

MEDIA RELEASE

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S\$4 million New Maritime Simulation Centre Built to Help Train Maritime Officers

The Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) is the first local maritime union to own a maritime simulation centre integrated with state-of-the-art facilities that includes the latest 240 degree Full Mission Bridge Simulator, Engine Room Simulator, Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) and Liquid Cargo Handling Simulator (LCHS) that costs approximately S\$4 million as part of its continual and collective effort to develop the Singapore Maritime Core to support the local maritime industry.

The Wavelink Maritime Simulation Centre housed at the Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability Institute is one of the first few maritime institutes in Singapore to house four simulation systems in one location.

SMOU has been active in promoting a seafaring career to Singaporeans as it is a well paying job with excellent career progression*. This new facilities act as one of the key components in enhancing the training of the cadets and officers. In February this year the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and SMOU committed S\$22 million over a five-year period to support Singaporeans/permanent residents who wish to pursue a maritime career via the 3 years Tripartite Nautical Training Award (TNTA) Programme. The new cadets from the TNTA programme will be those who will benefit from having part of their applied learning in the newly built Full Mission Bridge Simulator. Shipping companies which has Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with SMOU can also use the simulation centre to upgrade the skills of their current officers.

These will aid the users in learning effective ship manoeuvring, resource management and prepare them for extreme conditions and emergencies, thus improving ship safety without putting users through real risks and danger (i.e. risk-free environment). The quality and efficiency of those undergoing training to work onboard commercial ships as seafaring deck officers can be further improved as the various realistic scenarios help bridge the gap between theory and practical, thus reinforcing their learning. The trainer can also assess the users' response to various scenarios and provide immediate feedbacks to the users, thereby accelerating the learning and training effectiveness.

It is also an effective and powerful aid for training and competency assessment of ship masters, deck officers and cadets as they learn about ship-handling, passage planning and the use of various shipboard equipments such as radar, electronic charts, automatic identification systems, echo sounder and automatic radar plotting aids.

Centre of Excellence for Applied Learning

With the newly built Wavelink Maritime Simulation Centre, WMI is poised to be a centre of excellence for applied learning. The learning outcomes from the various scenarios will allow for better internalisation, promote readiness to be proactive and is a crucial and significant capability enhancement for the cadets and officers by improving their learning experience and accelerating their learning process.

Gracing the Official Opening of the Wavelink Maritime Simulation Centre as Guest-of-Honour is Minister, Prime Minister's Office and Secretary-General, National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), Mr Lim Swee Say.

The Official Opening of the Wavelink Maritime Simulation Centre also coincided with the Investiture of the Tripartite Nautical Training Award (TNTA) Programme Cohort 7 cadets who will be starting on their 3 years training with a 6 months pre-sea classroom training. Part of their 6 months training will now include approximately 100 hours in the new simulators.

The TNTA programme has progressed to its 7th Intake with 30 cadets in this current cohort, of which, 2 are female. This cohort is also seeing a higher percentage of cadets with diplomas compared to the last few cohorts.

"I feel so privileged to be among those who are the first to use the simulators for my maritime training. The past cohorts of cadets can only look at static photos of the various ship instruments but now we can have about 100 hours of hands-on experience with various scenarios. I believe these training will give me the competitive edge and put me a head above the rest in my maritime career," said TNTA Cohort 7 Cadet, Mckenrick Lim Jun Sheng.

SMOU General Secretary, Ms Mary Liew said, "Traditionally, seafaring skills are very much time-based learning, that is, the longer you work onboard a ship, the better skills you have. But now with simulation training, the cadets and officers' skills are accelerated with real-time feedback in a risk-free environment. Thus, they become better officers, have better jobs and better lives. It is a win-win situation for them as well as the shipping companies."

Tripartite Nautical Training Award (TNTA) Programme

As a small country that is highly dependent on international trade, the maritime industry is a core pillar for Singapore's economic development. It contributes 7% of Singapore's GDP and provides 170,000 jobs. But, out of more than 20,000 officers in more than 4,200 Singapore-flagged ships, only 1,605 are Singaporeans.

In 2009, the Tripartite Nautical Training Award (TNTA) programme was a ground-breaking place-and-train programme that is jointly initiated by Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), NTUC's e2i and SMOU to train Singaporeans for the Certificate of Competency (CoC) Class 3 qualifications issued by Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), thereby allowing the trainees to pursue a nautical career at sea as nautical deck officers. This programme is supported by MPA, Singapore Shipping Association (SSA) and various shipping companies. Thus far, more than S\$6 million have been invested in this initiative.

The programme has close to 170 Singaporeans being awarded and involves some 13 shipping companies which offer the cadets shipboard placements, training allowances and long-term jobs.

It has seen Singaporeans from all walks of life being given a second chance to pursue a seafaring career that they would otherwise be unable to achieve since 90% of the course fees are sponsored by WDA, e2i and SMOU. The cadets pay only 10% of the course fees. During the course of training, cadets are given a monthly allowance of up to S\$1,400 each during the 3 years training course.

The entire TNTA programme takes approximately 3 years and SMOU is proud to finally have 2 cadets who graduated with Certificate of Competency (CoC3) officers as of November 2013 and more are expected to graduate. When a TNTA cadet graduates as entry-level seafaring officers, he can earn wages from US\$2,500 and increase progressively to US\$7,000 monthly as a Captain. If he becomes Captain of a specialised ship, he can command between a US\$7,000 to US\$20,000*. It is a promising career with good progressive wages.

****Working on board specialised vessels.***

Progressive Wage of a Seafaring Officer

TNTA Cadet	3rd Officer (CoC Class 3)	2nd Officer (CoC Class 3)	Chief Officer (CoC Class 2)	Captain (CoC Class 1)
US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$
1,100	2,500	3,100	5,000	7,000 - 20,000*

This is based on average wage

Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU)

SMOU was established in 1951. The union has grown from a membership base of about 400 in the 1970s to more than 26,000 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. It 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\$15 million of unpaid wages. SMOU is an affiliate of NTUC and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). Visit www.smou.org.sg



e2i (Employment and Employability Institute)

As THE leading organisation to create solutions for better employment and employability, e2i exists to create better jobs and better lives for workers. Since 2008, we have helped 300,000 workers through providing better jobs, developing better skills through professional development, and improving productivity for companies. An initiative of the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), supported by the Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the Singapore Labour Foundation (SLF), and the Singapore National

Employers' Federation (SNEF), e2i serves all segments of workers, from rank-and-file to professionals, managers and executives. Visit www.e2i.com.sg for more information.

Wavelink Maritime Institute (WMI)

WMI was formed in 2007 and is dedicated to providing quality maritime education, training and consultancy services for both local and international maritime community especially companies with Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with SMOU. 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 7 Cohorts of TNTA cadets thus far.