

MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED TILL 20 FEB 2018, 12 NOON

SKILLSFUTURE SINGAPORE, MPA AND MARITIME UNION TO INJECT \$12.6 MILLION IN TRAINING NEXT GENERATION OF SEAFARERS

The Singapore maritime industry looks well-positioned for the future, with strong support from SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), and Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU) in the form of continued funding for the Tripartite Nautical and Engineering Training Award (TNTA & TETA) Programmes worth S\$12.6 million.

The TNTA and TETA programmes, will receive funding support from SSG, MPA and SMOU. The two cadet training programmes are recognised as key opportunities for Singaporeans to develop themselves to the fullest potential through progressive and fulfilling career pathways.

The 3-year funding commences this year and aims to groom a pool of 200 Singaporeans to become deck and marine engineer officers, who will contribute to building the Singapore manpower core in the Maritime sector.

Guest-of-Honour, Mr Ng Chee Meng, Minister for Education (Schools) and Second Minister for Transport made this key announcement at the annual SMOU & Wavelink Lunar New Year Luncheon and Hong Bao Presentation on 20 February at Raffles City Convention Centre to about 1,000 tripartite partners, industry guests and union members.

Chief Executive of SkillsFuture Singapore, Mr Ng Cher Pong said, "These two programmes not only meet the need of the maritime industry for seafarers, but also offers exciting opportunities to Singaporeans who wish to build a career in this sector. Strong tripartite support and involvement is critical. SkillsFuture Singapore is therefore pleased to work closely with SMOU and MPA on the programmes. We will continue to expand the pathways available for skills development and deepening across the key sectors of our economy."

Chief Executive of MPA, Mr Andrew Tan, said, "Building a future ready maritime workforce is one of the key thrusts of the Sea Transport Industry Transformation Map. MPA is pleased to cement our tripartite partnership with SMOU further by co-funding both training programmes to provide good jobs to Singaporeans through multiple pathways."

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NTUC President and SMOU General Secretary, Ms Mary Liew said, “We are pleased that SSG and MPA are onboard with us to train the next generation of seafarers. Together with the shipping companies who are providing training placements to the cadets, we are sending out a strong message that tripartism remains the right way to go even as we navigate towards the future of maritime.

In addition, SMOU is also contributing S\$5,000 to shipping companies it has collective agreements with, for every training placement they offer to Singaporean cadets under the TNTA and TETA initiatives. We hope that these incentives will help inject more new blood into the dynamic maritime industry which contributes towards 7% of Singapore’s GDP.”

As part of SMOU’s core values of “Caring and Sharing”, 200 senior citizens from SMOU’s adopted home, Henderson Home and various community homes such as Care Community Services Society, Hope Community Services Centre, Jamiyah Home for the Aged and Bright Hill Evergreen Home were invited to the luncheon and presented hong baos.

SMOU CONTRIBUTES \$120,000 TO IMPROVE SEAFARERS’ WELFARE

Starting from 2018, SMOU will contribute \$120,000 over a period of three years to The Mission to Seafarers Singapore (MTSS) to improve the welfare and general well-being of seafarers.

This contribution will serve to benefit seafarers who visit the International Drop-in Centre at Jurong Port operated by MTSS. The facilities at the centre offer seafarers a cosy environment to relax, free Wi-Fi and interaction with fellow seafarers among others.

Chairman of The Mission to Seafarers Singapore, Captain Robert Francis Walker said, “We are absolutely delighted and extremely encouraged that SMOU has stepped up and provided a significant contribution to assist in our work caring for Seafarers in Singapore. The Mission is a charitable organisation and relies solely on the generosity of others to enable us to achieve our objectives. SMOU has given us the opportunity to share our common goal of caring for the welfare of seafarers and we are looking forward to a sustained and mutually beneficial relationship.”

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SMOU will also be working with tripartite partners to reach out to more seafaring members at the upcoming new port in Tuas. Such collaborations are part of the union's efforts to do more and help enhance the services and welfare for seafarers whose ships berth in Singapore.

Today, Singapore is home to more than 5,000 maritime establishments employing over 170,000 people. The maritime industry contributes to 7 per cent of Singapore's GDP.

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