

# Newsletter 2024

## THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS SERVICE DELIVERY RECORD

2024

SINGAPORE

ACTIVITY	
NUMBER OF SHIPS VISITED	7,687
TRANSPORT SERVICE PER SEAFARER/TRIP	6,688
SEAFARERS VISIT TO DROP-IN CENTRE	3,450
SHIPS USING PORTABLE ROUTERS	538

As we embark on another year of service, we are privileged to introduce The Mission to Seafarers Singapore’s 2024 newsletter. This annual publication reflects our steadfast commitment to supporting the maritime community, celebrating our achievements, and addressing the evolving needs of seafarers who remain at the heart of everything we do.

The year 2024 marks a period of remarkable growth and transformation for our mission. We have seen significant increases in the number of ships visited, transport services provided, and seafarers engaged at our drop-in centre. These accomplishments are a testament to the dedication of our team and the invaluable support from our partners and donors, who share our vision of providing holistic care to the men and women who navigate the world’s oceans.

In this edition, we highlight the programs and initiatives that have defined the past year. From our expanded transport services, which have more than doubled in reach, to the enhanced facilities at our drop-in centre, every effort has been made to ensure that seafarers receive the support they deserve. At the same time, we remain mindful of the challenges ahead, such as the decline in demand for portable router services and the slight drop in ship visits at anchorages. Addressing these areas will be a key focus as we move forward.

One of the most pressing issues facing seafarers today is mental health. Long periods of isolation, demanding work conditions, and limited access to family and friends take a toll on the well-being of these essential workers. Recognizing this, we have prioritized initiatives aimed at promoting mental health awareness and providing direct support to those in need. Through partnerships with local and international organizations, we are working to create a network of care that meets both the physical and emotional needs of seafarers.

As always, none of this would be possible without the support of our dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and strategic partners. On behalf of The Mission to Seafarers Singapore, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your contributions to our mission. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of seafarers, ensuring that they are not forgotten but valued and cared for.

Thank you for journeying with us as we continue to chart a course towards a brighter future for seafarers. I hope you find this newsletter both informative and inspiring.

### **Fellowship with the Diocese of Singapore Leadership**

O We had a wonderful lunch meeting with our esteemed President, Archbishop Dr. Titus Chung, and Archdeacon Wong Tak Meng, of the Diocese of Singapore. This time of fellowship was both uplifting and inspiring, as we shared updates about our work and reflected on the mission we serve together.

Archbishop Dr. Titus Chung offered us his heartfelt assurance of continuous prayers and steadfast support, which serves as a profound encouragement to our team. His words reminded us of the vital spiritual foundation that underpins our efforts to serve the maritime community. In response, we reaffirmed our pledge of spiritual allegiance to the Diocese of Singapore, recognizing the invaluable guidance and strength we derive from this partnership. Moments like these underscores the importance of unity in mission and the shared commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.



### **Outreach to Crew On Board Tankers Berthed at Shell Marine, Energy and Chemical Park in Bukom**

A heartfelt thank you to Shell and their incredible team for facilitating our visit on board MT Nan Lin Wan and MT Advantage Spice, berthed at Shell Marine, Shell Energy, and Chemical Park in Bukom.

This visit marked the completion of the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) Day of the Seafarer gift pack distribution, ensuring these thoughtful gifts reached seafarers working on containers, bulk carriers, general cargo vessels, RORO ships, and tankers.

With your support, we've successfully bridged all gaps, bringing joy and appreciation to the hardworking crew members who keep our global trade moving.

Thank you for standing alongside us in honouring and supporting the men and women at sea. Together, we continue to make a difference!



**Outreach to Crew On Board Cruise Liner**



Our first-ever visit to a cruise liner which carries nearly 3000 passengers including the crew members marking a significant milestone. We extend heartfelt gratitude to Starr, the welfare officer aboard Arcadia, for inviting us to connect with part of her extensive crew of 850. This outreach allowed us to engage directly with the diverse community aboard the ship and offering support where needed. We are deeply appreciative of this wonderful collaboration in facilitating the invaluable initiative

**Corporate Social Responsibility**



On 22 March 2024 - Joining hands with the Mission to Seafarers Singapore, BHP demonstrates a deep concern for the welfare of seafarers. This afternoon, a dedicated group of their staff members exemplified corporate social responsibility by visiting our Centre in Jurong Port to assemble gift packs for 100 seafarers. Together, we spent an afternoon engaging with and personally delivering these meaningful gifts to our friends who deliver our daily necessities to our shore.

