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MARINA HOSTS 2020 NATIONAL MARITIME WEEK CELEBRATION

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) hosted the nationwide celebration of the 2020 National Maritime Week from 20-27 September 2020 to highlight the importance of maritime safety, security, and environmental protection, as well as to enjoin all member states to celebrate World Maritime Day.

"Sustainable Shipping for a Sustainable Planet", the theme of the World Maritime Day 2020, was also adopted as this year's theme for the National Maritime Week celebration. The theme aims to raise awareness about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the way Member States are striving to achieve these targets.

Kickstarting the event was an opening ceremony with an address delivered by MARINA Administrator VADM Robert A Empedrad. Also, part of the ceremony was the official opening of the MARINA Regional Office - National Capital Region which was celebrated with a virtual tour of the office premises. The opening of the MARINA Regional Office - NCR is part of the agency's initiatives to strengthen the presence of the MROs.

A three-day virtual Maritime Industry Symposium was also held from 23-25 September 2020. Topics discussed covered mainly the initiatives, innovations, and investments to sustain the course of the Philippine maritime industry, including those concerning developments in maritime manpower, shipbuilding and ship repair, and domestic and overseas shipping.

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MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad, together with Atty. Sharon Aledo and SRS Director Engr. Ramon Hernandez, lead the opening ceremony of the MARINA NCR.



As part of the celebration National Maritime Week 2020, the MARINA Regional Office XIII conducts a Mangrove Planting activity at Sitio Panubigon, Brgy. Lipata, Surigao City.

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NATIONAL MARITIME WEEK CELEBRATION...

The industry symposium was an avenue for important discussions regarding the pressing issues the industry currently faces and a way to strengthen collaborations between maritime stakeholders and the government.

"The symposium allowed us to discuss and collaborate strategic solutions for the industry to move forward," the Administrator stated.

Despite the challenge of hosting a major event such as the National Maritime Week 2020 amidst the ongoing pandemic, the Agency has made use of digital media platforms to host virtual events that stakeholders can participate in.

"The maritime industry reflects the resiliency of the Filipinos. We firmly hope to overcome this challenge

by taking advantage of opportunities that come along during this pandemic. For as long as the government, the maritime stakeholders, and the people will work together for a progressive maritime nation, there is no reason not to succeed," the Administrator further said.



MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert Empedrad during the virtual opening ceremony of the National Maritime Week

MARINA, PHL MARITIME ADMINISTRATION CONTINUE TO FIRM UP PREPS FOR INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AUDIT IN 2022

Bracing for the unique challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Transportation (DOTr), together with relevant government agencies performing maritime administration functions, continue to firm up preparations to ensure that the Philippines hurdles its mandatory audit under the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) scheduled to be carried out in the country in October 2022.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 84, series of 2019, the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Inter-Agency Council on the International Maritime Organization Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) met virtually on 09 September 2020 to verify the feasibility of the Key Performance Indicators targeted for the Philippine Maritime Strategy on the Implementation and Enforcement of the Relevant IMO Instruments for 2020-2024 approved by the IMSAS Council last 10 June 2020. The meeting likewise reviewed the 2019 Non-Exhaustive List of Obligations (NELO) under Instruments Relevant to the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code) to determine the areas by which the Philippines will have to focus more for its preparations. The 2019 NELO is a useful tool for the

State as it enumerates the obligations of a Contracting Government, Flag State, Coastal State and Port State under mandatory instruments relevant to the III Code.

The Philippines will be audited by the IMO with regard to its implementation of the mandatory IMO conventions to which the country is a State Party particularly on how it has given full and complete effect to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), the International Convention on Load Lines (LL and LL PROT 88), International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships (TONNAGE), and Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREG), and its Protocols.

Aside from the 2019 NELO, it can also be recalled that the IMSAS Council had approved the country's Cross Table of Responsibilities and the Philippine Strategy on the Implementation and Enforcement of Relevant IMO Instruments during the 2nd Inter-agency Council Meeting on the IMSAS held on 10 June 2020.

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The said two documents are vital for the mandatory audit in October 2022. The Cross Table is a prerequisite to the drafting of the Philippine Strategy, as it clearly delineates the obligations and interrelationship among maritime entities performing Flag State, Port State and Coastal State functions as prescribed by the relevant IMO Instruments. The Philippine Strategy, on the other hand, aims to enhance maritime safety and protection of the environment and to meet international obligations and responsibilities as a member of the IMO.

Apart from the documentary preparations, the Philippine maritime administration likewise conducted an Inter-agency Webinar on IMSAS and a Verification Audit to different maritime government agencies this year ensuring the capacity building of its technical personnel.

Part of Philippine compliance for this audit is an evidence that the country has formulated national provisions to these Conventions.

