

# SINGAPORE

# *Nautilus*

A Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore Quarterly

## The people factor

Manpower development for the upturn

### **A class of its own**

New EMBA raises the ante for maritime education

### **Singapore a global centre for maritime education?**

Yes, and passing with flying colours

### **O Captain, My Captain**

I have the best job, says Singapore Maritime Academy lecturer

### **It's not just business, it's personal**

Personal touches make Singapore a long-term proposition



# EXECUTIVE MBA in Shipping, Offshore & Finance

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(\*Ranked One of the Top 25 Global MBA programmes, Financial Times 2009)

The Executive MBA in Shipping, Offshore and Finance is developed jointly by BI Norwegian School of Management, Norway, and the NTU Nanyang Business School, Singapore, in close collaboration with the industry.

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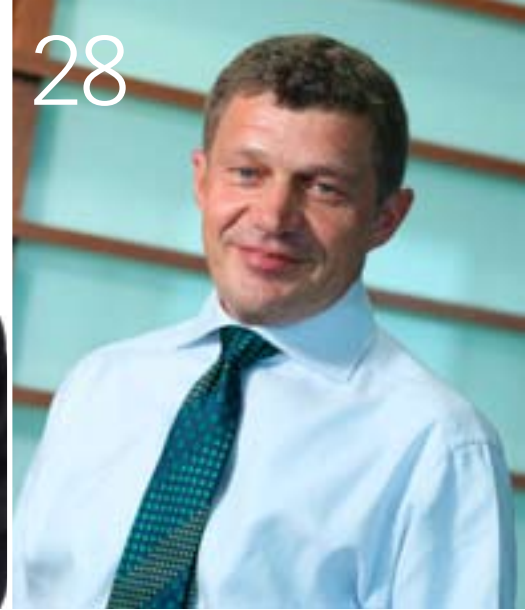
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# It's about leadership.

**Control your impact.** Global environmental concerns are increasingly becoming an issue which will impact on shipping as well. Long experience of ship legislation and international rule frameworks has clearly demonstrated that the shipping industry must actively engage in short- and long-term solutions to minimize emissions to air and discharges to sea. Our purpose is to safeguard life, property, and the environment. DNV provides a number of services that address shipping's environmental impact – so that you can go ahead with confidence.

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# Teach a man to fish...

**M**aritime Singapore is capitalising on opportunities amid the economic slowdown.

With our eyes on the future, we are firmly committed to investing in human capital for the upturn.

People matter and the quality of people differentiates the winners from the pack.

And so we pay it forward, nurturing the people who would power Singapore's growth and development as a premier international maritime centre.

Through partnerships, we develop a comprehensive maritime education and training landscape – a suite of executive programmes, alongside diploma, degree and postgraduate maritime courses for the novice, mid-career and SEAsoned professionals.

A MARITIME community as ONE in publicity and outreach efforts to create greater awareness and attract our youth to Singapore's dynamic and diverse maritime sector – some 5,000 establishments employing 110,000 people, and growing.

The best in class put people first. They share their enlightened people philosophies and best practices – human capital is clearly the driver of business growth, and developing human capital a strategic competitive issue.

But its not just about people to fuel the industry.

Singapore is rapidly becoming a hub for maritime education. It is proving to be a magnet for leading maritime educators and even the UK Hydrographic Office, drawn to Singapore's location and vibrant and cosmopolitan maritime community. This complements Singapore's development as a maritime thought capital of international conferences, high-powered lectures and dialogues, *à la* Singapore Maritime Week.

The Singapore maritime ecosystem is a learning organism. Enrich yourself.

*Matt*



## New MPA Chairman and Board members 2009-2012



Outgoing Chairman of the MPA Board, Mr Peter Ong (left) and incoming Chairman, Mr Lucien Wong

ALLEN & GLEDHILL LLP managing partner Lucien Wong has been appointed Chairman of the MPA Board by Raymond Lim, Minister for Transport and the Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, for a period of three years.

An MPA board member since 1 November 2007, Wong was appointed Deputy Chairman on 1 September 2008. He takes over chairmanship of the MPA board from Peter Ong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Outgoing chairman Peter Ong, who served as MPA Chairman from February 2003, charted the broad directions that advanced Singapore's strategic maritime interests and strengthened Singapore's development as a premier global hub port and an international maritime centre.

Other members of the MPA Board are leaders from the public and private sectors as well as the maritime union. They are Teo Siong Seng, President, Singapore Shipping Association; Dato' Jude Benny, Managing Partner, Joseph Tan Jude Benny; Andreas Sohmen-Pao, Managing Director, BW Shipping Managers; Bahren Shaari, Managing Director, ING Asia Private Bank; Chew Men Leong, Chief of Navy, Republic of Singapore Navy; Kenichi Kuroya, Managing Director, 'K' Line; Thomas Tay, General Secretary, Singapore Maritime Officers' Union; James Wong, Senior Director (Planning and People), Ministry Of Health; Wong Weng Sun, President/COO, Sembcorp Marine; and Dr Robert Yap, Chairman & CEO, YCH Group. ☰

## Maritime leader heads established business chamber



Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Teo Siong Seng

MPA BOARD MEMBER and shipping veteran Teo Siong Seng is the new president of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI), taking over the helm from outgoing chairman Chua Tian Poh.

More widely known as SS Teo in the maritime community, Teo is a man who wears many hats. Apart from his appointments as MPA Board member and SCCCI chairman, he is also managing director of Pacific International Lines, chairman of the Singapore Maritime Foundation and MaritimeONE as well as president of the Singapore Shipping Association.

For his outstanding contributions in promoting Singapore's attractiveness as a maritime hub, Teo was honoured at the Singapore International Maritime Award 2007 Gala Dinner.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, which was witnessed by Wong Kan Seng, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs, Teo told the Chamber that community development, culture and education will remain high on SCCCI's agenda. At the same time, he will remain committed to encouraging members to "remain resilient and confident in tackling the financial crisis". ☰

# Singapore retains its place in the sun

DESPITE SHANGHAI nipping at its heels, Singapore remains the world's busiest container port in 2008, handling 29.9 million TEUs of containers. This was a 7.1 per cent increase from 2007. Vessel arrivals also increased, by 11.1 per cent to 1.6 billion gross tons (GT).

Meanwhile, Singapore's continuous investment in enhancing its attractiveness as an international maritime centre is paying off. An increasing number of international shipping groups are establishing their presence here under the Approved International Shipping (AIS) scheme. To date, there are more than a hundred AIS companies with projected local business spending of about S\$3 billion annually in Singapore.

The Singapore Registry of Ships also grew in 2008, with total tonnage of ships under the Singapore flag increasing 10.4 per cent to reach 43.7 million GT.

In the bunkering sector, the number of bunker suppliers accredited by MPA rose to 77, after four additional firms were granted licences. This is part of MPA's plan to attract bigger players to Singapore's bunker scene.

Further, a new Singapore bunker standard for bunker suppliers and surveyors, SS 600, was introduced. The guidelines and procedures were to ensure higher levels of quality and quantity as well as safety and efficiency in Singapore's bunkering sector.

As the year came to an end, MPA announced moves to



## THE LION'S SHARE:

Singapore is still the world's busiest container port

help the maritime sector lower business costs. Port dues of 10 per cent for bunker tankers 16 years old and above would remain unchanged for another year. MPA also extended a waiver of port dues for double-hull bunker tankers until April 2011 for vessels licensed between March 2005 and March 2008. ☰



## FLYING THE FLAG:

Waiver initiative gives a boost to the vessel register

# New waiver initiative under the Block Transfer Scheme

SINGAPORE HAS EXTENDED a waiver on withholding tax for overseas interest payments in the purchase of Singapore-flagged vessels by another five years, in a move to help the industry during these challenging times.

The extension was announced by Raymond Lim, Minister for Transport and the Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the Singapore Maritime Foundation New Year Cocktail Reception 2009.

The waiver is a key feature of the Block Transfer Scheme (BTS) to bolster the Republic's vessel register. Another 'waiver' is the scrapping of the two-ship criterion to qualify.