**Lunch & Learn**



We were delighted to welcome the Anglo-American team, led by Mr Peter Lye, to our centre at Jurong Port. During the visit, we explored potential partnerships to enhance seafarer welfare within the shipping community. We're optimistic that this collaboration will positively impact sustainability, particularly in the social aspects, improving the well-being of crews on board ships. This visit marks a significant step towards aligning our efforts in creating a more sustainable and supportive environment for seafarers, ensuring their welfare is prioritized as part of the broader sustainability goals.



Our sincere gratitude to RightShip for the opportunity to present our work to your staff not only physically in Singapore but also virtually in London, Malta, Vietnam, HongKong and various parts of the world. Your invitation signifies a shared commitment to the welfare of seafarers. We believe our collaboration holds great potential to build positive change within the seafaring industry, ensuring the well-being and safety of those who dedicate their lives to maritime trade. Thank you for recognizing the importance of Mission to Seafarers Singapore and we look forward to a fruitful partnership that benefits seafarers worldwide.

**Walking the Talk: Supporting Seafarers' Wellbeing – Shore Leave**



We are humbled to come alongside Shell Marine and GAC Singapore to promoting Shore Leave for crew members aboard tankers. This initiative is vital for improving the mental well-being of seafarers, providing them with much-needed rest and connection to the world beyond their vessels. The Mission to Seafarers Singapore is honoured to play a role in this important endeavour by offering free transport services for these crew members. This collaborative effort underscores our shared commitment to enhancing the quality of life for those who spend days at sea. Together, we aim to make a meaningful difference—one shore leave at a time

**Family Day for Seafarers!**



Thank you, SMOU, for providing seafarers from MV Lodbrog the wonderful opportunity to participate in your family day at Singapore's Bird Paradise on Sunday, 2nd June. It was an incredible experience for us to enjoy the vibrant and diverse birdlife in a beautiful setting. Your dedication to supporting seafarers and their families by organizing such memorable activities is truly commendable. The day was filled with joy, camaraderie, and a deeper appreciation for nature. We are grateful for your continued efforts in building a strong sense of community and for making such enriching experiences possible for us.

**Equipping Staff and Stakeholders**



In conjunction with the Day of the Seafarers, the Mission to Seafarers Singapore organized the SafeTALK workshop (Suicide Alertness For Everyone) at our Centre in Jurong Port to raise awareness about suicide prevention on board ships. We are grateful for the collaboration between LivingWorks LivingWorks Australia and The Mission to Seafarers, which made this workshop possible. Thank you to all the 18 participants from Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) , Singapore Maritime Officers' Union / Wavelink Group, ILSM, and our local staff members for their efforts to equip themselves to handle difficult situations they may encounter while working with seafarers. Asking the question, "Are you thinking of taking your own life?" is not as easy as it may seem. The trainers Cheng Hwee Fern and Catherine Graham gave instruction for the 3.5-hour intensive SafeTALK workshop which provided the attendees with tools to identify a potentially suicidal person using the acronym TALK: Tell, Ask, Listen, and Keep Safe.

As welfare workers, it is vital for us to avoid being the "Hungry Bakers" but instead be well-equipped so that we can effectively support crew members with suicidal thoughts.

**Staff Training for Effective Service**



In 2024 alone, MtSS transported over 7,000 seafarers, connecting them from their vessels from key locations such as PSA Pasir Panjang, Tuas Mega Port, Jurong Port, Marina South Pier, and West Coast Pier. With the addition of new team members, we are not only increasing our capacity but also ensuring that our services meet the highest safety and operational standards.