Presently, the MARINA continues to lobby for the passage into law of the proposed bill entitled, "An Act Providing for the Full and Effective Implementation and Enforcement of International Maritime Instruments of which the Philippines is a State Party". This proposed measure is currently at the House Committee on Transportation of the House Representatives to which the Senate had likewise submitted its counterpart version.

The Philippines is originally scheduled to be audited in 2021. However, the IMO decided that IMSAS Audits due for 2020 to 2021 be pushed back a year and are now to be conducted in 2022 and 2023, respectively, in view of the pandemic.



MARINA, MARINO PL SOLON WELCOME PRESIDENT DUTERTE'S ORDER TO DFA TO ASSIST STRANDED SEAFARERS ABROAD AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) and Marino Party-list Representative Sandro Gonzalez have welcomed the pronouncement of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, ordering the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to extend assistance to stranded seafarers abroad due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a televised public address that aired last September 14, 2020, the chief executive of the Marino party-list noted the woeful conditions of Filipino seafarers whose ships were prevented from docking in some countries as a safety measure against the deadly virus. President Duterte ordered diplomatic officials to look into the matter and act immediately.

According to Gonzalez, this is a welcome development as Filipino seafarers both locally and overseas have been experiencing the ill effects of the pandemic.

"I thank the President for recognizing the urgency of addressing the problems of our seafarers. They have been dealing with the effects of the pandemic since its outbreak early this year. Our office received distress calls from seafarers themselves and their families and relatives, narrating to us their condition in some ships overseas. In retrospect, some seafarers who are awaiting their deployment on ships also got stranded in Metro Manila as their employment got

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halted indefinitely. We forwarded all these concerns to government agencies, including DFA, for appropriate action," Gonzalez shared.

MARINA Administrator Robert Empedrad said that his Agency has been continuing to implement the best and practicable strategies in dealing with the adverse effects of the pandemic for those greatly affected seafarers who are currently stranded.

"Aside from detailed procedures and health and safety protocols for the repatriation and the conduct of crew change, in authorized domestic and international ports in the country, we also communicated recently to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) the Philippines 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 this crisis. MARINA has likewise extended the validity of seafarer-related certificates until the end of the year," VAdm Empedrad added.

MARINA, at present, seeks funding for three projects, namely the building of seafarers' dormitory, additional support for facilities for crew change, and allocation of P5 million for the PH 2021 Candidature to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Council.

"I strongly support MARINA's programs and projects for seafarers. The time is ripe to pass measures that will protect the well-being of seafarers if this kind of crisis happens again in the future. The seafarers' dormitory, for one, will provide shelter for the seafarers as they await their overseas deployment," Gonzalez shared.

Both organizations have also agreed to strengthen their partnership and continue their discussions particularly on ways to modernize the organizational structure of the MARINA, as well as to accelerate the enactment into law of various legislative measures that seek to advance the country's maritime industry and promote the general welfare of Filipino seafarers and other maritime professionals.

DOTr CONDUCTS FIRST CREW CHANGE OPERATIONS AT THE PORT OF CAPINPIN IN BATAAN

Strengthening its commitment to make the Philippines an international crew change hub, the Department of Transportation (DOTr), through its maritime sector, conducted the first crew change operations outside Metro Manila at Port Capinpin in Orion, Bataan last 5 September 2020.

This, after all operational requirements for the location, such as the establishment of a One-Stop Shop (OSS), RT-PCR testing booths, quarantine facilities, anchorage, application and Customs, Immigration, and Quarantine (CIQ) procedures, and tugboats were finalized and approved.

According to Office for Transportation Security (OTS) Administrator and OSS Head, Undersecretary Raul Del Rosario, it took more than a month to establish the OSS in Port Capinpin.

"To be exact, 1 month and 1 week bago natin na-put up ang OSS dito sa Orion. Kinailangan kasi

nating i-match ang mga protocols na ipapatupad natin sa One-Stop Shop doon sa mga protocols ng Bataan Provincial IATF. Ang role ng One-Stop Shop ay iipun-ipunin ang concerned agencies sa crew change protocol. Kasama na d'yan ang mga agencies under the DOTr— Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), OTS, MARINA, at 'yung ibang agencies na ka-partner natin gaya ng Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Quarantine, Bureau of Immigration, OWWA at PNP, at ang LGU na talagang nagbabantay para sa prevention ng COVID," Usec Del Rosario said.

Port Capinpin, a port being operated and managed by the PPA, was activated as a crew change hub on August 19.

The activation of crew change hubs was directed by DOTr Secretary Arthur Tugade to help address the global need for fresh crew of ships, and to ensure the health, safety, welfare and employment of seafarers
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as they can only serve on board a vessel without leave up to 11 months based on International Labour Organization (ILO) 2006 Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). This will primarily benefit seafarers, who are stranded onboard ships with expired contracts due to imposed travel restrictions due to COVID-19.



