



THE

MARINA NEWSLETTER

June 2021

VOL III No. 6 | Official Publication of the Maritime Industry Authority | Republic of the Philippines

“SAILING WITH EXCELLENCE AMID THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES”: MARINA CELEBRATES 47TH FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) marked its 47th founding anniversary celebration with the theme, “Sailing With Excellence Amid the Challenges of Our Times”, through an array of virtual and face-to-face activities conducted at the MARINA Central Office on 17 June 2021.

The event commenced with the arrival of the Guest of Honor, Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Arthur P. Tugade, with special guest MARINO Partylist Representative, Hon. Sandro L. Gonzalez. Other accompanying officials that graced the event included Associated Marine Officers and Seamens Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) President Dr. Conrado Oca, Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) General Manager Jay Daniel Santiago, DOTr Assistant Secretary for Maritime Narciso A. Vingson, Jr., and DOTr Assistant Secretary for Communications and Commuter Affairs Goddess Hope Libiran.

To formally kick things off, MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert A Empedrad AFP (Ret) gave out his opening address. “The MARINA thrived during this most challenging period of its existence, and with all honesty and humility. I believe we were able to overcome the major and hardest difficulties we have ever faced.” Administrator Empedrad noted, going on to say that the MARINA continues to achieve major feats such as the establishment of the seafarers' condotel, activation of crew change hubs, and the vaccination of seafarers.

Numerous video presentations were prepared as part of the day's commemoration of the MARINA's achievements throughout the years, together with the simultaneous unveiling of future projects. The



MARINA Officials, led by Administrator Robert A Empedrad, together with DOTr Secretary Arthur Tugade, MARINO Partylist Representative, Hon. Sandro L. Gonzalez, and AMOSUP President Dr. Conrado Oca during the 47th Founding Anniversary celebration.

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Members of the Editorial Board assume full responsibility for all articles and contributions published in this Newsletter.

MARINA CELEBRATES 47TH FOUNDING...

audio-visual presentation on the accomplishments of the Agency in 2020 outlined the many triumphs of the MARINA in spite of the circumstances of the ongoing pandemic. Meanwhile, a short video teaser was released for the launching of the Filipino Seafarers' Heroes Foundation, which was created to honor the lives of seafarers who perished while serving at sea.

The MARINA 47th Anniversary Celebration was also a chance for the winners of the #MARINAVirtualSingingContest to showcase their talents. Finalists Apol M. Diago of the MARINA STCW Office, Public Information Division (STCWO-PID), and Germaine Betero of the MARINA Domestic Shipping Service (DSS) serenaded the guests with their live performances, while fellow finalists Juliemar Esther Bea (MARINA Regional Office V), Chelsea Lumella Dante (MARINA Regional Office VIII), and Isay Rodriguez (MARINA Regional Office IV) joined in through their virtual production numbers.

After the special presentation, special guest and MARINO Partylist Representative Sandro L. Gonzalez delivered his special address. "In its 47 years, MARINA has been at the forefront of forwarding the development of our maritime sector, most especially, the welfare of our Filipino seafarers," Gonzalez said. "Despite the challenges of this pandemic, we in the MARINO Partylist are proud that our close relationship with MARINA has enabled us to contribute to this new age of service to our seafarers," he continued, acknowledging that the close coordination between the MARINA and MARINO Partylist allowed for extensive assistance of seafarers in need.

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MARINO Partylist Rep. Hon. Sandro L. Gonzalez, during the 47th Founding Anniversary celebration.

Finally, the MARINA 47th Anniversary Celebration concluded with an inspirational message from the Guest of Honor, DOTr Secretary Arthur P. Tugade. During his speech, he praises the MARINA for initiating the ceremonial vaccination of seafarers and the signing of the MOU for the CONDOTEL for seafarers, as these two activities capture the true essence of the MARINA's mandate to serve its stakeholders. "Marami kayong ginagawa, at patuloy na ginagawa sa administrasyon ni Vice Admiral Empedrad," he stated.

The MARINA 47th Anniversary Celebration started off with a pre-celebration ceremony held last 01 June 2021, which involved a mass, blessing of the MARINA Central Office building, and recognition and awarding of several MARINA offices and personnel.



DOTr Secretary Arthur Tugade delivers his speech during the 47th Founding Anniversary celebration.

The MARINA was created pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 474 on 01 June 1974.

MARINA STARTS OFF JUNE WITH 47TH ANNIVERSARY PRE-CELEBRATION



The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) commences its 47th founding anniversary with a pre-celebration held last 01 June 2021.