To equip our team for this vital mission, all new and existing staff have undergone a comprehensive orientation program conducted by qualified trainers from PSA at their esteemed training institute. We recognize the critical role shore leave plays in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of seafarers. By expanding our team and investing in high-quality training, we aim to make their shore leave as smooth and stress-free as possible. Safety, care, and efficiency remain our top priorities. As we gear up for 2025, MtSS remains dedicated to our mission of caring for the welfare of seafarers who contribute tirelessly to the global economy. With a strengthened team and enhanced training, we are ready to meet the challenges ahead and continue making a positive impact in the lives of the seafaring community.

We invite the maritime community and all who value the welfare of seafarers to support our initiatives. Together, we can ensure that every seafarer feels valued, cared for, and safe during their time in Singapore.

**The Nautical Institute Conference 2024**



Grateful to the Nautical Institute Singapore Branch for the opportunity to share insights on the latest developments about the Mission to Seafarers Singapore and promoting SafeTALK. It was a privilege to attend the conference and hear the discussion amongst leaders with regard to a matter of great importance—the wellbeing of seafarers—within the shipping fraternity.

As we confront the distressing reality of rising suicide rates globally, now exceeding 700,000 annually according to WHO, it is imperative that stakeholders encourage open and honest dialogue on this issue. Suicide must no longer be a subject of social stigma or a taboo; it demands our collective attention and action.

Our sincere appreciation to the organizer of the Nautical Institute Conference 2024 for your effort and dedication to raising awareness and supporting initiatives that prioritise the welfare of those at sea. I believe together, we can make a difference and work towards creating a safer and more compassionate environment for our seafarers, where their mental health is recognised and valued.

**IMPA Conference 2024**



Delighted to share my insights on crew welfare within Singapore’s maritime context at the IMPA Conference 2024 with like-minded Maritime stakeholders. Grateful to Paul Skinner for the invitation for the second consecutive year. It’s always an honour to contribute to meaningful discussions that highlight the importance of supporting seafarers and improving their well-being in the maritime industry



**Chinese New Year Celebration 2024**

The Mission to Seafarers Singapore by God's grace continues to ensure relevance amidst potential turbulence in 2024. Amidst uncertainty, the total wellbeing of seafarers remains our top priority. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to MPA for their sponsorship of the F&B for our Chinese New Year celebration with Master and crew of MV St George at our Centre.



During the festive season, many of us may have taken for granted the special privilege to celebrate with loved ones at home. However, seafarers out at sea lack this privilege, just so the global economy can be kept going. The Mission to Seafarers Singapore has prepared special goodies made possible by Cargill to express our gratitude for their efforts.



**Celebrating the International Day of the Seafarer 2024**



The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), alongside industry partners, unions, and organizations such as MtSS, SMA, and SailMAP, celebrated the International Day of the Seafarer at the Singapore Maritime Gallery.

The event featured opening remarks by MPA Chief Executive Eng Dih Teo, a presentation by MtSS Port Chaplain Toh Soon Kok on seafarers' welfare, and insights from SMA Director Capt Chatur Wahyu on innovative training methods like AI, VR, and clean marine fuels. MPA's Deputy Director Pauline Chua also highlighted the Maritime Energy Training Facility's role in advancing maritime workforce training.

The ceremony honoured SailMAP awardees for their career achievements and concluded with the distribution of sustainable thermal flasks to seafarers



28th June 2024- Celebrating the Day of the Seafarers in our centre with over 50 crew members from MV Universe Prosperity, MV PVT Pearl, MV King Island, and MV Yin Xue was truly meaningful. The shared sense of purpose was palpable as we came together to honor the Seafaring profession and its challenges. A special thanks to a few people: Singapore Maritime Officers' Union / Wavelink Group for their generous provision of food and beverages, our Chairman Capt Fred Francis and Vice Chairman Chris Jones, their presence have made the event even more enjoyable. It's always wonderful to see such partnership in celebration of our seafarers' welfare journey.

**Celebrating Day of the Seafarers with a Green Touch!**



In honour of the incredible seafarers who keep our world connected, the Mission to Seafarers Singapore is glad to help distribute these eco-friendly thermal flasks and travel adapters to visiting seafarers in ports and the anchorage!