Strengthening its commitment to make the Philippines an international crew change hub, the Department of Transportation (DOTr), through its maritime sector, conducts the first crew change operations outside Metro Manila at Port Capinpin in Orion, Bataan.

Strict protocols and procedures were set by the OSS to ensure the smooth implementation of crew change operations. Prior to embarkation, seafarers are required to undergo RT-PCR testing 72 hours before boarding. After getting a negative result, they will be subjected to physical examination by the BOQ, as well as Customs and Immigration procedures. Upon obtaining clearance, they will be sent to the vessel where they will receive handover of duties from off signees. On the other hand, off signing seafarers are required to undergo CIQ procedures onboard vessel. Once fully cleared by authorities, they will be sent to the port for disembarkation, debriefing, RT-PCR testing and quarantine.

To further help seafarers, PPA General Manager Jay Santiago said that the PPA is currently constructing a 100-bed quarantine facility at Port Capinpin, which may be used by seafarers waiting for the result of their COVID-19 test.

"We are now constructing a 100-bed quarantine facility that can be used by our seafarers waiting for their RT-PCR results. Accommodation is for free. This facility will be completed in less than a month. Funds used to construct this facility is part of the Php100-million donation from the Lopez Group of companies," PPA GM Santiago said.

Meanwhile, according to DOTr OIC-Assistant Secretary for Maritime Vice Admiral Narciso Vingson Jr., aside from the OSS, the Covid-19 Molecular Laboratory at the Port of Manila has also been completed, and is now just awaiting accreditation/license from the Department of Health (DOH). This molecular laboratory can service the requirements of the Port of Capinpin, and can release testing results in 24-48 hours.

"Ang crew change hub operations natin ay napakaganda kasi kumpleto na siya. Ang PPA nagput up din ng sariling molecular lab na kaya mag-test ng 2,000 samples. That's not exclusive to seafarers. They can also open it to walk-ins. We can release the results within 24 to 48 hours, depende sa volume of samples," Asec Vingson said.

In August, a total of three crew change hubs were activated by the DOTr, which are located at the Port of Manila, Port of Capinpin, and at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Other ports for activation include Batangas, Davao, and Cebu.

Prior to activation, prospective crew change hubs are required to establish a one-stop-shop to process the crew change, that includes health screening (swab testing). The location must have sufficient and appropriate quarantine facility and CIQ facilities and established procedures.

Also present during the event are PPA PMO Aurora/Bataan Project Manager Allan Rojo, PCG Bataan Station Commander Larry Cendaña, MARINA-METSS Capt. Vicente Navarro, BOQ Bataan Station Chief Dr. Emmanuel Sto. Domingo, and the respective representatives from the Bureau of Immigration, Bureau of Customs, the Local Government of Bataan, Local Manning Agencies (LMAs) and shipping agents. (c/o DOTr Communications Team)



A Filipino seafarer receives assistance from the port authorities during the crew change operations.

MARINA PUBLISHES UPDATED GUIDELINES ON PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND AUTHORIZED CAPACITY OF PASSENGER SHIPS OPERATING IN AREAS UNDER MGCQ, GCQ



Arrival of locally stranded individuals (LSIs) to their provinces via passenger ship.

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) has published guidelines on the optimization of physical distancing and carriage of passengers on board passenger ships as a way to boost ridership in public transportation.

This is in response to Resolution No. 67 issued by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), and in line with the proposal made by the Economic Development Cluster (EDC) and the Department of Transportation (DOTr) to increase the number of commuters by reducing the physical distance required in public transportation.

The MARINA Advisory No. 69 provides the physical distance required between riders and the number of passengers allowed on board, which are completely dependent on the classification of community quarantine where the ships are currently operating. The periods of the effectivity of these guidelines are also provided in the said Advisory.

A 0.75 meter of physical distance between passengers and an authorized capacity of 75% is allowed for ships traveling from areas under GCQ to GCQ, and vice versa. Meanwhile, a .50 meter of physical distance between passengers and an authorized capacity of 85% is allowed for passenger ships operating in areas under GCQ which will be traveling to areas under MGCQ, and vice versa. Lastly, passenger

ships traveling from areas under MGCQ to MGCQ are allowed to have .30 meter of physical distance between passengers and an authorized capacity of 90%.

Additionally, the mandatory wearing of face masks and face shields for passengers including the officers and ship crew, and a one (1) meter physical distance between passengers during boarding and disembarkation will be strictly implemented.