The Maritime Finance Incentive (MFI) has also been expanded to include partnerships and container leasing activities.

Industry players welcome the tax waiver extension, saying it would make Singapore a popular choice for ship owners once the global economy recovers.

SS Teo, chairman of Singapore Maritime Foundation, says: "Things are difficult and ship financing is not so easy to find, but it will eventually resume. It's good that we announce such a scheme so that when the economy recovers, we can capture the opportunities." ☰



## Maritime law and arbitration gets a boost



### **COURTING THE INDUSTRY:**

New course hopes to expand accessibility to maritime law in the region

THE REGION'S MARITIME LAW sector will receive a boost when a new Maritime Law & Practice course begins on 18 May 2009 in Singapore. The Institute of Maritime Law at the University of Southampton will be working with the Singapore Maritime Foundation on its implementation. The course will be based on the world-renowned short course on maritime law the Institute has been holding exclusively in the UK for the past 35 years.

Spanning two weeks, this course will cover essential topics in maritime law such as charterparties, shipping documents in international trade, cargo claims, principles of liabilities, marine insurance and the enforcement of maritime claims.

Encouraged by the Institute's decision to bring the course to Asia, Dato' Jude Benny, MPA Board member and Managing Partner at Joseph Tan Jude Benny Advocates & Solicitors, says: "Having the course conducted in Singapore, a key centre for maritime law and arbitration in Asia, will make it more accessible to maritime professionals within the region, and enhance the quality of continuing education for our profession." ☺

## Fresh look for MPA website



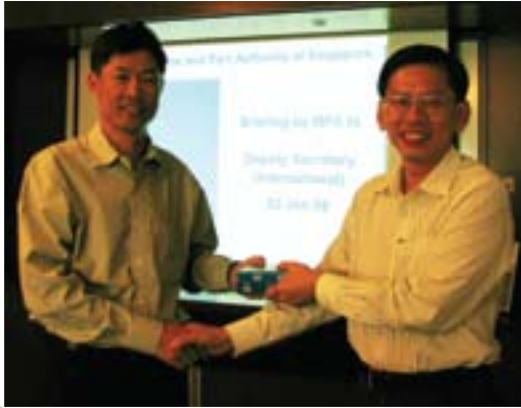
THE MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY of Singapore (MPA) has unveiled a new website with a host of new features. Leveraging new media tools that appeal to web and tech-savvy users while retaining its core functions, MPA hopes the website will engage and reach out to not just the maritime community, but also the general public, especially the youth.

The new features of the refreshed website include a new dynamic homepage, a careful classification of information for ease of surfing, the option of signing up for latest updates of notices and circulars so that shipping and maritime companies can keep abreast of news, and quick links that are business-oriented. To connect with Netizens everywhere, a new improved search engine and interactive features like video streaming and a photo gallery have also been added. ☺





Visitors to MPA



**LEFT**  
Mr Lee Yuen Hee (right), Deputy Secretary (International), Ministry of Transport, Singapore.

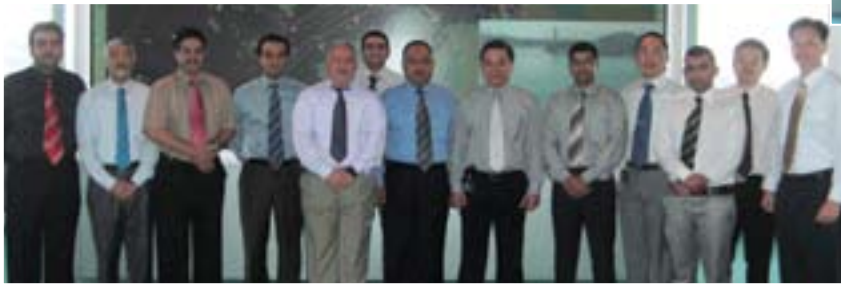
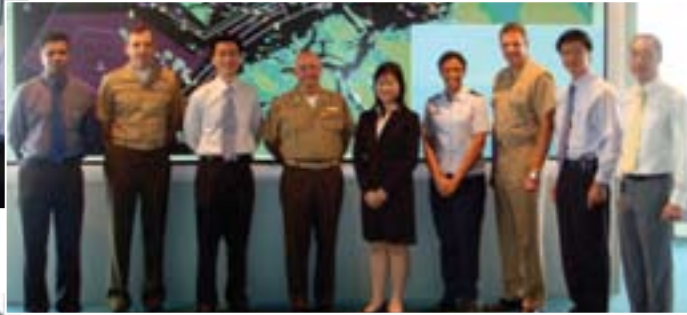


**RIGHT**  
HE Makoto Yamanaka (left), Ambassador, Embassy of Japan.



**ABOVE**  
VADM Anil Kumar Chopra (left), Director General, Indian Coast Guard.

**BELOW**  
MG Thomas Conant (fourth from left), Director for Strategic Planning and Policy, US Pacific Command.



**ABOVE**  
COL Eisa Al-fadhli (seventh from left), Director, Planning and Technical Studies, Directorate of Technical Systematic Department, Kuwait Coast Guard, Ministry of Interior.

**BELOW**  
Students from the Technical University of Delft, the Netherlands.



**LEFT**  
BG(NS) Tay Lim Heng, Chief Executive, MPA, visits Dalian.

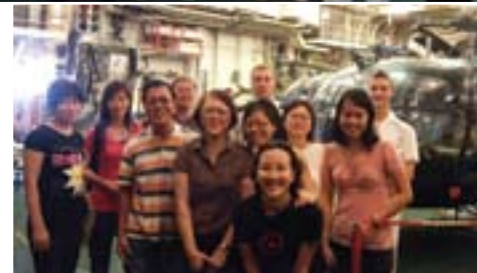
**BELOW**  
Mr Alireza Satei (fourth from left), Deputy Managing Director, Ports and Special Economic Zone Affairs, Ports and Maritime Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran.



**ABOVE**  
Officers from the French helicopter carrier, *Jeanne d'Arc*.



**RIGHT**  
MPA staff visits *Jeanne d'Arc*.



**BELOW**

Mr Oh Kong-gyun (right), Chairman, International Association of Classification Societies.



**ABOVE**

VADM Mikio Ishibashi (right), Vice Commandant for Operations, Japan Coast Guard.

**BELOW**

Mr Makoto Mizutani (right), Director, Public-Private Partnership Promotion Office, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.



**ABOVE**

RADM Manson Brown (left), Commander, 14th Coast Guard District, US Coast Guard.

## MPA Workplan Seminar 2009



**ABOVE**

The budding stars of the workplan seminar.

**LEFT**

Guest-of-honour, Mrs Lim Hwee Hua, Senior Minister of State for Finance and Transport with Ministry of Transport senior management and MPA board members and senior management.

## Launch of the Maritime Young Executives & Students (YES) Club



**LEFT**

Mr SS Teo, Chairman, Singapore Maritime Foundation (left) and Mr Esben Poulsson, President and CEO, Torm Singapore, engage the members of the Maritime YES Club.

**RIGHT**

Mr Roland Tan, Director, Singapore Maritime Academy, Singapore Polytechnic, Mr Michael Chia, President, Association of Singapore Marine Industries and BG (NS) Tay Lim Heng, Chief Executive, MPA



## MPA Kinabalu Expedition

**BELOW**

Team MPA scales Mount Kinabalu



# The people factor

On the plus side, this economic downturn is an opportunity for maritime employers to prepare its staff for the next boom

**I**n the boom years, we had a difficult time attracting people to the industry,” says Maritime Outreach Network (MaritimeONE) chairman SS Teo. “Now we will stand by them.”

And the number of people he intends to stand steadfastly by? Oh let’s see – just a little more than 100,000, or the size of the maritime workforce in Singapore.

When the global economy took a free fall in the last quarter of 2008, the trade-centric shipping industry went into one of the worst tailspins one can remember – or expected. From fretting over a manpower pinch not so long ago, maritime companies are suddenly worried about the new demand-supply situation, surplus tonnage, and coping with fixed overhead costs.



