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MULTIDISCIPLINARY MANPOWER PROGRAMMES SPUR PROMISING SEAFARING CAREERS AS ASIA'S MARITIME INDUSTRY EVOLVES

SINGAPORE (16 July 2015) – The future has never looked brighter for those considering taking up seafaring as a career, spurred on by the collective efforts of the Singapore Government and key industry players to develop a more diverse maritime labour force, and will be one of the many topics addressed at the 8th *Maritime Manpower Singapore (MMS) 2015 Conference*, a biennial event organised by Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) and Wavelink Maritime Institute (WMI) held at the Raffles City Convention Centre, Singapore. The event will be graced by Guest-of-Honour, Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Secretary-General of the National Trades Union Congress.

SMOU and WMI strongly endorse the recent announcements by the government to fund \$65 million for the Maritime Cluster Fund-Manpower Development Programme, and the commitment of \$22 million by WDA and e2i over a five-year period to support Singaporeans and Permanent Residents, who wish to pursue a maritime career through the Tripartite Nautical Training Award (TNTA) Programme, all of which are indicative factors of the strong support and emphasis to further attract, groom and develop the Singapore Core in the maritime sector.

While the TNTA Programme is into its 9th cohort to address the dwindling number of Singaporean seafaring officers, the maritime industry is still in acute shortage of Marine Engineers. Therefore, SMOU and WMI will be collaborating with the tripartite partners to launch the first Tripartite Engineering Training Award (TETA) Programme in the upcoming months. This is also a place-and-train initiative, similar to the TNTA, to encourage Singaporeans to pursue the career path of Marine Engineering Officers onboard commercial ships.

“The maritime industry contributes an astounding 7% of Singapore's GDP, and our aim is to continue to bring about greater awareness of well-paying career opportunities to young Singaporeans. With immense support from the Singapore Government and its tripartite partners, this is the opportune time for those who have never considered and would like to take up seafaring as a career to consider this exciting path. Even for those considering a career change, this job will help to



provide a better job, better pay and better lives”, said Ms Mary Liew, General Secretary of Singapore Maritime Officers’ Union (SMOU).

New shipping technologies and infrastructure, a more competitive environment and shifting trade patterns signal a turning point for the entire industry, and is prompting Singapore’s maritime sector to rapidly pursue a more multi-disciplinary labour force beyond just the traditional skills that helped catapult Singapore as one of the world’s busiest maritime hubs for much of its 50-year history as a young sovereign nation.

Today, Singapore is home to more than 5,000 maritime establishments employing over 170,000 people. Against such a backdrop, the demand for maritime professionals will only continue to grow exponentially and with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006) taking effect to help improve seafarers’ rights, the maritime manpower landscape looks poised to grow at a rapid rate.

Looking ahead, IHS Maritime & Trade’s latest fleet statistics show that about 2,194 ships will be delivered in 2015 alone, including all commodity fleets, vehicle carriers, ro-ro ships and offshore support vessels. These additions will bring the total global fleet size to 43,480 ships for 2015 and is projected to grow 9.8 percent over the next five years to reach 48,200 ships by 2020.

Many new vessel types that feature more innovative technology, fuel efficiency and scaled-up sizes will be delivered over the next two years and by 2020, the global fleet will see an addition of 90 VLGCs (very large gas carriers) for seaborne LPG (liquefied petroleum gas), 286 crude oil tankers (including crude oil product tankers) above 80,000 dwt (deadweight tonnage), 149 LNG (liquefied natural gas) carriers, 157 drilling rigs, 58 drill ships, 1,592 dry bulk carriers of all sizes, as well as 439 fully cellular container ships, according to IHS Maritime’s latest Fleet Capacity Forecast report.

“The industry is increasingly seeing a demand for seafarers who offer a diversity of skills that will be needed to keep up with the growth of modern vessels, representing a new generation of ship designs that will become much more commonplace in the near future,” says Crystal Chan, maritime analyst at IHS Maritime & Trade.

Singapore is one of the top flag registries in the world but out of more than 20,000 officers in more than 4,200 Singapore-flagged ships, only 1,605 are Singaporeans. More can be done to make the profession more attractive, even as SMOU is making good progress in attracting Singaporeans to seafaring. Improving safety and raising awareness of career prospects are issues that need to be looked at.



Participation at MMS 2015 Conference

On 16 July 2015, key international maritime industry speakers will congregate in Singapore to discuss pertinent maritime issues that will impact Singapore's shores and beyond. The biennial Maritime Manpower Singapore (MMS) 2015 Conference themed "Manpower Development for Sustainable Shipping" features a provocative line-up of 15 speakers, including leaders and professionals from the local and overseas maritime industry, such as Mr Andrew Tan, Chief Executive, Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore; Mr Stephen Cotton, General Secretary, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), and many others.

