to encourage locals to take on further training to achieve higher class CoCs. Singaporean seafaring officers with a CoC Class 2 and 1 will get a monetary award of up to S\$3,000 when they reach each of these stages.

14 The third programme is the **Up-skill Allowance Scheme**. Employers can tap on this scheme to offer junior seafaring officers a training allowance of up to S\$6,000 while they pursue full-time CoC 2/1 programmes. This will help to encourage more Singaporeans to attend the upgrade course that will qualify them for senior shipboard positions.

MPA continues to commit to building a strong Singaporean core for the maritime sector

15 Moving forward, the tripartite committee will continue to work on manpower needs of the sector. Beyond port-related jobs, the taskforce for shore-based sectors will identify key jobs in other sub-sectors that offer crossover opportunities such as shipowning/operating and broking; shipmanagement and ship agency. The seafaring taskforce will look at

pathways for sea to shore transitions. A sectoral manpower plan for Transport (Sea) will be developed with various initiatives to address the manpower challenges in the maritime industry. The committee will continue to tap on other SkillsFuture programmes and initiatives to prepare Singaporeans for future ready maritime careers.

16 Since 2007, a total of S\$115 million has been committed to the Maritime Cluster Fund – Manpower Development (MCF-MD) programme, which supports maritime companies in the development of manpower, training initiatives and building capabilities. To date, more than 20,000 individuals have benefitted from the programme.

Annex A – Factsheet on SkillsFuture Earn and Learn Programme for maritime sector and new measures to support Singaporeans' career in seafaring

Annex B – Tripartite Maritime Manpower Taskforces for Seafaring and Shore-Based Sectors

Annex C – Quotes from tripartite maritime manpower taskforce members

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About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) was established on 2 February 1996, with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre (IMC), and to advance and safeguard Singapore's strategic maritime interests. MPA is the driving force behind Singapore's port and maritime development, taking on the roles of Port Authority, Port Regulator, Port Planner, IMC Champion, and National Maritime Representative. MPA partners the industry and other agencies to enhance safety, security and environmental protection in our port waters, facilitate port operations and growth, expand the cluster of maritime ancillary services, and promote maritime R&D and manpower development.

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