These flasks made available by MPA, PSA, Jurong Port, SMOU, SOS/Seacare and part of Maritime Singapore are not just a token of our appreciation but a commitment to sustainability. By encouraging the reduction of single-use plastics bottles, we're taking a step towards a cleaner ocean and a healthier planet.

Let's raise a flask to our dedicated seafarers and to a future where our maritime industry leads in environmental responsibility. Together, we can make a difference!

Special thanks go to sponsors Jurong Port, PSA Singapore, SOS, and SMOU for supporting this meaningful event, which underscores the maritime community's dedication to seafarers' welfare and development.

**Labour Day celebration for Seafarers**



The Mission to Seafarers is grateful to SMOU for their partnership for seafarers' welfare in Singapore. On 8th May, over 50 crew members from diverse nationalities, including Vietnamese, Chinese, Filipino, French, and Romanian, gathered at our Centre in Jurong Port for an evening filled with food, fun and games. Our honour to have the presence of representatives from Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) the Exco of SMOU and management committee of MtSS. At the end of the evening, every seafarers walked away with a waist pouch as a token of appreciation. Together, we celebrate the hard work and dedication of seafarers, promoting unity and support within the maritime community.

**Maritime Week!**



During Singapore Maritime Week, the maritime industry's camaraderie to care for the wellbeing of seafarers shines at the Mission in Singapore. In collaboration with Inmarsat, we hosted an evening filled with great fun and food at our Drop-in Centre in Jurong Port. Our aim is to combat isolation and work stress plaguing seafarers. We are deeply appreciative of Capt Stanley Siaw who has gone out of his way to share insights on handling depression with over 30 seafarers from several different vessels, something for the crew members to take away. Our gratitude to Laurie, Lidia, Dennis, Vinod and Rina of Inmarsat for your presence with us. Thank you to Fei Fei from MPA for joining us. Last but not least, Tom and SC from our local committee who came and connect with our stakeholders.

### **Mid-Autumn Festival 2024!**



MtSS celebrates the Mid-Autumn Festival with seafarers as a cultural occasion. The festival, which focuses on themes of family reunions, gratitude, and the harvest, often reminds seafarers, far from their loved ones, of home, stirring feelings of homesickness. We hope that spending an evening enjoying mooncakes, kindly provided by SMOU and SOS/Seacare, will in some way help to ease their sense of loneliness.

### **Deepavali Celebration!**



7th November - We welcomed over 40 seafarers from MV Hinano, MV Twinluck SW, and MV Tan Binh 136 to our Seafarer's Centre at Jurong Port for a special Deepavali celebration. To give our visiting seafarers a break from life onboard, they were treated to a taste of local Indian cuisine, with authentic dishes that brought a festive touch to the evening.

This gathering was made possible with the generous support of our corporate partner, MPA, whose Shipping Division team joined in with 10 staff members. We were also honored to have Capt. Raj Chada, our Operational Task Force Chairman, who shared traditional Indian sweets with the crew, SC Lim, our management committee member, and John Bodill, our Marketing and Fundraising manager were also present to grace the event.

It was a wonderful evening filled with community, culture, and camaraderie, reminding our seafarers that they are valued and welcome here in Singapore.

11th December - Celebrating the true joy of Christmas with a meaningful Holy Communion Service alongside the Master and Crew Members of MV Oriental Harbour. We had a great time of worship, fellowship, and reflection on the hope brought by the birth of Christ. We are deeply grateful to The Shipowners' Club and the Mission to Seafarers for generously providing Christmas gifts for everyone on board. Together, we shared the spirit of love, gratitude, and unity this Christmas brings.



### **Bringing Joy to Seafarers**

Earlier this year, Aderco approached us with a heartfelt idea: to surprise seafarers with a gift that could bring them a sense of comfort and joy while at sea. We were delighted to collaborate on this initiative, and as a result, the Mission to Seafarers Singapore team facilitated the distribution of table tennis sets, proudly featuring the logos of both the Mission and Aderco.

