



THE

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## MARINA FIRMS UP 10-POINT AGENDA FOR THE MARITIME INDUSTRY



MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad in his office at the MARINA Central Office

Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator VADM Robert A Empedrad AFP (Ret) bared his 10-Point Agenda for the maritime industry during the Agency's Midyear Performance Assessment and Planning Conference held virtually last 20 July 2020.

Administrator Empedrad who assumed office on March 3, 2020 and has since kept the MARINA afloat amid the raging tide of CoVid-19 global pandemic, outlined following priorities:

1. Strengthen the MARINA organization for efficiency especially the MROs;
2. Capacitate MARINA personnel and enhance their morale and welfare;
3. Ensure strict compliance with standard health protocols against COVID-19;
4. Act with urgency in addressing the findings of EMSA;
5. Establish systems and processes to eradicate corruption within the organization;
6. Maximize the use of digitalization or automation to speed up services for our stakeholders;
7. Pursue with vigor the 8 priority programs of the Maritime Industry Development Plan

2019-2028 (MIDP);

8. Elevate compliance with the STCW Convention 1978, as amended, and ensure the advancement and safety of our seafarers;
9. Strengthen policies and procedures to ensure good governance;
10. Prepare for the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) 2022

Quoting a passage from the Bible (Ephesians 4:16), Administrator Empedrad strongly enjoined all MARINA Offices to consider each other as members of one body, that each is part of a whole and has a significant purpose or role to play; that MARINA offices should be equipped and be able to perform well to make the Organization grow and increase its impact to the country and the global maritime community.



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## MARINA RELEASES ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES ON 'BLENDED LEARNING' MODE OF MARITIME TRAINING AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC



*A Filipino seafarer tightly winds a hose as part of standard training procedure.*

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) recently issued additional guidelines on the conduct of training programs via 'Blended Learning' mode during General Community Quarantine (GCQ), as a response to the need to provide a platform for Filipino seafarers who may have been directly impacted as a result of quarantine lockdowns to complete their required training

This would now allow all Maritime Training Institutions (MTIs) and Assessment Centers (ACs) who are authorized to conduct STCW Mandatory Training Courses to deliver MARINA approved courses through a Blended Learning Mode of training.

Blended Learning refers to an approach wherein the maritime training program will be conducted through the combination of traditional face-to-face

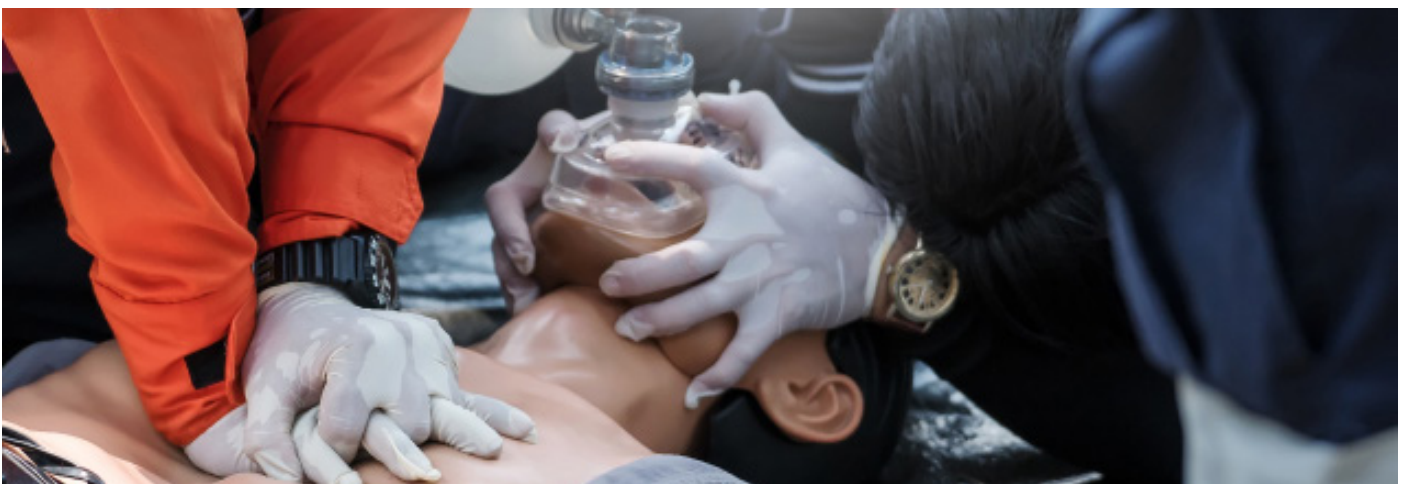
methods and online or e-Learning platforms.

It shall be adopted in delivering the MARINA approved courses that require the use of training equipment and learning systems in performing trainer-supervised practice sessions and/or assessment.

MARINA has reminded MTIs to ensure that the coverage of the approved training program is fully met including how the blended learning is to be implemented, facilities and equipment needed to maximize the use of technology to support learning and teaching, and their management responsibilities. MTIs, whose applications are approved, will be granted a provisional authority valid for (6) months or until full face-to-face conduct of classes is allowed.