Teo, however, urges employers to look beyond the short-term. Do not be too hasty to trim staff. Build long-term relationships with core clients. Hunker down and get ready to catch the wind when the economy turns around.

Says MPA chief executive BG (NS) Tay Lim Heng: “It is vital that the maritime industry takes this economic downturn as an opportunity to upgrade the skills of its staff in preparation for the next boom.”

**RIGHT**  
Wendy Loo,  
International  
Maritime Centre  
Division deputy  
director, MPA

“The goal has always been to create a vibrant maritime education and training landscape in Singapore, with a wide range of courses to meet the manpower needs of maritime businesses based in Singapore.”

– MPA chief executive  
BG (NS) Tay Lim Heng

Shipping has always been a cyclical industry. When the credit crunch eases and recovery comes – which it will – the maritime centre that has made preparations to meet the expected spike in demand will emerge ahead of its competitors.

“We will not give up building the talent pipeline that our industry requires,” asserts Teo. “People are the greatest assets of maritime companies, and it is important to attract new talent as well as provide continuous education and training to those who are already in the profession.”

After all, Singapore’s focus on building a sound maritime education and training infrastructure through various manpower development initiatives has facilitated Singapore’s growth as a major hub port and international maritime centre.

To date, there are more than 5,000 maritime enterprises employing over 100,000 people in Singapore, with the Singapore maritime cluster contributing about 6.5 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product.

The goal, sums up BG (NS) Tay, has always been to create a vibrant maritime education and training landscape in Singapore, with a wide range of courses to meet the manpower needs of maritime businesses based in Singapore, as the Republic develops into a leading international maritime centre.

## MaritimeONE

To foster tripartite cooperation among the government, industry and institutes of higher learning towards raising awareness and promoting careers in the maritime industry,



MaritimeONE was launched in April 2007.

An industry-led initiative by the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF), MPA, SSA and the Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI), MaritimeONE offers maritime scholarships, organises student outreach activities, and hosts networking receptions for students and maritime executives. In 2008, it also launched an online job portal, [www.maritimecareers.com.sg](http://www.maritimecareers.com.sg), to bring together job seekers and maritime employers.

**ABOVE**  
BG (NS) Tay Lim Heng, chief executive, MPA

## Beyond Awareness

To ensure that maritime executives are equipped with relevant industry knowledge, MPA had partnered various educational institutions to establish new diploma and degree maritime education programmes, such as the Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies with Business Major and the Bachelor of Engineering in Naval Architecture.

“Those already working in the maritime sector are also kept well-trained through MPA’s various manpower development schemes supported under our Maritime Cluster Fund,” says MPA’s International Maritime Centre Division deputy director Wendy Loo. These schemes include the Course Fee Subsidy (CFS) scheme, Overseas Trainer Attachment Programme (OTAP), Maritime Attachment Programme (MAP), and the Joint Maritime Scholarship Scheme (JMSS).

Scholarships are investments for the long-term, says Teo, and enable companies to spot potential leaders early. Last year, 14 MaritimeONE scholarships were awarded to students in various maritime programmes.

“Efforts to attract and retain new talent are certainly paying off,” says Loo. In addition to an

increase in the number of applications for maritime-related courses at the local polytechnics and universities, more training providers are also coming to Singapore to launch new maritime courses.

## Help From Our Friends

Apart from MPA, industry bodies such as SMF, SSA and ASMI, as well as institutes of higher learning have been instrumental in spearheading significant manpower development initiatives.

“These valued partners have been critical in relaying the industry’s manpower needs to MPA, and providing feedback on the local maritime development and training scene,” says Loo. “Their keen support through funding scholarships and providing internship placements for students reading maritime-related subjects have certainly benefited and inspired many to join the maritime industry.”

For instance, SSA offers a variety of courses covering many dimensions of the industry, for both students and working professionals. Several port and shipping groups such as PSA, NYK and SWIRE have also jumped onboard to fortify the local maritime training environment. In doing so, they are raising the quality of maritime manpower in Singapore.



“We will not give up building the talent pipeline that our industry requires. People are the greatest assets of maritime companies, and it is important to attract new talent as well as provide continuous education and training to those who are already in the profession.”

– *MaritimeONE* chairman SS Teo

“Manpower development in the maritime industry is an endeavour which involves all

stakeholders, including companies, industry associations, tertiary associations, unions, MPA and other government agencies,” says BG (NS) Tay.

“While MPA can come up with various manpower development initiatives and programmes, companies have to support the programmes for them to be successful. It is heartening to note that maritime companies continue to provide internship positions to our maritime students, even as we are going through this downturn.”

Singapore’s manpower developments in the pipeline this year are new degree programmes offered by foreign universities as well as well-established training providers. At the same time, MPA will be focusing on R&D capabilities, working with various industry bodies to maintain high accredited standards of work practices.

Clearly, when it comes to Singapore’s maritime sector, no one is abandoning ship. 📞

## Two sides to a story

A maritime novice and an industry veteran – two people reveal the scope and effectiveness of the manpower training and recruitment programmes on offer in Singapore

At first glance, the young female fresh graduate and sun-burnt sometime sailor make an unlikely pair. Niu Wenjue and Lee Chee Seong, however, both exemplify Singapore’s two-fold approach to maritime manpower development, which is to nurture new talent and groom existing professionals.

Having signed up for the Nanyang Technological University’s (NTU) Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies programme, Niu feels she has made the right choice. “Singapore has a rich maritime tradition and there is a rising demand for shipping executives and maritime financiers,” she explains. “This means good job prospects.”

She adds that the course curriculum provides students with in-depth knowledge and skills to give them a headstart in their careers. The curriculum also includes a 10-week Industrial Immersion stint, during which students are attached to organisations in shipping and related industries.

“With the help of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), the university was able to find more than 40 shipping-related companies that offered internship opportunities,” she remembers. “I did my

internship at Norddeutsche Landesbank, and was offered a position there after my graduation.”

Lee, on the other hand, spent 24 years at sea, 14 of them as a ship captain for Neptune Orient Lines. When he stepped ashore, he decided to upgrade his skills to set himself apart from his peers.

“When I decided to step ashore in 2004, I joined the APL Corporate Marine Operations as a fleet controller in charge of the transpacific fleet,” he says. “I realised, however, that there were many ex-captains like me. To move ahead, I felt I needed something extra. So when I heard about the Master of Science degree in Maritime Studies at NTU, I signed up.”

At the end of the two-year programme, Lee emerged with a coveted qualification that has helped propel his career to a new height. Now the fleet personnel director of APL, he says his time back in school has opened more than a few doors.

“Because I had been at sea for so long, my local contacts were limited,” he says. “The programme and its networking sessions, however, helped me extend my business network.”



# Charting a new chapter

The United Kingdom Hydrographic Office establishes its first Asian outfit in Singapore, paving the way for further cooperation to boost navigational safety and international maritime business

its high-quality hydrographic and nautical chart publications and products.

Officially established on 23 January this year, the UKHO office in Singapore is housed at the British High Commission. According to UKHO chief executive Mike Robinson, the city-state was chosen as the first Asian office because of its maritime heritage and strategic position.

“UKHO’s presence in Singapore will help us build relationships in this important region and improve the services we provide to our maritime customers,” he says, adding that the new office will make it easier for major nautical chart distributors in Asia to learn about and embrace technological advancements in navigational aids.

Currently the Chair of the East Asia Hydrographic Commission, Singapore was also the best pick because of the Maritime and Port

**ABOVE**  
Jamie Chen, deputy chief hydrographer, MPA (left) and Mike Robinson, chief executive, UKHO

**T**he United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) opens its first Asian regional office, and Singapore is the natural location.

Popularly known as the British Admiralty, UKHO is internationally renowned for



**“UKHO’s presence in Singapore will help us build relationships in this important region and improve the services we provide to our maritime customers.”**

**– UKHO chief executive**

**Mike Robinson**

Authority of Singapore’s (MPA) expertise in hydrography as well as the government agency’s commitment to the promotion of electronic navigational aids.

