



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Singapore, 28 August 2020 | For Immediate Release**

### **Singapore Establishes Crew Facilitation Centre and Singapore Shipping Tripartite Alliance Resilience Fund for Safe Crew Change**

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) will be taking enhanced measures to further secure safe port operations and facilitate crew change. This will allow essential goods to continue to flow through the Port of Singapore, and Singapore to play its part in the global supply chain.

#### **Enhanced Precautionary Measures in the Port**

2. MPA has enhanced precautionary measures for ships calling at our port to further protect crew, shore personnel and the local community. Ships seeking to conduct activities such as repairs, servicing, surveys and inspections which require shore personnel to board the ship must inform the Port Master at least three days prior to the arrival of the ship and undertake additional measures including disinfecting working areas in the ship. Please refer to Port Marine Circular 35 of 2020 at [Enclosure 1](#) for more details.
3. MPA has also issued a notice to all harbour pilots on additional precautionary measures to take when conducting pilotage duties on ships.

#### **Enhanced Crew Change Procedures**

4. Singapore has been facilitating crew change of all nationalities from ships of different flags, during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As an international port, many foreign-flagged ships call at Singapore, and MPA has been facilitating change of crew for these ships. Almost all Singapore-registered ships (SRS) managed to conduct crew change, including in Singapore, with the exception of 2% of the crew onboard with extended contracts. MPA will continue to work closely with the owners, operators and managers of SRS on these remaining crew.

5. Seafarers play an important role in keeping international trade and global supply chains going, and hence, MPA will take further steps to enable crew change to take place in Singapore safely.

#### *Crew Facilitation Centre*

6. With effect from 1 September 2020, MPA, with the support of PSA Singapore, will use its existing floating accommodation to set up a Crew Facilitation Centre (CFC) at the Tanjong Pagar Terminal. It is a self-contained facility with an onsite medical centre, testing and holding facilities. Dedicated to sign-on crew, the CFC will house the crew for up to 48 hours prior to them boarding their ships, if required, when their ship and flight schedule do not match. The CFC will facilitate more crew change to take place in Singapore and keep both the ships and local community safe. Sign-off crew, based on current procedures, will proceed to depart Singapore or stay at existing designated holding facilities Seacare Hotel or accommodation vessel "POSH Bawean" for up to 48 hours, and be strictly segregated from the community.

#### *More Streamlined Crew Change Procedures*

7. In line with the risk managed approach taken by Singapore's Multi-Ministry Taskforce, crew members who has stayed at least 14 days from specific low-risk countries/regions to sign-on to ships in Singapore will either no longer be required to serve a stay-at-home isolation in the originating country/region or only serve a shorter isolation of seven days prior to departure for Singapore. Crew members from other countries/regions will continue to serve an isolation period of 14 days prior to departure.

8. To further safeguard the crew change process, ship owners, managers and agents are to ensure the pre-departure COVID-19 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests are carried out at government-approved or ISO 15189-accredited testing facilities.

9. Please refer to Port Marine Circular 36 of 2020 at Enclosure 2 for details of the revised crew change procedures.

10. MPA will continue to work with the industry to review our crew change procedures to adapt to the fast-changing situation relating to COVID-19. MPA reminds the industry – ship owners, managers and agents – to continue to play its part to carry out safe crew changes.

#### **Singapore Shipping Tripartite Alliance Resilience (SG-STAR) Fund**

11. As a global hub port and international maritime centre, Singapore remains committed to facilitate successful crew changes in a safe manner. To accelerate the

process and propagate best practices of safe crew change, MPA, Singapore Shipping Association, Singapore Maritime Officers' Union, and Singapore Organisation of Seamen, will establish a S\$1 million Singapore Shipping Tripartite Alliance Resilience (SG-STAR) Fund to work with stakeholders in seafaring nations on concrete solutions for safe crew changes, such as initiatives on best practices for crew holding facilities and PCR testing centres.

12. Supported by Mr Kitack Lim, Secretary-General of International Maritime Organization, and Mr Guy Ryder, Director-General of International Labour Organization, Singapore welcomes like-minded international partners to join in this tripartite initiative and contribute to this Alliance fund so that actions can be scaled up. More details of the SG-STAR Fund will be released in due course.

13. “This has been a trying time for seafarers. They have been working tirelessly to keep goods flowing around the world. But due to health and safety concerns, many have encountered difficulties to call on ports and undergo crew change, and that has severely affected their well-being. It is therefore very important for all stakeholders to come together to ensure safe port operations and safe crew changes. This dedicated facility for crew change and the Fund are the results of the collaboration between MPA, industry associations and seafarer unions. As shipping is a global business, we hope that more ports and stakeholders will join us in such initiatives, so that seafarers can continue their work and keep the supply lines of the world open,” said Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Transport.

14. Please refer Enclosure 3 for quotes by the tripartite partners.

Enclosures:

- 1 – Port Marine Circular 35 of 2020
- 2 – Port Marine Circular 36 of 2020
- 3 – Quotes by Tripartite Partners

<End of Release>

### **About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)**

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) was established on 2 February 1996, with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre (IMC), and to advance and safeguard Singapore's strategic maritime interests. MPA is the driving force behind Singapore's port and maritime development, taking on the roles of Port Authority, Port Regulator, Port Planner, IMC Champion, and National Maritime Representative. MPA partners the industry and other agencies to enhance safety, security and environmental protection

in our port waters, facilitate port operations and growth, expand the cluster of maritime ancillary services, and promote maritime R&D and manpower development.

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