To kickstart the month-long celebration, the Agency held a holy mass followed by the blessing of the MARINA building.

Along with the much-awaited finals of the #MARINAVirtualSingingContest, another activity conducted was the recognition and awarding of several MARINA Offices and personnel.

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DOTR, MARINO PARTYLIST, AMOSUP SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON CONDOTEL FOR SEAFARERS



DOTr Secretary Arthur Tugade, Marino Partylist's Hon. Sandro L. Gonzalez, and AMOSUP's Dr. Conrado F. Oca, together with MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert A Empedrad AFP (Ret) and PPA General Manager Jay Daniel R. Santiago pose for a photo opportunity during the signing of MOU on CONDOTEL for Seafarers.

The Department of Transportation (DOTr), Marino Partylist, and Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) forged an alliance during the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) celebration of the 47th Anniversary on 17 June 2021 by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on CONDOTEL for Seafarers.

The agreement is part of the commitment in recognizing the Filipino seafarers who play a vital role in the growth and development of the Philippine economy through their local employment taxes, foreign remittances and other economic activities.

Transportation Secretary Arthur P. Tugade, Marino Partylist's Hon. Sandro L. Gonzalez, and AMOSUP's Dr. Conrado F. Oca signed the MOU, solidifying their partnership in providing Filipino seafarers affordable temporary living facilities in close proximity to the MARINA and other maritime enterprises.

"Napakagandang pangitain na kung nagse-celebrate tayo ng Anibersaryo, binibigyang importansya ang mga marino. In fact, the highlight of today's gathering can be summed up into two. Una ay ang pagpirma

ng Memorandum of Understanding regarding CONDOTEL na pinapakita natin sa mga marino – na para bang sinasabi ng MARINA – nandirito at gagawa kami ng gusali na kung saan doon kayo mananatili, doon kayo maninirahan at doon kayo gagabayan. Napakagandang pangitain," Secretary Tugade emphasized in his inspirational message.

Secretary Tugade also recognized the efforts of Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) General Manager Jay Daniel Santiago for the providing the land for the CONDOTEL, as well as the commitment of Marino Partylist and AMOSUP for the adequate budget to be timely available for the construction of the said building.

Meanwhile, Marino Partylist Cong. Gonzalez expressed his gratitude for close relationship with the MARINA, enabling them to contribute to this new age of service to the Filipino seafarers.

Witnessing officials of the signing of the MOU include MARINA Administrator Vice Admiral Robert A Empedrad AFP (Ret) and PPA General Manager Jay Daniel R. Santiago.

MARINA HOLDS CEREMONIAL VACCINATION VS. COVID-19 FOR FILIPINO SEAFARERS

As part of its 47th Founding Anniversary celebration, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) held a ceremonial vaccination of Filipino seafarers on 17 June 2021. Fourteen (14) Filipino seafarers got their first jab of the Sinovac-CoronaVac vaccine at the AMOSUP Seamen's Center. This was made possible through the offer made by Dr Conrado Oca, AMOSUP President to have the ceremonial vaccination done at the Seamen's Center.

The Ceremonial Vaccination of Filipino Seafarers served as an avenue for the country's seafarers to have themselves officially inoculated against COVID-19 before they go on to their voyage in the next couple of months. The 14 individuals were endorsed by their respective manning agencies in coordination with the Association of Licensed Manning Agencies (ALMA).

Seafarers, who travel for long periods of time and call ports all across the globe, were initially categorized under B3 or 'Other Essential Workers' and B5 or 'Overseas Filipino Workers' in the national vaccination priority framework. But with the recommendation of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), seafarers were placed under priority group A4 or 'Frontline Personnel in Essential Sectors. and recently as A1.

Some of those in queue extended their gratitude and appreciation for Transportation Secretary Arthur P. Tugade and the MARINO Partylist. One of the seafarers, a chief engineer who is scheduled to go on board this year, encouraged his fellow mariners to register for the vaccination program, which is usually administered by the local government units (LGUs). He also emphasized that this would significantly help to protect his family from potential infection as he is a frontliner.

Secretary Tugade had earlier described the maritime workforce as the 'silent workers' of the nation, as they keep the economy thriving. The move to reclassify seafarers to A4 was made possible by the Inter-Agency Working Group composed of the DOTr, MARINA, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE),

Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Bureau of Quarantine (BOQ), and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) through its Maritime and Ocean Affairs, the Association of Licensed Manning Agencies Maritime Group, Joint Manning Group (JMG), Filipino Association for Mariner's Employment (FAME), and the Philippine Association of Manning Agencies and Ship Managers (PAMAS) were also represented in the working group.