In fact, Robinson hopes that the UKHO office in Singapore will build on existing good ties with MPA to contribute to navigational safety in the region.

A relationship strengthened by a shared vision of harnessing technology to develop cutting-edge and high-quality navigational aids, MPA and UKHO have been collaborating on maritime matters since the 1990s.

“We seek to enhance navigational safety and the protection of the marine environment in the region through capacity building, sharing of expertise, and training,” says MPA deputy hydrographer Jamie Chen.

Joint projects include the publishing and updating of nautical charts, and the active promotion of the use of technology for safe navigation, such as the use of the Electronic Chart Display and Information System, or ECDIS.

When integrated with a real-time positioning system, ECDIS provides real-time navigation information to mariners 24/7, regardless of weather. ECDIS also provides anti-grounding and anti-collision warnings – extremely useful tools to mariners transiting busy or confined waterways.

In 1998 and 2003, MPA and UKHO organised the first and second International ECDIS Conference and Exhibition in Singapore. Meant to create awareness of ECDIS as a necessary tool for safe and efficient navigation, each event attracted about 350 international participants from the shipping industry and academia, including maritime regulators, R&D specialists and, of

course, hydrographers.

Come October, MPA and UKHO will be co-hosting the third International ECDIS Conference and Exhibition, also in Singapore. Revolving around the theme ‘ECDIS – Beyond Navigation’, the event from 19 to 21 October will showcase the many applications of ECDIS as a Geographic Information System Tool.

Promoting the use of ECDIS, which includes training and capacity building, is relevant and timely as the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has mandated the carriage requirements of ECDIS from 2012.

Beyond the International ECDIS Conference and Exhibition, MPA and UKHO have cooperated in other efforts to enhance navigational safety. On 7 July 2006, they concluded a Letter of Intent (LOI) to develop a digital nautical chart information service via Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WIMAX).

The implementation of WIMAX was an MPA initiative to provide wireless broadband access to mariners at sea. The next common objective? Building the capacity and capability of regional hydrographic officers and mariners, which led to the extension of the MPA-UKHO LOI in July 2007. The LOI included training in ECDIS, hydrography and cartography via the sharing of expertise and experience between MPA and UKHO.

It is a win-win situation, just like the establishment of UKHO’s regional office in Singapore. “Ultimately, mariners stand to benefit through even greater availability of timely data and more frequently updated products, and enhanced navigation safety in the region,” says Robinson. 📡

**“We seek to enhance navigational safety and the protection of the marine environment in the region through capacity building, sharing of expertise, and training”**

**– MPA deputy chief hydrographer  
Jamie Chen**



# Talk is cheap, & life is better

**ABOVE**  
Mikkjal Poulsen,  
general  
manager for  
Technical,  
Safety and  
Crewing, Torm

With advances in technology, seafarers now find it a breeze to stay in touch with kin and kith

**I**t has been a century since Guglielmo Marconi developed a wireless telegraphy device that revolutionised ship-to-shore communications. Modern developments in the field, however, are no less significant



than those of the legendary Italian inventor.

There have been huge leaps in improving advanced communications on land, but it is only recently that the maritime communications has moved from a mainly narrowband arena to the broadband age.

Traditionally expensive and considered a luxury, communication at sea via the use of ship-to-shore communication systems was always carefully monitored and controlled.

Today, however, flat-rate broadband

connectivity is regarded as a necessity in order to recruit and retain crew, who are becoming more technology-savvy. This has quickly strengthened the case for Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) as an alternative to the established but pricey maritime satellite services that have dominated to date.

One of the companies leading the way with the world's first 1.5-metre C-Band stabilised satellite antenna is Singapore Telecommunications Limited (SingTel).

SingTel's Global Maritime Very Small Aperture Terminal (GMVSAT) provides clients with 'always-on' broadband solutions such as e-mail, Internet access, e-Surveillance, GSM coverage and Voice-over-Internet Protocol calls. The antenna design allows sea-going vessels to enjoy higher bandwidth than the traditional 2.4-metre C-band antenna. It is also cheaper, with an option for dedicated bandwidth.

Among the major players in the maritime sector who have embraced SingTel's technology is Torm Shipping. One of Europe's leading maritime companies, it recently engaged SingTel to implement the GMVSAT system across its fleet of over 100 ships.

Equipped with advanced auto-beam switching capability, the GMVSAT system will help Torm Shipping save valuable time and resources by allowing its vessels to move from one ocean region to another without the need for time-consuming re-configuration of satellite communications equipment.

The GMVSAT system also allows the integration of vessels with centralised land-based applications in their owners' corporate headquarters. This brings tremendous benefits to shipping companies in terms of productivity, cost savings and efficiency.

Torm Shipping's first ocean-going vessel to be fitted with SingTel's GMVSAT was rolled out in July last year. Since then, eight more ships have had the system installed, and the company plans to have 10 additional ships fully equipped with the broadband service by the end of the year.

"It is still early days, but the feedback so far has all been positive," says Mikkjøl Poulsen, Torm Shipping's Singapore-based general manager for Technical, Safety and Crewing. "We can now manage and fix IT systems from shore, use



**“For a leading global seaport like Singapore, the use of technology is important.”**

*– MPA technology director*

*Toh Ah Cheong*

Internet Protocol telephony, create centralised monitoring systems and provide shore systems access to on-board seafarers.”

He describes vessels of today as mobile offices, with VSAT supporting business applications such as cargo and chart updates, and inventory logistics. In addition, ship operations benefit from instant communications with technicians, vendors and other skilled workers to address issues in real-time.

With VSAT connectivity, crew members can also use the Internet, e-mail and telephone to stay in contact with friends and family, manage personal affairs and enjoy entertainment.

“The audio quality is so good that crew members say that calling family members thousands of miles away is just like calling them from the next room,” maintains Poulsen.

SingTel executive vice-president for business Bill Chang says: “Our solutions create better lives for seafarers by allowing them to stay in touch with their loved ones while at sea, providing them the same quality of user experience that they enjoy at home. We are looking at a host of onboard applications where SingTel can add value while providing more cost-effective packages for maritime operators.”

“For a leading global seaport like Singapore, the use of technology is important,” says Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) technology director Toh Ah Cheong. “The addition of VSAT to the stable of Infocomm@SeaPort programmes is the realisation of a collaboration between MPA and the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) to harness infocomm technology to catalyse business transformation and operational excellence in the port community.” 

**ABOVE**  
Toh Ah Cheong,  
Director  
(Technology) at  
the Maritime  
and Port  
Authority of  
Singapore (MPA)



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## You're hired

The maritime recruitment sector is standing firm amid the current economic turmoil, and remains strong

**I**f you ask Mark Robertshaw, Asia-Pacific director of UK-based Faststream Recruitment, how his company is faring in the current economic climate, he will tell you business is better than ever.

Manpower, it would seem, is one form of capital that never depreciates.

Despite the current global downturn, Robertshaw stresses that the maritime recruitment sector is still an amazingly active one.

The industry is looking for a whole host of experienced and qualified people to fill jobs, he says, ranging from shipbrokers, marine engineers and naval architects to technical superintendents, chartering managers and a range of executive-level positions.

And there is no better place to find these people than in the vibrant hub of Singapore.

The Republic serves as the company's Asian home, and for one simple reason. This shipping and marine recruitment firm knows it can draw on the Republic's extensive pool of local and international talent to match positions with

candidates that possess the right qualifications and experience.

"It was a strategic decision to set up in Singapore, one of the world's maritime hubs," says Robertshaw.

"The business level is high here, and Singapore is held in very high regard in the shipping community. Also, the work-life balance here is better than in most other international cities."

Faststream, which set up its Singapore base in January 2008, is headquartered in Southampton, UK. It also has offices in the Norwegian city of Oslo, and Fort Lauderdale, Houston and Massachusetts in the US.

One forum the company has used to advertise job positions in Singapore is the maritime careers website by Maritime Outreach Network, or MaritimeONE.

"The MaritimeONE website is a professional portal and, therefore, a natural marketing platform," says Robertshaw.