Idris Talib, Technical Manager, joined the team for a ship visit and played a role in hand out the sets to crew members, who were thrilled with the unexpected gifts.

A huge thank you to Aderco for partnering with us on this wonderful project to brighten e



**Year End Celebration!**

Inmarsat’s early Christmas celebration for seafarers at the Mission to Seafarers Singapore’s Centre exemplifies the spirit of gratitude and care during the holiday season. Events like these are a beautiful way to recognize the sacrifices seafarers make, spending long periods away from their families to keep global trade running smoothly.

We’re certain the live band, festive meal, and thoughtful gifts have brought much-needed joy and cheers to the seafarers. Kudos to Inmarsat and her staff and not forgetting Rina for going the extra mile to make this season memorable. Such gestures truly highlight the importance of maritime welfare and the appreciation we owe to these essential workers. Merry Christmas to all the hardworking seafarers!



Our heartfelt thanks to MPA and SMOU for your invaluable partnership in supporting the welfare of seafarers in Singapore.

Your collaboration and commitment have been instrumental in enabling us to provide meaningful care and assistance to the men and women who work tirelessly at sea. Together, we will make a positive impact on their well-being, ensuring they feel valued and supported. We deeply appreciate your dedication to this cause and look forward to continuing our partnership to further enhance the lives of seafarers.



### **Tragic Loss on Board**

For many seafarers, the moment they step off the gangway and into the arms of their families is unparalleled. After months at sea, they relish the simple pleasures of home: shared meals, family celebrations, and the comfort of familiar surroundings which sometimes we take it for granted. These happy reunions make it worthwhile the sacrifices made during long voyages and highlight their resilience and dedication.

In stark contrast, there are heart-breaking stories of seafarers who tragically lose their lives while at work. The sea, while a source of livelihood, can be unforgiving. Accidents, harsh weather conditions, and health issues can turn a routine voyage into a fatal journey, leaving their families behind, without joyous homecoming, but only the grief of loss and the challenge of moving forward without their loved one.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all these tragedies casting a shadow over the maritime industry. May the Lord watch over all the seafarers as they sailed across treacherous waters to provide for their families and bring us our necessities to our shore.





### **Tragic Loss of a Filipino Seafarer on board !**

A 40-year-old Filipino seafarer has left an indelible mark on the hearts of all his colleagues. A father of a ten-year-old, he was eagerly anticipating his long-awaited sign off from Singapore and reunion with his family this Christmas after a gruelling 11 months at sea. His wife and child had already decorated the Christmas tree, prepared his favourite dishes and counting down the days until his return.

But fate had other plans. He died on 4th December en-route to Singapore from S. Africa before his scheduled disembarkation. Despite the crew's best efforts to revive him, he passed away in the afternoon. His last conversation with his wife the night before had been filled with hope and promises—plans to watch the Christmas lights together and gifts he had prepared for the child.

The news of his death was a devastating blow to his family, who had been looking forward to welcoming him home. His colleagues on board spoke of his humour, his dedication and the sacrifices he made to give his family a better future. His untimely passing is a stark reminder of the emotional and physical toll life at sea takes on seafarers.

The Mission to Seafarers in SG stepped in to support his grieving colleagues and to give him the farewell he deserves. For seafarers who spend long months away from their loved ones, Christmas is more than a holiday—it is a symbol of reunion, love, and hope. His absence will be deeply felt, not just by his family but by the entire crew on board.



We gathered as a community to pray for the deceased Oiler on board one of the container vessels which came alongside in PSA Pasir Panjang. The somber mood reflected our collective grief and respect for the deceased. Each member of the crew stood in silent reflection, offering prayers and support for one another. The memorial service underscored the strong bonds formed in their shared life at sea, reminding us of the fragility of life and the importance of community. We honored the Oiler's memory, acknowledging his contributions and the void his passing leaves in the surviving crew and their hearts.