The Ceremonial Vaccination was witnessed virtually by Secretary Tugade, the MARINO Partylist, MARINA Administrator Ret Vice Admiral Robert A Empedrad, and STCWO Executive Director Ret Vice Admiral Rene V Medina.



The ceremonial vaccination at the Seamen's Center where in Filipino seafarers, who are endorsed by their respective manning agencies, in coordination with the Association of Licensed Manning Agencies (ALMA), line up and get their first jab of the Sinovac-CoronaVac vaccine. This ceremonial vaccination serves as an avenue for the country's seafarers to have themselves officially inoculated against COVID-19.

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MARINA FURTHER EXTENDS VALIDITY OF STCW CERTIFICATES

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), through its Advisory No. 2021-29, further extended the validity of STCW Certificates as a temporary contingency measure amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

All STCW certificates previously extended by virtue of earlier issued MARINA Advisories bearing reference numbers "MA-2020-83", "MA-2020-73", "MA-2020-66", and "MA-2020-64" (all series of 2020) but were not re-validated up to now due to lack of refresher training, as applicable to their certificate to be revalidated, shall be extended up to 31 December 2021 without need to file for an application of extension at the MARINA. This applies to all seafarers who are both ONBOARD or ASHORE on the date of issue of the said Advisory.

All STCW certificates issued by MARINA that are expiring between the period 01 July 2021 to 31 December 2021 (dates inclusive) shall be extended for a period of ONE (1) YEAR from the date of expiry of the certificates without the need to file for an application of extension at the MARINA. This applies only to all seafarers who are ONBOARD on the date of issue of this Advisory.

The concerned licensed manning agencies and shipping companies are required to ensure that the crew are compliant with the above-mentioned STCW requirements, and are hereby directed to submit to MARINA the list of their crew member/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 email at certificate_extension@mail_marina.gov.ph following the attached template in Annex A.

VALIDITY OF EXPIRING SRBS, SIRBS ON 01 JULY–31 DECEMBER 2021 NOW EXTENDED TO ONE YEAR – MARINA

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) has once again issued an advisory, which grants a one (1)-year extension for expiring Seafarer's Record Books (SRBs) and Seafarers Identification and Record Books (SIRBs) from 01 July 2021 to 31 December 2021 to further assist Filipino seafarers who are experiencing difficulties in crew changes and disembarkation and to promote their continued employment.

"All Seafarer's Record Books (SRBs) or Seafarers' Identification and Record Books (SIRBs), expiring between 01 July 2021 to 31 December 2021, shall be extended for a period of one (1) year from the date of expiry without the need to file for its renewal at the MARINA. This applies to SRB or SIRB of all Filipino Seafarers who are ONBOARD at the time of the expiry of their respective SIRB or SRB," stated in the Advisory.

Further, the MARINA directed all concerned manning or crewing agencies and shipping companies to submit to the agency the list of their crew members whose validity of SIRB/SRB have been extended pursuant to the 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 2020-91.

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.

MARINA LEADS SIMULTANEOUS NATIONWIDE VACCINATION FOR FILIPINO SEAFARERS IN CELEBRATION OF DAY OF THE SEAFARER

The Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), together with all its Regional Offices and maritime stakeholders, conducted a simultaneous nationwide vaccination for domestic and overseas Filipino seafarers in the celebration of the Day of the Seafarer 2021 on 25 June 2021.

This year's campaign calls for a "Fair Future 4 Seafarers," encouraging governments and world leaders to provide support by ensuring that fair treatment and working conditions are granted for seafarers all around the globe.

3,120 FILIPINO SEAFARERS INOCULATED IN SIMULTANEOUS NATIONWIDE VACCINATION

A total of 3,120 Filipino seafarers, both domestic and overseas, got their first jab of anti-COVID-19 vaccines in simultaneous nationwide inoculation activities on the Day of the Filipino Seafarer. The population was a mix of overseas seafarers, who are scheduled to go on to their next voyage in the next few months, and domestic seafarers.

Seafarers received their first dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine which is among those brands preferred by Western employers. The doses were provided by the Department of Health (DOH) and were administered through the cooperation of the AMOSUP and ALMA. The seafarers were endorsed by their manning agencies as they would be deployed in the next four months.

Senator Christopher Lawrence 'Bong' T. Go and National Task Force against COVID-19 (NTF) chief implementer and vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr. paid a visit to the AMOSUP Sen'in No Le Building in Intramuros, which acted as the facility for the mass vaccination on the DOTFS in Manila. They personally extended their greetings and recognition for the seafarers present.



