



Singapore, 8 December 2022 | **For immediate release**

Staying safe at sea during the year-end holiday season

The Northeast Monsoon has set in and is expected to last till March 2023. During this period, the winds around Singapore are expected to strengthen while the sea conditions are expected to be choppy with moderate to heavy rain. The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) urges members of the public to exercise care and remain vigilant when at sea, in particular during this period. MPA would also like to remind industry and port users to implement the necessary safety measures when conducting their operations.

2. For sea transport passengers and commuters, MPA would like to highlight the importance of exercising basic safety practices, including remaining seated during the passage, using handrails when embarking and disembarking between the craft and landing steps, and donning of lifejackets when boarding and alighting the vessels at sea.

3. Persons engaging in recreational activities such as canoeing, kayaking, swimming, skiing, sailing and surfing should check the weather forecast and tidal conditions before heading to sea. Additionally, pleasure craft boaters should wear life jackets for their personal safety, especially on open deck boats, as there is increased risk of falling overboard.

4. For port users, MPA would like to remind all owners, operators, masters and crew that ships and cargoes must be properly secured for sea and they must also ensure that their ships' firefighting and life-saving equipment on board are in good working condition and in accordance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations. Additionally, the crew must be familiar with safety procedures, including exercising safe speed, shipboard emergency procedures, and embarking and disembarking passengers, especially in strong wind conditions. Masters must also remain alert while at anchor, keep a safe anchor watch, regularly check the weather conditions, ensure engines are ready for manoeuvring, and observe the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS). When alongside, Masters and crew are to ensure that mooring lines are safely secured and

tightened. Port users are also encouraged to wear life jackets for their personal safety when boarding and disembarking from ships at the anchorage.

Enhanced safety checks and measures by MPA

5. During this period, MPA will be stepping up safety checks and measures. MPA inspectors will conduct additional spot checks on ferries, harbour and pleasure craft. Besides the inspections on the general condition of the vessels, the inspectors will also focus on the embarking and disembarking process, the state of firefighting and life-saving equipment on board, and operators' familiarity with emergency procedures.

6. Captain Chong Jia Chyuan, Port Master of MPA, said, "Safety is a shared responsibility, and everyone must play their part to ensure that both operations and recreation at sea remain safe, especially during the monsoon period. Accidents often happen when complacency sets in. Do not leave anything to chance as the sea conditions can change very quickly. Be prepared and stay alert whenever you are at sea".

MPA-Industry Partnership to Enhance Safety at Sea

7. The National Maritime Safety at Sea Council (NMSSC), which serves as an advisory body to MPA on maritime safety matters, has also been working with various MPA-industry safety work groups to enhance safety at sea. In August 2022, two safety forums were organised as part of International Safety@Sea Week to share with the pleasure craft community about best practices to avoid incidents at sea and to engage the harbour craft industry on how operators could instil a strong safety culture.

8. The NMSSC and MPA-Harbour Craft Safety Work Group also worked with MPA and the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council to produce a video on the safe boarding of vessels and a booklet on safety measures when working in and around water based on various case studies. MPA has put up the safety video and posters at Marina South Pier and West Coast Pier to raise awareness of maritime safety. The resources are also available online at www.safetyatseaweek.gov.sg/resources.

9. Mr Ishak Ismail, Chairman of NMSSC said, "The video on safe boarding of vessels and case studies booklet to better support maritime shore-based personnel who board ships at anchorages and those working in and around water, are good examples of how the NMSSC works with the industry to push the safety agenda alongside MPA. At the end of the day, we want to build a strong safety culture amongst our maritime companies and workers and develop good safety habits so everyone can go home safely to their loved ones."

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About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

MPA was established on 2 February 1996 with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre, 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, international maritime centre champion and national maritime representative. MPA partners with 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. MPA is responsible for the overall development and growth of the Port of Singapore. In 2021, Singapore remained as the world's busiest transshipment hub with a container throughput of 37.5 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

For more information, please visit <https://www.mpa.gov.sg>

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