Following this development, the MARINA warned seafarers to enroll only in MTIs with approved training programs for blended learning.

Lastly, the MARINA believes that the Philippines will be able to increase its deployment of seafarers as a result of this blended learning scheme and assures the public that the implementation of this approach will be monitored and properly handled to maintain the quality of maritime education in the country despite the rising number of confirmed cases of COVID-19.



*With face to face classes suspended for the time being, hands-on training like CPR and first-aid will have to be delivered through digital platforms.*

## DOTr ACTIVATES 3 PORTS AS CREW CHANGE HUBS IN ONE MONTH: SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE STARTS AS HUB

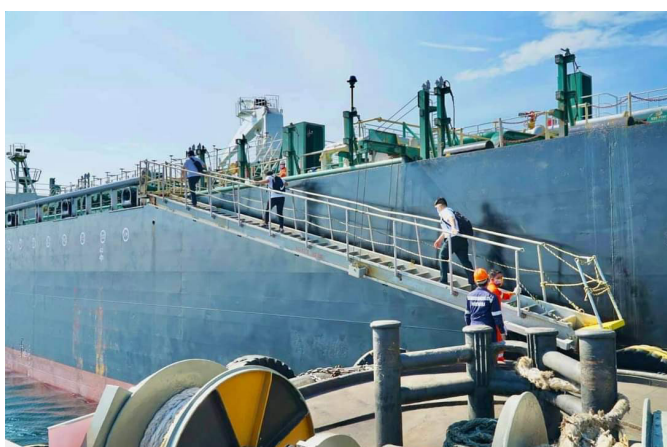
Facing restrictions imposed by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on the country's maritime industry, the Department of Transportation (DOTr), through its Maritime Sector, is now activating crew change hubs to address the global need for fresh crew of ships operated by around 1.5 million seafarers, 378,000 or 25% of which are Filipinos.

"This month alone, the DOTr maritime sector was able to open and activate three crew change hubs in the country. These are located at the Port of Manila, Port of Capinpin in Bataan, and today, at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone. It is my hope for the Philippines to become a major international hub for crew change," Secretary Tugade said.

On August 19, Port Capinpin in Bataan joined the Port of Manila as a crew change hub. Other ports for activation include Batangas, Davao, and Cebu.



*Port authorities guide the Filipino seafarers upon their arrival at the Subic Bay Freeport.*



*Arrival of Filipino seafarers at the Subic Bay Freeport.*

Crew change is essential to ensure seafarers' safety, health, welfare and employment as they can only serve on board a vessel without leave up to a maximum of 11 months based on International Labour Organization (ILO) 2006 Maritime Labour Convention (MLC).

The activation of crew change hubs will primarily benefit seafarers, recognized globally as key workers, who are stranded onboard ships with expired contracts due to travel restrictions aimed to curtail the spread of COVID-19.

"To guarantee that the health and safety of seafarers and the public are protected while we work on this endeavor, the DOTr and its attached agencies are activating hubs in close coordination with various government agencies and units involved in crew changes," OIC-Assistant Secretary for Maritime Vice Admiral Narciso Vingson, Jr. said.

On August 22, the DOTr, through the Office for Transportation Security (OTS), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) also activated the Subic Bay Freeport Zone as a crew change hub. This is made possible after series of consultations with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) and the local government of Zambales, Bataan and Olongapo City.

Meanwhile, MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad underscored the need to establish crew change hubs in the country especially now that there is a pandemic.

"This has been a significant cause of worry, as seafarers of all nationalities are already experiencing immense physical and mental fatigue brought on by overstaying onboard ships at sea. If this continues, delivery of essential cargo will be affected. Having crew change hubs in the country will solve this problem and give our seafarers the advantage of swift processing due to the established protocols," Administrator Empedrad highlighted. (c/o DOTr Communications Team)



## MARINA COMMUNICATES PH GUIDELINES ON GREEN LANE TO IMO; ENSURES SPEEDY, SAFE TRAVELS OF SEAFARERS AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The Department of Transportation (DOTr), through its maritime sector, conducts the first crew change operations outside Metro Manila at Port Capinpin in Orion, Bataan.

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) communicated recently to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) the Philippine Guidelines for the establishment of the Philippines Green Lane to facilitate the speedy and safe travels of seafarers, including their safe and swift disembarkation, and crew change during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a response to the international organization's recommendations for safe ship crew changes.

These guidelines were formulated through an inter-agency effort in order to expedite the travels of seafarers involved in deployment, disembarkation, and crew changes by establishing a Philippines Green Lane.

In addition, the MARINA has also issued MARINA Advisory 2020-60 and 2020-61 which highlights the various crew change protocols from other IMO Member States that may be used by licensed manning agencies, shipowners, ship operators, and other concerned entities in the Philippine maritime sector.

