

THE ROLE OF THE MARINA IN PROMOTING PHILIPPINE INTERESTS THROUGH MARITIME MULTILATERAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

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By: Sonia B Malaluan, MARINA Administrator

First of all, we convey our sincerest appreciation to Assistant Secretary Noel Fernandez for including the Maritime Industry Authority in the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) Partners' Lecture Series. Through this platform, we hope to be able to contribute relevant inputs into our conversation on the role of the MARINA in promoting Philippine interests through maritime multilateral cooperation and partnerships.

I will be guided by this outline for my presentation:

- 1. Brief Overview of the Maritime Industry Authority**
- 2. MARINA in the International Maritime Organization (IMO);**
- 3. MARINA with IMO Member States**
- 4. MARINA with Regional Organizations;**
- 5. MARINA with Non-Governmental Organizations;**
- 6. MARINA in Gender and Development in the Maritime Sector; and**
- 7. Some perspectives on the key points of the Role of the MARINA in the promotion of our country's maritime interests**

The Maritime Industry Authority was created on 01 June 1974 pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 474, series of 1974. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of our Agency.

By virtue of Executive Order 546 of 1979, the MARINA was attached to the then Ministry of Transportation and Communication for policy and program coordination.

Executive Order No. 1011 of 1985 transferred the quasi-judicial functions relating to maritime transport from the then Board of Transportation (BOT) to the MARINA.

Executive Order No. 125/125-A in 1987 vested upon the MARINA the functions of vessel registration, vessel safety regulation, and issuance of the Seafarer Identification and Record Book (SIRB), the “Seaman’s Book”.

Republic Act No. 9295 of 2004 or “Domestic Shipping Development Act ” provides for the Modernization of domestic shipping and shipbuilding sectors and deregulation of the Philippine domestic shipping industry.

Republic Act No. 10635 of 2014 established MARINA as the single maritime authority to give full and complete effect to the provisions of the 1978 International STCW Convention, as amended, through the transfer and assumptions of seafarer-related functions previously with the PRC, CHED, TESDA, DOH and NTC.

Realizing the potentials of the maritime industry for national economic growth, the MARINA was mandated to accelerate the integrated Development, Promotion, Supervision and Regulation of the maritime industry. The MARINA performs both Promotional and Developmental as well as Supervisory and Regulatory activities for the maritime sector.

The Vision , Mission and the Core Value of the Agency are reflected in the screen.

The screen provides information on the Key Officials of the Agency. The MARINA Board, is Chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, with membership from other Government Agencies. The Department of Foreign Affairs sits as a Member of the MARINA Board.

On the right portion of the screen shows composition of Management Officials, The Administrator is assisted by two Deputy Administrators, while the STCWO is headed by the Executive Director and assisted by the Deputy Executive Director. The top officials of MARINA are Presidential appointees. Service Units in the Central Office and Directors of MARINA Regional Offices occupy Director II positions. We have included, for purposes of this presentation, the internal creation of the Maritime Attache position in Philippine Embassy in London and of the MARINA National Capital Region Office.

We are a very small Agency as compared to other Regulatory Agencies. As of 29 February 2024, we have a total personnel complement of 1,049 where almost half of this number are Job

Order or Contract of Service Personnel. Of this number, 555 are women and 494 are males. Indeed, at MARINA we have achieved already gender-balance in the work place.

The Maritime Industry Authority has been regulating; the four sectors of the industry namely: Domestic Shipping, Overseas Shipping; Shipbuilding and Ship Repair and the Maritime Workforce.

To support the businesses of different maritime enterprises and to ensure that passengers reach their destinations safety, implementation of maritime safety rules and regulations becomes necessary. Furthermore, current debates on decarbonization or reduction of greenhouse gas emission from ships prompted the MARINA to take the lead, in consideration of its role at the Flag State Administration of the country.

Digitalization likewise plays a major role in this era of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, virtual reality, autonomous ships and other green digital solutions. Moving forward, the next few slides contain our priority programs for the current year, in consideration of our limited resources in terms of funding and manpower complement.

To maximize the benefits of modern technology, the MARINA is now on its midway to its nationwide stakeholders orientation on the MARINA Blockchain Enabled Certification System. The Blockchain-Enabled Automated Certification System is a project of the Agency which aims to integrate into

one web-enabled information system all MARINA frontline processes / transactions relating to vessels and seafarers, provides online verification of certificates and ensures data protection and security. It paves the way for contactless transactions from application to release of certificates, licenses, letter approvals and documents. The project uses blockchain technology to keep data secured from unauthorized changes.

Meanwhile, with the issuance of Executive Order No. 55 (2024) which adopted the implementation of the Maritime Industry Development Program 2028. The MARINA will likewise put huge effort to ensure that the goals and objectives of the Plan are fully realized by 2028.

Other priority programs include the sustained Compliance with the STCW Convention for seafarers 1978, as amended. Strict implementation of Maritime Safety Rules and Regulations, Implementation of the IMO Revised Strategy on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships. _Promotion of Ease of Doing Business by repealing obsolete or ineffective Circulars and integration of Regulatory Impact Assessment for all MARINA Policies and streamlining of processes and documentary requirements that aims to attract more investments, in the light of RA 11659 or the revised Public Service Act, allowing 100% foreign ownership to engage in sea transport in the Philippines.

The Philippines, thru the MARINA actively participates in the deliberation/discussion of global regulations relating to maritime safety and security, marine environment protection, and human element. The Maritime Attache and representatives from MARINA regularly attends the Sub-Committee, Committee, Council and Assembly meetings at IMO.

MARINA also serves as the focal point for the implementation of the IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Program (ITCP), MARINA is the Administrator of the IMO's GISIS and also the Lead Agency for the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) and the Independent Evaluation under the STCW Convention as amended. MARINA Technical Personnel are also member of the IMO Panel of Competent Persons.