It is urged that stakeholders should comply with these ship safety rules and regulations, implement safety protocols and precautionary measures set, so that the public can adapt to contain the spread of COVID-19 as promoting habits. The health of the seagoing public and commuters necessitates safety protocols and policies.

The commitment of MARINA to all ship owners, ship operators, ship managers, bareboat charterers, and all concerned stakeholders is to ensure maritime safety at all times, especially amidst the ongoing pandemic.

The condition that all ships operating in routes or areas under ECQ or MECQ shall be limited to the carriage of cargoes is retained while all other MARINA Advisories and issuances inconsistent with MA 2020-69 are amended accordingly.



MARINA frontliners on standby to assist locally stranded individuals (LSIs) arriving in different regions nationwide.

GOOD NEWS!

MARINA EXTENDS EXPIRING STCW CERTIFICATES TO ONE YEAR

The Maritime Industry Authority, through its Advisory No. 2020-66, has recently issued a one-year extension of the validity of STCW certificates of Filipino seafarers, as part of the Agency's temporary contingency measure amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

All STCW certificates, which are expiring between 01 September 2020 to 31 December 2020, shall be extended for a period of one (1) year from the date of expiry of the certificate without filing for an application at the MARINA.

This applies to all STCW certificates of all Filipino seafarers who are both onboard or ashore at the time of expiry of their certificates, and are compliant with the provisions that are mentioned by MARINA on its advisory.

Firstly, the seafarer must have a completed approved seagoing service performing duties appropriate to the certificate held, for a period of at least: twelve (12) months in total during the last 5 years prior to revalidation or; three (3) months in total during the last 6 months immediately prior to revalidation.

Meanwhile, for Certificate of Proficiency (COP) in tanker courses, the seafarer must have completed approved seagoing service performing the duties appropriate to the tank certificate held, for a period of at least 3 months in total during the preceding 5 years. Lastly, the seafarer must meet the standards of medical fitness specified in Section A-I/9 of the STCW Code.

Aside from the provisions mentioned above, all the seafarers are also encouraged to apply for revalidation of their Certificate of Competency (COC) and Certificate of Proficiency (COP) after completing their online/offline courses, as applicable to their certificate to be revalidated at the earliest opportunity, in accordance with the standard requirements for revalidation. The five (5)-year validity date shall be reckoned from the original expiration date of the previous certificate.

On the other hand, the concerned licensed manning agencies and shipping companies are required to ensure that their crew are compliant with the above-mentioned STCW requirements, and are hereby directed to submit to MARINA the list of their crewmember/s whose validity of STCW certificate/s have been extended pursuant to this Advisory. An electronic copy of the said information shall be submitted via e-mail at certificate_extension_extension@mail.marina.gov.ph following the attached template in Annex A that can be found in the advisory.

The MARINA has been aware of the challenges in the maritime industry amidst COVID-19 pandemic, especially in terms of conduct of trainings, revalidation of certificates, and ship to shore interactions including crew changes, that is why the Agency is continuously exerting its maximum effort to adapt to the changes without compromising the employment opportunities of Filipino seafarers.



Amid the threat brought by COVID-19 pandemic, Filipino seafarers still undergo normal processing of documents at the MARINA Central Office.

GOOD NEWS!

MARINA EXTENDS EXPIRING SIRBs, SRBs FOR SEAFARERS ONBOARD, ASHORE TO ONE YEAR

As part of its efforts to further assist Filipino seafarers who are experiencing difficulties in crew changes and disembarkation and to promote their continued employment, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) has issued MARINA Advisory 2020-67, which grants a one (1)-year extension for expiring Seafarer's Record Books (SRBs) and Seafarers Identification and Record Books (SIRBs).

All SRBs and SIRBs of seafarers currently serving on board ships and ashore, which are expiring between 13 March 2020 to 31 December 2020, shall be extended for one (1) year from the date of expiry without having to file for an application at the MARINA.

However, the MARINA strongly encourages seafarers who are not currently onboard to renew their SIRBs/SRBs six (6) months prior to the document's expiration in order to avoid the expected influx of SIRB/SRB renewal next year.

Additionally, manning/crewing agencies and shipping companies advised to submit a list of their crewmember/s whose validity of their SRBs and SIRBs has been extended through the said Advisory via e-mail at mds@marina.gov.ph. A format is provided in Annex A of the said Advisory which can be downloaded in the MARINA website.

The issuance of this Advisory effectively repeals MARINA Advisory 2020-58.

By public interest, the MARINA has been compelled to issue this Advisory as a way to promote the continued employment of our seafarers, facilitate crew change and their repatriation and to allow those ashore to spend more time at home with their loved ones.

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A Filipino seafarer poses for a photo with a smile in his face, showing how he was contented in the processing of his Seafarers Identification and Record Book (SIRB).