We reached out to the crew members of MV Puerto Rosario to remember the passing of their Bosun, Michael .... Michael had dedicated his life to the sea and many crew who sailed with him. A funeral service was held on board the bulk carrier anchored at EAPA on 23 May 2024 at 1230hrs. Together with the crew members, we honour his memory and prayerfully provide closure for all his shipmates. His courage and spirit will be deeply missed. Rest in peace, Bosun.



Caring for Seafarers around the world is more than words; it is a reflection of our dedication to providing support, comfort, and compassion to uplift those who spend their lives at sea, regardless of race, nationality, or religion.

Yet again a seafarer - this time a Ukrainian - tragically passed away on board his vessel while in China. His crew mates were grieving and desperate to ensure he was given the dignity and respect he deserved in his last journey. The vessel made her way to Singapore en route to Romania for discharging and where the repatriation process would take place.

Recognising the emotional and spiritual needs of the crew, the ship owner alerted us at the Mission for help. We arranged for an Eastern Orthodox priest to board the ship alongside our team. A funeral service was conducted, honouring the seafarer's life and faith. It was a poignant reminder that even in the face of tragedy, no seafarer is alone, and no challenge is too great for us at the Mission to Seafarers to address. Our care transcends all religious boundaries. This is the essence of inclusiveness—the heartbeat of the Mission to Seafarers. Whether a seafarer practices Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or no religion at all, we stand ready to provide the help they need, when they need it most.

This is a testament that every seafarer is part of one global seafaring family. By caring for their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, we honour their immense contribution to the world's economy and daily life.

As we conclude 2024, may this be a reminder of the humanity that unites us all in 2025. Seafarers may be the invisible workforce of the global trade for the common folks on the street, but to us, they are visible, valued, and cherished.



**Raising Awareness in Church - Out of sight, out of mind!**



Seafarers have been working tirelessly behind the scenes for ages, yet their vital contributions to the global economy often go unnoticed.

We thank God for His grace, and with the support of my Vicar in St George's Church, Revd Dr. Jonathan Wong, The Mission to Seafarers Singapore had the opportunity to reconnect with several parishes in the Diocese of Singapore.

A special thanks to Deaconess Lena Lim for inviting us to speak at St. John's Chapel (Chinese Congregation) on 3rd November. She led the church in prayer for us and for seafarers worldwide who work tirelessly to deliver our essentials. We hope to have more opportunities like this in the future to raise awareness and support for our seafarers.

**Sea Sunday**



Sea Sunday is a vital occasion to honour and support seafarers, who are essential to our global economy and daily lives. On August 4th, the Mission to Seafarers Singapore celebrated this special event across three services at St George's Church, with the involvement of our Chairman Prof Capt Frederick Francis, Vice Chairman Chris Jones, Management Committee Member Capt Richard Howe and Member Capt Raymond Ambrose.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our Anchor Parish, St George's Church, for their wonderful support. Their generosity and commitment allow us to effectively reach out to desperate seafarers, providing them with the care and assistance they need.

Let's come together to show our gratitude and ensure a brighter future for the brave individuals who keep our world connected.



We extend our heartfelt thanks to our Anchor Parish, St. George's Church, for welcoming us to discuss the Mission's work at the Senior's Meeting. It was enriching to delve into Singapore's latest developments and shed light on the evolving seafaring landscape.

Special appreciation to Capt Raymond Ambrose and Larry Bradley for sharing their invaluable experiences and insights about the changing shipping patterns. Your steadfast support is vital as we continue our mission to enhance seafarers' welfare. Together, let's strive to make a difference in the lives of desperate seafarers.

### **Holy Communion Service!**



Celebrating Holy Communion with Christian seafarers on board ships reinforces a deep sense of community, hope, and connection to faith for those who spend long periods away from home and church. It not only strengthens their emotional well-being but also brings comfort amidst the isolation and challenges of life at sea. We praise the Lord for the dedicated clergy, including Revd Dr Jonathan Wong of St George's Church, who have enabled the extension of the communion table to seafarers. The Eucharist serves as a powerful reminder of God's presence, offering spiritual nourishment and reaffirming their belonging to the wider Christian community. For many seafarers, it provides a moment of peace and reflection, helping them cope with the physical and mental demands of their work.