On 21 August 2020, the Philippines through the MARINA presented the country's crew change practices during the virtual meeting of Maritime Experts Group of the Transportation Working Group (TPT) of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The virtual forum was attended by more than 100 delegates from the 21 Member Economies. The MARINA assures the public that the Agency will continue to monitor IMO Circular Letters relating to ship crew changes and inform stakeholders accordingly.



A Filipino seafarer, carrying his luggage, undergoes the first crew change operations at the Port of Capinpin in Bataan.



First batch of seafarers participating in the first crew change operations outside Metro Manila at Port Capinpin in Orion, Bataan. This government initiative strengthens the country's commitment to make the Philippines an international crew change hub.

# PHILIPPINES COMMITS AS MAJOR CREW CHANGE HUB IN ASEAN MARITIME CONFAB; UPDATES EFFORTS ON COVID-19, OTHER INITIATIVES

The Philippines, through the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) committed itself on 27 August 2020 to becoming a major international hub for crew change before the 39th Meeting of the Maritime Transport Working Group of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its Dialogue Partners such as China, Japan, Korea and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). This is the first time that the meeting was held virtually amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

MARINA Administrator Robert A Empedrad, who headed the Philippine Delegation, said that the Philippines as a responsible member of the international maritime community continues to cooperate with Member States for the facilitation and safe movement of the world's seafarers noting their importance in the stability of the global seaborne trade. As a major provider of seafarers to the global labor market, he further mentioned that the Philippines has already opened the Ports of Manila, Bataan and Subic for international crew change and that the country is looking forward to the opening of its other international ports for this purpose.

"Given that seafarers play a crucial role in local and global maritime community, the welfare of these key workers should be of prime importance. As such, our maritime sector is working diligently to activate crew change hubs in the country to give maritime vessels the avenue to refresh their manpower, and to provide relief to our hardworking seafarers," Empedrad said. "They are the lifeline of the world's economy as such they are our essential workers. In the Philippines, our seafarers are our indispensable partners for our country's economic development."



A Filipino seafarer getting assistance from port authorities as part of the first crew change operation in the newly opened hub in Bataan earlier this month went smoothly as headed by Department of Transportation through the Maritime Industry Authority.

## Philippines' Maritime Initiatives amidst COVID-19 Pandemic

At this meeting, Administrator Empedrad assured that the Philippines continues to exert its utmost effort to keep the maritime industry afloat through a "whole-of-government approach" amidst the pandemic.

At this unprecedented time, he ensured that the supply chains, including the maritime sector in the Philippines, remain operational with the implementation of several measures such as the: 1) use of automated systems to lessen face-to-face transactions; 2) creation of a Shipping Protection Office, which protects both domestic and international shippers against unreasonable fees and charges imposed by the shipping lines; 3) decongestion of ports; 4) issuance of directive for all domestic shipping lines to provide

cargo space and allocation for agricultural and food products, and providing preferential cargo rates; and 5) extension of STCW certificates for seafarers that are still on board ships.



MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad leads the Philippine Delegation during the 39th Meeting of the Maritime Transport Working Group of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).



## Philippines' Initiatives on the Implementation of Maritime Transport-Related Measures Under Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan (KLTSPP)

The Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan (KLTSPP) 2016-2025 is a 10-year masterplan for the ASEAN transport sector, which aims to enhance regional economic integration.

One of the projects under the KLTSPP is the ASEAN Single Shipping Market (ASSM). Administrator Empedrad provided updates on the progress of the Pilot Project regarding the operationalization of ASSM, and coordination efforts to support the sustainability of Davao-General Santos-Bitung route Ro-Ro operation. The ASSM aims to improve the region's logistics performance and international competitiveness.

Aside from ASSM, the Philippines conveyed its support and participation in the succeeding phase of the

"Advanced Personnel Training Program for Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)" project as its ports acquire more VTS facilities and equipment to improve the delivery of service to stakeholders. The VTS refers to the marine traffic monitoring system established by harbour or port authorities.

Further, Administrator Empedrad also conveyed the country's support to the ASEAN's proposed project relating to the "Conduct of a package of ASEAN-China Maritime Transport Studies". The said study aims at maximizing the potential of maritime trade between the ASEAN region and China through the assessment of economic benefits of the shipping network, and identification of possible cooperation areas.

## First Virtual ASEAN Maritime Transport Working Group (MTWG) Since the Occurrence of Global Pandemic



The 39th Meeting of the Maritime Transport Working Group of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its Dialogue Partners such as China, Japan, Korea and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). This is the first time that the meeting was held virtually amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 39th ASEAN MTWG meeting aims to provide updates on the status and implementation of the measures and strategic actions on maritime related programs, projects and activities under the KLTSPP 2016-2025.

The said meeting was attended by the ASEAN Member States delegates from Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia,

Laos, and the Philippines. It is likewise participated by the dialogue partners from Japan, China, Republic of Korea and International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The ASEAN MTWG Meetings are conducted twice a year to monitor the progress in the implementation of the KLTSPP (2016-2025) and to discuss various ASEAN transport-related initiatives.