The Conference will see some 300 participants and also presents a great opportunity to network with local participants as well as delegates from more than 15 countries. This Conference remains pivotal to the sharing of information for the progress of the maritime industry not only in Singapore but beyond our shores.

Singapore's maritime sector has come a long way since its independence 50 years ago and it has to continue to seek and capitalise on new opportunities in order to maintain its status as the world's leading maritime hub.

An estimated 90 per cent of the world trade is by sea and our daily needs are met by the commodities that are transported by vessels bringing in the goods. With that in mind, the maritime industry remains vital to our daily lives. Moreover, Asian ship owners command around 50 percent of the world's merchant fleet, so great potential is present in this region as more international maritime companies establish their regional offices in Singapore to gain better access to fast growing Asian economies.

Singapore's unique location and deep harbour has contributed to the nation's maritime success, making it one of the busiest container hub ports, biggest bunkering port, and a world leader in offshore and marine engineering. In addition, the Singapore Registry of Ships is also among the top 10 ship registries with one of the youngest fleets in the world.



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About TNTA

The **Tripartite Nautical Training Award (TNTA)**, is an initiative started in 2009 by Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) and is a joint effort with the National Trades Union Congress' (NTUC) e2i (Employment and Employability Institute), and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), and supported by Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and Singapore Shipping Association (SSA). The training is conducted by Wavelink Maritime Institute (WMI) and is into its 9th intake presently. This TNTA initiative will see more Singaporeans joining the maritime sector and pursue promising careers at sea onboard ocean-crossing international vessels.

In 2009, some \$2.4 million was initially committed to train 60 cadets and in 2012, and a further \$4.2 million was committed to train another 80 cadets. In 2014, Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), NTUC's Employment & Employability Institute (e2i) and the Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) committed a further \$22 million into TNTA Programme over a period of five years. This is a grand total of **\$28.6 million** committed to train Singaporean seafarers so that they may have better jobs, better wages and better lives.

Under this initiative, candidates undergo 6 months of pre-sea training, before sailing as cadets for 18 months, and returning thereafter for 7 months of training at the Singapore Maritime Academy before their Certificate of Competency Class (CoC3) 3 Examinations. Cadets undertaking the programme will receive 80% and 10% course fee funding by WDA and SMOU respectively while another 10% is payable by them.

Singapore Maritime Officers' Union

SMOU was established in 1951. The union has grown from a membership base of about 400 in the 1970s to more than 28,000 members. SMOU plays a pivotal role in promoting good industrial relations between seafarers (members) and their employers, the ship-owners and ship-management companies, and the governments through its strong tripartite relationships with the local, regional and international maritime community. The union seeks to improve the wages and working conditions of members in the maritime industry through collective bargaining agreements with shipping companies which employ them.

Since 1993, SMOU has helped distressed seafarers claim more than US\$17 million of unpaid wages. SMOU is an affiliate of NTUC and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).



Wavelink Maritime Institute

WMI was formed in 2007 and is dedicated to providing quality maritime education, training and consultancy services for both the local and international maritime community.

WMI's commitment to training is based on its capability and resources to provide quality education and training for the maritime industry, as well as for the regional maritime shipping companies. WMI provides training services to better enhance and further strengthen the competencies of seafaring officers to meet the demands and challenges of the international maritime environment.

WMI has been providing the training for the TNTA cadets and is currently into its 9th run.

About IHS Maritime & Trade

IHS Maritime & Trade, part of IHS Inc. (NYSE: IHS), is the leading provider of critical information and insight used by governments, traders, cargo owners and the global shipping industry to find sources of competitive advantage, identify new opportunities, manage complex global supply chains and circumvent potential security risks. With the addition of JOC Group Inc. and GTI in 2014, IHS Maritime & Trade now provides timely trade intelligence integrating ship data, ship movement, bill of lading and trade flow forecasting to give customers the unique ability to connect commodities to ships and cargos to market. *JOC.com*, *JOC Events (TPM)*, *PIERS™*, *Global Trade Atlas®*, *World Trade Services*, *Market Intelligence Network*, *Sea-web™*, *AISLive*, *Fleet Capacity Forecast*, *World Register of Ships* and *IHS Publications (Fairplay, Safety at Sea)* represent the broad solution suite we provide customers. (**www.ihs.com/maritime**)