Faststream's own global website receives 50,000 visits a month, while its Singapore portal draws up to 7,000 job seekers monthly.

Indeed, Singapore has been busy grooming local talent for careers in the maritime business.

"The Master of Science in Maritime Studies degree offered by the Nanyang Technological University is excellent, and companies will hire

## “Companies are using the downturn to establish themselves in shipping and hire talent at a realistic rate.”

people with that,” says Robertshaw.

He advises job seekers, however, to manage their expectations: “They have to be realistic and know their real value. They also need to be flexible about where they work. Singapore is an international maritime hub, but the shipping industry itself is international, so candidates must be willing to relocate if necessary.”

Nevertheless, it seems there is no lack of marine-based companies setting up shop and expanding their presence in Singapore, including UK engineering giant Rolls-Royce, which moved its global marine headquarters to the city-state this year.

A positive trend Robertshaw has witnessed in Singapore is the increasing number of foreign shipping and marine companies that are setting up shop.

“A lot of Asian shipyards from China and Korea realise they are catering to an international market and that they need to set up satellite offices to market their services in maritime hubs like Singapore,” he says.

As a result, those clients are looking for people with strong commercial experience. Among those planning to hang out a Singapore shingle is a major shipbroking firm – although Robertshaw is not about to say who. All he will state is that this will increase the demand for experienced shipbrokers to man his client’s broking operations.

The financial sector of the maritime business is growing rapidly and Asian trading houses are beginning to take a more hands-on approach.

“The owners of trading houses, stung by the high freight rates previously, are now looking to buy their own ships while they are cheap,” says Robertshaw. “They are approaching people to set up shipping companies for them.”

Robertshaw has also been in contact with commodity houses that are looking for people to set up shipping departments. “These companies are using the downturn to establish themselves in shipping and hire talent at a realistic rate,” he adds.

Another trend fuelling the demand for

experienced Singapore-based staff is the exodus of expatriates.

“International companies that set up two or three years ago would have brought in a lot of expatriates to fast-forward the knowledge base of the operations here,” says Robertshaw. “These companies are now looking at the cost of these individuals and deciding it’s a good time to repatriate them and replace them with locals. This is not a knee-jerk reaction to the downturn but a considered plan.”

At the end of the day, he says, there will be a need for qualified Singapore staff, especially in technical disciplines like maritime engineering and naval architecture, to meet the demand.

“Because of all the government initiatives being introduced [to create a pro-business environment], Singapore has a bright future,” he says. “People who are looking for jobs here have access to more opportunities than those in some of the other global shipping hubs.”

It is these opportunities that keep Singapore at the forefront of the maritime industry. Its maritime policy-makers have never lost sight of the fact that, despite the vessels calling at the port in their thousands or the busy cranes and equipment, the industry’s greatest asset remains its people.

And investing in these people produces dividends for life. ☺

### BELOW

Mark Robertshaw, Asia-Pacific director of UK-based Faststream Recruitment





## A class of its own

To meet the needs of top-tiered shipping professionals, the new Executive MBA at Nanyang Technological University is on its way to becoming one of the most sought-after programmes in maritime

**ABOVE**  
Associate professor Edmund Lo Yat-Man, NTU School of Civil & Environmental Engineering

**L**aunched in January, the new Executive MBA (EMBA) offered by the Nanyang Business School in Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is designed to meet the needs of Singapore's growing breed of top-tiered maritime professionals.

Developed from an existing EMBA programme in partnership with the BI Norwegian School of Management, the EMBA in Shipping, Offshore & Finance aims to support the strategic as well as leadership roles Singapore increasingly plays in the global maritime industry.



In addition, as Asia's prominence in world shipping continues to grow, the programme's East-meets-West perspective will prepare leaders for the "Asian century", says Nanyang Business School associate dean of executive education Professor Nilanjan Sen.

Describing the programme as "action-oriented", Sen adds that it "uniquely combines the latest research and theory with a good measure of practical exposure to cutting-edge real-life challenges".

As about half the candidates are international students, the programme is also a good platform for one to learn more about different cultures and how business is conducted in other countries.

"Since the shipping industry is constantly changing and developing, it needs well-trained managers with an international outlook," says Sen. "The EMBA in Shipping, Offshore & Finance provides learning and networking opportunities for senior business leaders who understand the challenges of the shipping business. At the same time, the business school provides a balance of academic rigour and relevance."

Needless to say, the EMBA in Shipping, Offshore & Finance is intended to appeal to many maritime professionals, including those working for small and medium enterprises that increasingly conduct business on an international scale.

"We aim to make this one of the most sought-after EMBA programmes in the maritime industry," says Sen.

Tapping the resources of the well-ranked Nanyang Business School as well as the BI Norwegian School of Management, which has more than 10 years of experience in exchange programmes, the EMBA in Shipping, Offshore & Finance provides access to leading lecturers and business professionals.

Eligible candidates must have at least eight years of relevant business experience, and meet rigorous entry requirements. To accommodate their busy schedules, the 18-month programme is taught over two-week intensive sessions held every three months, alternating between Singapore and Norway.

When it comes to building Singapore as a hub for maritime education and R&D, NTU is well up to speed. Other maritime-related programmes offered by the university include the Bachelor and Master of Science in Maritime Studies.

## "NTU has been paving the way for talent to enter the maritime industry as engineers, managers, scientists and researchers."

– Associate Professor Edmond Lo Yat-Man.

These courses have been developed to "fill a gap", says School of Civil & Environmental Engineering associate professor Edmund Lo Yat-Man. For instance, the Master of Science in Maritime Studies is tailored for professionals in maritime-related businesses, or graduates who wish to pursue a career in the maritime sector.

"The education and experience our students receive will equip them with the necessary tools and knowledge to form the next generation of shipping executives," says Lo.

The pioneer batch of students from the Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies graduated last year, with near full employment. Indeed, feedback from the graduates and their employers, says Lo, clearly indicates that the programme is meeting the needs of the maritime industry and helping to establish Singapore as "a centre of excellence for maritime business, research and development".

To foster cooperation between the academia and maritime industry, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and NTU have set up the Maritime Research Centre (MRC) to develop R&D projects and provide industry consultancy services.

To date, MRC has facilitated over 20 R&D projects and provided industry consultancy services involving more than 40 academic faculty members from various schools in NTU. The centre also helped to establish the Maritime Professorship and Maritime Industrial Attachment Programmes.

"NTU has been paving the way for talent to enter the maritime industry as engineers, managers, scientists and researchers," says Lo.

And with the launch of the new EMBA in Shipping, Offshore & Finance, the maritime education landscape in Singapore just became a notch more exciting. 📧



## Lure of the sea

Three young management trainees explore the great career prospects in the burgeoning shipping sector

**P**oh Wee Teng, Robert Sugarra and Wang Duan Wei hail from three different countries but they have a few things in common. All are 23 years old, fresh out of university and raring to plunge into careers in the maritime industry.

They make up shipping company Norden's

first batch of management trainees in Singapore. The Danish firm also has management trainee programmes at its offices in Copenhagen, Shanghai and Annapolis.

Says Chinese national Wang, who graduated from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) this year with a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies: "Singapore's shipping industry is well-known around the world. I made the right choice for my major."

Poh, a Singaporean who, like him, was among NTU's pioneer batch of maritime studies graduates, also realised that it would be a good choice after being attracted to the course initially because of her love for the sea. "Shipping is actually a very

**ABOVE**

Poh Wee Teng, Robert Sugarra and Wang Duan Wei

important sector in Singapore, accounting for around seven per cent of GDP. There are a lot of prospects," she says.

However, not many people are aware of that. As a result, the industry has been less successful at attracting talent compared to sectors like information technology and investment banking, says Peter Borup, managing director and group vice-president of Norden Tankers & Bulkers Singapore.

The management trainee programme is one way the company is trying to lure smart young people into its fold. It offers them a broad-based grounding in the business via rotation through the company's main departments, which include chartering and operations in the dry cargo and tanker segments. At the end of two years, they could be posted out to one of Norden's five other offices worldwide.