Sen. Go, a known advocate for the welfare of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in the legislative branch, assured the seafarers that he would continue to uphold their rights and the benefits due to them as 'heroes.'

Meanwhile, a lot of seafarers were also vaccinated in other parts of the country with the MARINA Regional Offices' leadership in cooperation with the DOH and their Local Government Units (LGUs). 20 were vaccinated in MRO 1&2's vaccination activity; 60 in Batangas City under MRO 4; 25 in Masbate City and Legazpi City under MRO 5; 91 in Iloilo under MRO 6; 35 in Cebu City and Mandaue City under MRO 7; 33 in Tacloban City under MRO 8; 20 in Zamboanga City under MRO 9; 11 in Cagayan de Oro City under MRO 10; 150 in Davao City under MRO 11; and 44 in General Santos City under MRO 12.

Other MROs have already conducted their vaccination activities the day prior, with MRO 13 inoculating 11 seafarers in Butuan City, and MRO 7 at 25 in Mandaue City.

More vaccination sites in Metro Manila include AMOSUP Manila where 520 seafarers got their first dose of the vaccines, Lakeshore Hall in Taguig City serving 468 seafarers, and 1,080 in Las Pinas City.

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CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF THE SEAFARER IN THE MARINA CENTRAL OFFICE



MARINA officials, led by Administrator Robert Empedrad, together with Senator Bong Go and vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr., pose for a photo opportunity during the celebration of the Day of the Seafarer 2021 at the MARINA Central Office.

Among the highly esteemed officials who graced the event were Guest of Honor Senator Christopher Lawrence "Bong" T. Go and Special Guest National Task Force against COVID-19 (NTF) chief implementer and vaccine czar Carlito Galvez Jr..

STCW Executive Director VADM Rene V Medina AFP (Ret) welcomed the guests with his opening remarks. "Today, on the day of this Day of the Seafarer, we acknowledge all seafarers, especially Filipino seafarers, who operate the ships and bring cargoes safely to their destination, regardless of the conditions they have to face. Without seafarers, living in this time of health crisis will be a lot harder." He said, stressing the importance of seafarers as essential workers and highlighting how the MARINA has continued to pursue more opportunities to ensure the safety and continued employment of Filipino seafarers. "So much has been done, but so much remains to be made for the benefits and well-being of our seafarers."

One of the highlights of the Day of the Seafarer 2021 is the awarding and recognition of seafarers and maritime organizations who have been made noteworthy contributions in the past year. The MARINO Party List, Association of Licensed Manning Agencies (ALMA), and the Associated Marine Officers and Seafarers' Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) were part of the organizations who have been

recognized for their major feats in helping seafarers who have been affected by the ongoing pandemic.

Similarly, Capt. Marlon Quiñones of MV Athens Bridge, Eng. Nelson Ramirez, and the officers and crew of MV Fleur N were also recognized for their acts of bravery and continued advocacy for the rights and welfare of seafarers.

In line with the Day of the Seafarer 2021, the Search for the Ten Exceptional Bravery at Sea Awardees was also launched. This online search calls for the nomination of Filipino seafarers who have exhibited extraordinary acts of bravery and seamanship skills during events that occurred from August 2020 to June 2021. The ten (10) selected seafarers will be awarded in the coming National Maritime Week Celebration to be held later this year.

Afterwards, Sec Galvez shared his thoughts during his message. In his speech, he praised Filipino seafarers for enduring one of the most difficult professions. "Hindi biro ang mga pinagdadaanan ng ating mga manglalayag habang sila ay nasa laot. Nariyan na rin ang hamon na dulot ng COVID-19 na nakakaapekto sa kanilang deployment," he said.

The NTF Vaccine Czar also regarded Filipino seafarers as modern-day heroes. During his message, he cites that the Philippine government continues to push for the prioritization of seafarers in the national vaccination program.

As the program drew to a close, MARINA Administrator VADM Robert A Empedrad introduced Guest of Honor Senator Go.

"Ipinaglaban namin na maisama ang mga seafarer sa priority list. Kung mahal niyo pamilya niyo, magpabakuna na kayo!" Senator Bong Go said, urging Filipino seafarers to get their jobs before departing for employment. "The Duterte Administration loves and cares for our seafarers. Through the MARINA, we have been working hard to provide concrete plans of action, to ensure that seafarers are looked after during this difficult and challenging time," he added.

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