MARINA benefits from scholarship grants from the World Maritime University, the International Maritime Law Institute and the International Maritime Safety Security and Environment Academy, with a total of 75 graduates and 4 intakes.

For our engagements with IMO Member States, the MARINA has so far concluded seven (7) Merchant Shipping Agreements, with Bangladesh; Brunei Darussalam; *Cyprus*; Iran; Netherlands; Norway; and Viet Nam.

For the mutual recognition of certificates under Regulation I/10 of the STCW Convention for seafarers 1978, as amended, the Philippines through the MARINA has so far concluded 52.

The most recent were the following: the MOA between the Philippines and Canada last March 2023 and the Philippines and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia last November 2023. We are about to sign another MOA with Norway in May.

Out of the 52 Member States with mutual recognition of certificates under Regulation I/10 of the STCW Convention, as amended, here are the 10 top in terms of number of deployed seafarers. Bahamas, Panama, Liberia, Marshall Islands, Malta, Singapore, Netherlands, Italy, Cyprus and United Kingdom.

The Philippines and Denmark collaborated to promote green shipping in the Asia and Pacific Region. We also participate in the PH-EU Sub-Committee on Maritime Cooperation. As the global center for advance maritime education and research, the MARINA has also inked a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Maritime University in the area of academic cooperation and technical assistance.

The MARINA likewise pursues the promotion of the country's maritime interests in relevant Regional Association or Organizations. In the APEC Transportation Working Group (TPT), the MARINA has consistently pursued availability of capacity building for seafarers, maritime administrations and affected private sector in the areas of decarbonization, autonomous ships, seafarers' training, all within the context of regional cooperation, integration and facilitation of trade and investments.

MARINA heads the delegation to the ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group Meetings. Discussion focuses on ASEAN Single Shipping Market, Development of Guidelines for Smart Port, Regional Cooperation on Ship Waste Management, Implementation of ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, ASEAN IMO MOU on Future Cooperation in the Maritime Sector, among others.

For BIMP-EAGA, the MARINA takes active role in the Sea-Linkages Working Group, particularly in the smooth flow of goods and services within the 4-country trading bloc.

This slide shows some photos taken recently on our efforts to develop and sustain partnership with Non-Governmental Institutions, such as the following:

- 1. The MOU signing between the MARINA and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGI) which is an intergovernmental organization based in Seoul, South Korea. It is dedicated to promoting green growth, which integrates economic progress with environmental sustainability.**
- 2. Another effort is the MOA signed between the MARINA and the now have access to the information sharing platform called Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing (IORIS). Accordingly, it secure and neutral, web-based, maritime coordination and information-sharing tool.” This platform offers functionalities such as satellite services capable of managing maritime incidents.**

- 3. The MARINA also actively engages itself with the Marine Accidents Investigation Forum in Asia**
- 4. it has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) on the reduction of marine plastic liter.**
- 5. A Memorandum of Understanding for academic cooperation with the Solent University, United Kingdom was also signed.**

MARINA is also member of the Women in Maritime Philippines or WIMA Phil whose banner programs include “She to Sea” promoting women in seafaring, WIMA on Watch on passenger safety awareness or WOW and WIMA for MARine life, promoting sustainability of our oceans.

We are also member of the Women in Maritime Asia, a regional association of women in maritime, collaborating with other regional women in maritime associations, (8) such as the

- 1. Pacific Women in Maritime Association (PACWIMA)**
- 2. Network of Professional Women in Maritime and Port Sectors of West and Central Africa**
- 3. Association for Women in the Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa region (WOMESA)**
- 4. Women in Maritime Association, Caribbean (WiMAC)**
- 5. Arab Women in Maritime (AWIMA)**
- 6. Red MAMLa or the Red de mujeres de Autoridades Maritimas de Latinoamerica**
- 7. Women in Maritime of West and Central Africa (WIMOWCA)**

The maritime attache and representatives to IMO are also member of the IMO Gender Network whose main program is Mentoring women students in WMU and IMLI.

MARINA as Flag State Administration

Participates actively at the international level in the development of global regulations affecting Filipino seafarers and Philippine Registered Ships

MARINA as Responsible Member of the Int'l Maritime Community

Enforces global maritime regulatory regimes that relate to maritime safety, protection of marine environment to Philippine registered Ships covered by Int'l Regulations

MARINA as Partner for Regional Economic Growth and Development

Implements best practices that promote trade and investment liberation and facilitation; ease of doing business; digitalization and automation of services

MARINA as a the Issuing Authority of Globally Recognized Certificates

Adopts measures to secure the authenticity and integrity of Statutory Certificates issued to Filipino Seafarers and Philippine Registered Ships. It is the only Agency in the Philippine Government that issues Certificates recognized globally [SRB, SID, COP, COC

In closing, the MARINA's role in promoting Philippine interests in the global maritime industry transcends beyond the certificates its issues to Filipino seafarers.

While the business of the MARINA is to ensure that all Philippine Registered Ships are seaworthy and that all Filipino seafarers on-board ocean going ships are duly certificated, at the end of the day, it's all economics; it's about supporting and nurturing the dreams of every sailor that they have carved for their families and loved ones.

“MARINA REMAINS COMMITTED TO PROMOTING OUR PHILIPPINE INTERESTS ESPECIALLY IN ENSURING THE WELLBEING OF OUR SEAFARERS MANNING THE OCEAN-GOING SHIPS, BEING THE BACKBONE OF GLOBAL ECONOMY”

Ladies and gentlemen – our work is to make all Philippine Registered Ships respected worldwide and all Filipino seafarers stand proud for having served as the country's Sailing Ambassadors.

Once again, thank you and good day.