Indonesian Robert Sugarra is facing a steeper learning curve than the other two trainees because his background is not in maritime studies. He holds a University of London degree in banking and finance from the Singapore Institute of Management but is looking forward to a maritime career. "It's an interesting sector. I see opportunities going forward, and it's fun to learn," he says.

Borup is gratified that the company has managed to attract applicants from disciplines other than maritime studies as he is well aware that Norden is not exactly a household name outside shipping circles.

"We know we have an uphill struggle to at least be in the radar's range, so people will know us and want a career with us," he says.

The industry is facing an acute shortage of manpower, both on shore and at sea. "With the profits generated from ship dous investments in new ships. They're going to be delivered over the next five years and for some ships it has become very, very difficult to find competent officers and crews," he says.

He thinks that countries like Singapore and Denmark, which enjoy high per capita GDP, probably have a harder time getting people to join the industry because young people have so many other attractive options. A life at sea "away from their family and friends, from the Internet, cable TV and EPL, nightclubs and restaurants ... it is not an obvious career choice," he says.

But the industry has its attractive side, and



Borup applauds Singapore's efforts at publicising that through television documentary Making Waves and the Mandarin drama serial The Peak.

Shipping companies have also tried to make the long days at sea less onerous through the provision of on-board comforts like gymnasiums, cinemas, and Internet access via satellite.

But there is only so much they can do. "At the end of the day, it's also the choice of a different life. If you want to be at home, watching the news every night, holding your girlfriend's hand every night, you shouldn't be here," says Borup.

Although the three trainees will eventually have jobs on shore, they will have to spend time at sea as part of their training.

"It's important that they understand what's going on in a ship. We want them to be there when the ship arrives, take part in the loading or discharge, be on a sea voyage and experience for themselves how life at sea is, and then be part of the operations at the next port ... Otherwise they cannot communicate sensibly with captains and agents," he says.

The trainees are looking at these upcoming experiences with a spirit of adventure and an eye on the future. The myriad opportunities offered by this burgeoning sector are theirs to explore.

As Wang puts it: "It is exciting." ☰

**ABOVE**  
Peter Borup,  
managing  
director and  
group vice-  
president,  
Norden Tankers  
& Bulkers  
Singapore

*This article was first published in The Straits Times, Recruit on 23 August 2008.*

# Great expectations

With AP Moller-Maersk's track record for preparing its best and brightest for great things, expectations are naturally sky-high for those offered a place in the new Maersk Line Graduate Programme

**F**resh out of school in 2002, Evelyn Teng took stock of her bearings, considered her many options, and made the decision to join the AP Moller-Maersk Group. Life has never been quite the same since.

The Psychology and Economics major from the National University of Singapore was placed immediately in the company's two-year international shipping education programme. Travelling every six months to Copenhagen, Denmark, for training at the Maersk Shipping Academy, she hobnobbed with Maersk colleagues

from all corners of the globe.

"There were people from South Africa, the Ivory Coast, Brazil and many more countries," Evelyn recalls. "It was fantastic because you learn not just from each other, but also how to relate to one another. This is important in a company such as Maersk, which is truly an international company."

Some of Maersk's top executives were also at the school to give "invaluable instructions and advice" on best management practices, taking the 'rookies' through the paces in diverse areas of the business, such as customer service, operations, finance, business negotiation and personal grooming.

"Our training programme is tailored to take in fresh graduates with limited working and maritime experience, and turn them into skilled assets for the company," says Maersk Singapore human resources general manager Filiawati Lim.

Revolving around the principle that "on-the-job training is the best training", the company rotates young executives through different departments to build their knowledge and understanding of what makes the organisation tick.

“So often, companies are not prepared to give opportunities to young people, thinking they are not experienced enough,” she adds. “But, at Maersk, we believe in them, and we give them those opportunities.”

And such trust is rewarded. Responsible for handling all capacity matters from Asia Pacific to Europe as early as her sophomore year as a trainee executive, Evelyn was determined not to let down the people who believed in her. “It was extremely challenging,” she says. “But I allowed myself no room for failure because the company showed so much confidence in me.”

Her can-do spirit paid off, and she was soon entrusted with a two-year posting to Shanghai, where she managed the commercial trade into Africa and the Middle East. Currently the country manager for Safmarine Singapore, a sister company of Maersk, she knows a good thing when she sees one.

“I am very fortunate,” she says. “I enjoy my work in Safmarine, a company who is carving a niche for itself in the shipping industry by being personal, committed and understanding. I aspire to incorporate the same values throughout the organisation and in my personal life.”

When you start on the right foot, every journey is rich with promise. Maersk’s comprehensive training programme puts young and bright executives on the fast track, creating a new generation of country managers in their early 30s.

Since 1993, the company has been investing heavily in manpower development, grooming many high-performers to take leadership roles within the organisation and deal with an increasingly challenging business environment.

**“Our training programme is tailored to take in fresh graduates with limited working and maritime experience, and turn them into skilled assets for the company.”**

*– Filiawati Lim, Maersk Singapore*



**LEFT**  
Evelyn Teng (left), a graduate from AP Moller-Maersk’s international shipping education programme

This October, Maersk will be launching its new Maersk Line Graduate Programme to further ensure that executives-in-training receive the two essential tools they need to reach their full potential – hands-on leadership experience and strong commercial awareness.

“There is no doubt that the programme is difficult to get into, and expectations are sky-high,” says Filiawati. “But I believe our trainees will thrive.”



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## It's not just business, it's personal

For J Lauritzen Singapore managing director **TOM HANSEN**, the Singapore government's personal touches are what make this place a long-term proposition

**ABOVE**  
Tom Hansen,  
managing  
director,  
J Lauritzen  
Singapore

**F**inding a shipping professional such as Tom Hansen in Singapore is a natural consequence of the city's standing as a vibrant maritime hub.

Yet, the managing director of ocean transport solutions supplier J Lauritzen Singapore feels a sense of belonging that goes beyond a good working relationship.

In fact, so strong is his fellow feeling for the country he has called home since his company relocated its East-of-Suez bulk operations from Melbourne to Singapore in 2005, the Danish executive is all fired up to spread the message of



maritime Singapore to the young and unconverted.

“We must get young Singaporeans to recognise that maritime activity is a core national business and an integral part of Singapore’s identity,” he says.

And, as part of efforts to help Singapore youth keep the faith in a maritime career, Lauritzen is offering summer internships to two students from the Nanyang Technological University’s Maritime Studies programme.

“Make no mistake,” Hansen says, “Singapore is a long-term proposition for us.”

According to him, no other government in the region has a maritime authority as “accessible” as Singapore’s. While other authorities work to “lure” businesses in and then move on to their next “target”, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) stays committed long after the ink has dried on the dotted line.

“My very high expectations of government support and cooperation haven’t been met here,” he says. “They have been exceeded.”

Hansen remembers a meeting with MPA’s group director Tan Beng Tee, during which he highlighted problems his company was facing. Two days later, sitting next to then Senior Minister of State for Finance and Transport Lim Hwee Hua at a dinner function, he fully understood the extent of the Singapore government’s commitment.

“Completely unexpectedly, Minister Lim was entirely aware of my issues and wanted to discuss how she could help to resolve them,” he says. “This simply does not happen everywhere – the government here works to remove obstacles instead of putting them in your way.”

This level of support has been one of several factors in Lauritzen’s steady growth in Singapore. In addition to widening the scope of its activities in the Republic, expanding beyond dry bulk to include offshore as well as gas and product tanker operations, the company has also been increasing the local component of its management team.

From its initial staffing of five employees, one of whom was Singaporean, Lauritzen now has five Singaporeans among its team of 12.

Although the current economic climate is not enjoying the best of times, Hansen is not panicking.

“Obviously, we have to take measures to contain the present damage, but we are also focusing on positioning ourselves to be strong when the upturn happens,” he says. This, he adds, is especially important in Asia, where he has “no doubt that the intra-Asia business will outgrow the rest of the world”.

When that happens, Singapore will be one of the best places to do business. Not only is it ideally positioned at the crossroads of fast-growing Asian markets, it also has efficient infrastructure, a diversified maritime sector, world-class lifestyle, and – did we mention? – a committed government.

By 2011, Hansen predicts the company will have 20 employees, with Singaporeans making up three quarters of them.

Based on its current order-book, Lauritzen’s fleet will also grow to 30 ships by 2011. To pay tribute to the country that made this growth possible, two of the new ships will have names reflecting their Singapore provenance.

“I would argue that we are positioning this outfit to be a Singaporean company with Danish shareholders,” says Hansen. ☺



## O Captain, My Captain

When preparing his students for a life in the maritime sector, Singapore Maritime Academy lecturer **CAPTAIN FREDERICK JAMES FRANCIS**'s love of the sea goes a long way

**ABOVE**  
Captain Frederick James Francis, Singapore Maritime Academy lecturer

**I**t is the early morning and the ocean spray rises up to touch your cheek. The sunrise paints the sky a brilliant orange as you stand tall on the deck of your ship.

These sights and sounds are memories now for Captain Frederick James Francis, but to hear the man talk, it is not hard to see that his deep love of a life at sea remains unabated.

"I find the kind of serenity on board a ship that I can't find ashore," says the senior lecturer at Singapore Polytechnic's Singapore Maritime Academy. "It could be 3am or 4am in the morning, there would be just the sound of the ship's engines in the silence of the night, and I would be reflecting on things in life."

But if the sound of traffic is your preferred meditation track, do not worry. According to the 47-year-old father of two, not everyone gets it.





**“I have the privilege of opening minds and shaping lives, fulfilling my dreams and still have a rich family life – a blessing indeed.”**

to move on – especially after wife Christina had their first child.

“Teaching provides the platform to share my experiences, and I knew that was my calling,” he says. “I wanted to make learning more exciting and fun, and the Singapore Maritime Academy was the perfect place for this.”

Not afraid to get up on the chair himself, Capt Francis likes to encourage shy students to speak in front of the class. “I am here for the less brilliant students, to try and make a difference in their lives,” he says. “While I cheer when any of my student graduates, there is greater joy when a struggling student makes it.”

To Capt Francis, he is a blessed man, as he has the “privilege of opening minds and shaping lives, fulfilling his own dreams and still have a rich family life. As he puts it: “I have one of the best jobs in the world because it does not feel like a job.”

When he is not bringing his students through the Nautical Studies diploma programme at the Singapore Maritime Academy, he is offering his services as a legal consultant and writing a book or two. Published tomes include a 400-page autobiography, *Diary of a Sailor*. He was also the principal author of *The Maritime Heritage of Singapore* and *Halsbury’s Laws of Singapore*.

An active sportsman, Capt Francis continues to sail. Last year, he sailed with a group of students on the *STS Pallada*, from Penang to Singapore. He was also the camp commandant five times for the school’s maritime experiential learning programme on board *Superstar Virgo*.

Despite having travelled around the globe, this captain has no doubt about where the best port in the world is. “My roots will always remain sacred to me and living in a fast-paced society like Singapore blends well with my lifestyle,” he says. “I enjoy experiencing the richness and diversities of other lands and their people, but I always make it a point to share with them my homeland, which is Singapore.” 📍

“It’s like what the Bible says about the gospel,” he explains. “You have to be in the wilderness to understand it.”

For him, the faith came early – way back in the 1960s, when he was just six and started travelling on passenger ships with his family. It was not long before the sea beckoned full-time, and he boarded the container ship *Neptune Emerald* in Osaka, Japan as a rookie sailor in 1978.

“I felt curiosity, excitement and nervousness,” he recalls. “As I scaled the gangway, I also felt a sense of pride and belonging.”

A young Francis spent one year getting his “sea legs” before he was called to do his National Service. After braving the hardy life at sea, however, military training was a “breeze”, and he was named the Best Recruit during his Basic Military Training and, later, Most Outstanding Soldier.

Upon returning to the merchant navy, he was quickly promoted. In 1991, at the age of 29, he became the captain of a bulk carrier. After commanding nine ships in five years, it was time

# Can Singapore be a global centre for maritime education?

If this is a test, the grades are in, and Singapore seems to be passing with flying colours

**A**ccording to some schools of thought, Singapore could well become Asia's leading hub in maritime education.

Over the past few years, the Singapore government had partnered various educational institutions to establish new diploma and degree maritime courses, along with continuing education programmes for



For men and women with the right qualifications, there is an array of maritime career opportunities available in shipping as well as maritime business, law, finance and engineering.

academic fraternity, if fully coordinated, can use the component parts of the country's educational establishments to form the nucleus of Asia's own World Maritime University," says Cambridge Academy of Transport (CAT) chairman Richard Butcher. "This would certainly be in keeping with Singapore's status as an international maritime centre."

Ranging from postgraduate to diploma courses, maritime programmes in Singapore are offered by the three local universities and other institutions, such as the BI Norwegian School of Management, Singapore Maritime Academy, Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, Singapore Shipping Association, Institute of Ship Management, and Singapore College of Insurance.

There are now more than 30 such courses in Singapore – and it is a growing tally. In fact, well-regarded institutions such as CAT is talking of relocating some of its maritime-related programmes to Asia, and Singapore has everything to swing the vote in its favour.

For starters, as one of the world's leading international maritime centres, Singapore is the base for many major shipping companies, container carriers, international banks and insurance companies. For men and women with the right qualifications, there is an array of maritime career opportunities available in shipping as well as maritime business, law, finance and engineering.

A large number of shipping and related enterprise operating within Singapore's business environment, says Butcher, also makes the city-state an ideal venue for a forthright exchange of views. This, in turn, shapes the country's potential as a global centre for maritime education and learning.

mid-career maritime staff.

More recent and notable examples include Nanyang Technological University's Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies and the two-year Bachelor of Engineering in Naval Architecture, run by Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Singapore Polytechnic, in collaboration with Newcastle University.

"Singapore's maritime and logistical



For instance, when CAT organised the Anatomy of Container Logistics conference in Singapore last year, the main themes revolved around the challenges faced by the international transport industry. These topics, up for debate among participants from diverse shipping backgrounds, included escalating bunker prices, the influx of new and bigger tonnage as well as environmental and security issues.

In addition to Singapore's standing as an international maritime centre and maritime thought capital, there are other reasons why the country is primed to be a focal point for maritime education.

"It is particularly advantageous, for the achievement of an educational hub status, that Singapore enjoys a central geographical position within Asia, a business-friendly environment, and strong government support for all aspects of the shipping industry," says Butcher.

In 2007, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) launched the MaritimeONE initiative to provide a more coordinated approach to the promotion of maritime careers

in Singapore. Activities and programmes include outreach and networking events such as school talks and visits, scholarship and internship opportunities for students, and a new maritime careers website that serves as a one-stop information centre on different maritime career paths and job openings.

One present hiccup in Singapore's development as a maritime education centre has to be the tottering global economy, which has hit the shipping industry hard. In such a business climate, one can expect maritime enterprises to scale back recruitment activities and pay closer attention to training and manpower development costs.

Yet, if companies can be persuaded to adopt a long-term approach, this current economic downturn is an opportunity for the maritime industry to build a pool of skilled maritime manpower in Singapore, to facilitate the expected rapid growth once the global economy picks up.

Hopefully, this means a continued demand for maritime programmes and good news for Singapore as a maritime educational hub. So take your seat – class is about to begin. ☺



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# Training our sights on the upturn

The Singapore Shipping Association encourages maritime companies to use the current downturn to send their staff for continuing education and training

**I**t's Catch-22 for some companies when it comes to staff training. In good times, business is so brisk that it is all hands on deck (pardon the pun). In bad times, the training budget is unfortunately amongst the first to be cut.

Last October, it was revealed in a DP Information Group survey that almost half of local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) spent less than one per cent of staff costs on training. The survey also showed that 20 per cent of firms put aside less than S\$100 a year to train each employee. It was suggested by International Enterprise Singapore that companies should spend two to three per cent of staff costs each year on training.

These costs could add up in the long run, as

all employees need training to keep up with the rapidly changing business environment. But investing in human capital has now become more affordable - under SPUR (Skills Programme for Upgrading and Resilience).


The SPUR initiative is a two-year enhanced financial support scheme that companies can tap during the economic slowdown to upgrade the skills of their workers and enhance their business capabilities.

When the SPUR initiative was announced by the government last 19 November, the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA) sought views from the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), Singapore Industrial and Services Employees' Union (SISEU), Workforce Development Agency (WDA) and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) on how to tap the funds to help the maritime industry take a longer-term view of investing in training employees and enhancing their employability.


SSA president SS Teo says: "Our association is committed to undertaking competence building for shipping personnel. We aim to equip them

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**Knutsen-group**  
 USD 914,000,000  
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**Various financings**



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**ODfjell Invest**  
 USD 850,000,000  
 Sole Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
**Senior Secured Credit Facility**



**SOLSTAD OFFSHORE ASA**  
**Solstad**  
 NOK 1,590,000,000  
 Sole Bookrunner & Sole MLA  
**Senior Secured Credit Facility**




**Nakilat**  
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 Joint Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
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**CMA CGM**  
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 Joint Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
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**General Ore**  
 USD 805,000,000  
 Sole Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
**Senior Secured Credit Facility**




**Chandris**  
 USD 116,000,000  
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**Senior Secured Credit Facility**




**Genco Shipping & Trading**  
 USD 1,377,000,000  
 Sole Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
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**Seadrill**  
 USD 1,500,000,000  
 Joint Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
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**Seaspan**  
 USD 920,000,000  
 Sole Bookrunner & Joint MLA  
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**Northern Offshore**  
 USD 300,000,000  
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**Seadrill X ASA**  
 USD 800,000,000  
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**Aker Floating Production**  
**Commercial Paper Issue**  
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 Sole Arranger  
**DnB NOR Markets**




**ARROW SEISMIC**  
**Commercial Paper Issue**  
 NOK 275,000,000  
 Sole Arranger  
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**Prosafe**  
**Commercial Paper Issue**  
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 Sole Arranger  
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**Bond Loan**  
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 Joint Arranger  
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**Royal Caribbean International**  
**Senior Notes**  
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 Co-Manager  
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**OSG**  
**Initial Public Offering**  
 USD 142,500,000  
 Co-Manager  
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**CMA CGM**  
**Acquisition of Cheng Lie Navigation**  
 USD 160,000,000  
 Sole Financial Advisor  
**DnB NOR Markets**




**Initial Public Offering**  
 USD 247,000,000  
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**BLT**  
**Acquisition of Chembulk Tankers LLC**  
 USD 850,000,000  
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**MC SHIPPING INC**  
**Sale of company to Bear Stearns Merchant Banking**  
 USD 284,000,000  
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**Equity Offering**  
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with pertinent skill-sets for their jobs, while upgrading the professional skills and standards of the Singapore maritime industry as a whole. We encourage industry players to capitalise on the strength of SSA and the enhanced funding under SPUR to enhance the skills of staff so the industry can be even more competitive.”

Under its executive development programme, SSA has been conducting shipping-related courses for shore-based rank-and-file personnel since 1991. It offers courses ranging from container management, shipping operations and documentation to more specialised courses in marine insurance, shipping law and the Singapore Standard SS600:2008 Code of Practice for Bunkering.

All SSA courses are recognised by WDA as industry qualifications that enjoy enhanced funding support under SPUR. Companies that send Singaporeans and permanent residents on the courses pay only 10 per cent of course fees (the remaining 90 per cent is subsidised) and are eligible to claim up to S\$6.80 an hour in absentee payroll reimbursement.

In 2008, SSA offered 11 courses and conducted 26 classes for 580 trainees. With SPUR funding from the government to encourage retraining and retaining of staff, SSA has increased the frequency of classes by 50 per cent this year, with 39 course dates and more day classes. Some 1,300 training places are on offer to meet an anticipated surge in enrolment. And in the first month of registration alone, 300 places have already been snapped up.

Besides SSA's maritime courses, there are more than 800 courses subsidised by SPUR, including human resources, information and communications technology, generic skills such as service excellence and WSQ-ESS problem solving and decision making. For a list of the courses and the service providers offering them, take a look at WDA's website ([www.wda.gov.sg](http://www.wda.gov.sg)).

SSA's shipping courses are also a stepping stone to the Diploma in Ship Operations and Management (DSOM) programme, a collaborative effort of SSA, MPA and Singapore Maritime Academy (SMA-Singapore Polytechnic) to give shipping executives a structured training pathway towards acquiring a tertiary-level education.

Among the SSA courses available are Introduction to Shipping, Principles of Shipping

Operations and Practices, Principles of Shipping Documentation and Practices, Understanding Import/Export Techniques for Documentation, Principles of Ship broking and Chartering, Shipping Law and Disputes, The Basics of Dangerous Goods Management, Container Management, Marine Insurance, Effective Written Communication in the Shipping Industry, Basic Course on the Code of Practice for Bunkering SS600:2008, and Intermediate Course on the Code of Practice for Bunkering SS600:2008. Course details are available at [www.ssa.org.sg](http://www.ssa.org.sg)

Chief operating officer of Ocean Tankers and SSA council member Aloysius Seow encourages more companies to send staff for skills upgrading. “Most companies work within a budget when it comes to training, and they become highly selective in the number of people who are sent,” he says. “But with SPUR subsidies, more staff can be fast-tracked through training to achieve the skills required for career advancement. I believe training empowers, motivates and builds employees' self-esteem. People feel happier - and their commitment shows when they do their job. It is a win-win situation that benefits employees and companies.”

SSA also partners MPA, the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF) and Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI) in MaritimeONE – a tripartite initiative by the maritime industry, institutes of higher learning and the government – to push initiatives to attract talent into the maritime workforce and heighten public awareness of the industry. Amid the economic downturn, MaritimeONE will also put the spotlight on training and job retention in the maritime industry.

SSA's Mr Teo adds: “After years of concerted effort to attract talent into our maritime industry, it would be a pity for us to lose it now through retrenchment. In fact, until early 2008 we were experiencing shortage of manpower that was impeding our growth. Hence, we should carry on grooming our talent with skills our companies will need in the future and tighten our belts in other ways. We hope our member companies and their employees will be able to ride out the storm together, building loyalty.”

*This article is a contributed piece by Marianne Choo, General Manager of the Singapore Shipping Association.*

# Sea food

The ship's galley has come a long way since the days of, say, Captain James Cook, and now offers all the comforts of a modern restaurant. Yet, even though times may have changed, the importance of nutrition has not – if an army marches on its stomach, a seafarer who spends months away from home certainly sails on his.



Making sauerkraut

Captain Cook, or so say historians, offered his crew a menu which included sauerkraut, salted cabbage, broth prepared from cattle offal, dried orchid roots, and marmalade made from carrots and malt.

Beer was also a standard ration as early as the 14th century. In 1492, Henry VII even established a naval brewery at Portsmouth to supply his ships with the frothy beverage.

Before refrigerators, cows and goats were taken aboard to supply fresh milk and meat.

A few hundred years later, and the modern sailor's diet usually comprises anything you could order in a well-



stocked diner – hamburgers with fresh lettuce, tomatoes and onions, shellfish, and even ice cream.

Modern standards of hygiene also mean that there are regulations regarding the disposal of food waste. Modern ships are also equipped with distilling plants that provide fresh water for cooking, drinking and bathing.

Run in a fashion similar to restaurants onshore, a ship's galley has a head chef supported by a team of cooks specialising in different areas of the kitchen.

Responsible for feeding the entire crew, the role of the head chef is interestingly indistinguishable from his

counterparts a few centuries ago.

In addition to compiling large orders, managing the food budget, preparing for festive occasions, and taking cultural preferences into account, his job also includes rationing food supplies – and fending off raids on the pantry by hungry crew members.



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