

STH leads maritime delegation to Shanghai

The Secretary for Transport and Housing, Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung, led a 17-member Hong Kong maritime delegation to Shanghai from December 2 to 4, 2013. The delegation visited Shanghai Maritime University, Waigaoqiao Port District and the Shanghai Free Trade Zone, and attended the grand opening of Marintec China 2013.

Professor Cheung officiated at the opening ceremony of the Hong Kong Pavilion at the event on December 3, where he explained that as an international maritime centre, Hong Kong had a developed maritime services cluster with a comprehensive service network. He further elaborated that there was presently a maritime cluster of over 700 shipping-related companies, providing a variety of quality maritime services, including ship agency and management, ship finance, marine insurance, maritime law and arbitration services, and other port-related operations.

Professor Cheung said that the Hong Kong Shipping Registry not only provided high-quality technical support to shipowners; it also offered a one-stop service to the registration of ships and related applications. He also explained that over 2,300 ships, amounting to more than 85 million gross tonnage, were registered with the Hong Kong Shipping Register, currently ranking among the top four in the world.

The Hong Kong Pavilion was set up by the Hong Kong Maritime Industry Council in collaboration with the Marine Department and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council to promote Hong Kong's strong maritime cluster. At the pavilion, nine Hong Kong exhibitors showcased advanced navigation and communications equipment as well as support services such as weather routing, ship repair, marine asset tracking and fleet management, aiming to promote the Hong Kong Port and its comprehensive maritime services.

STH leads maritime delegation to Taipei

The Secretary for Transport and Housing, Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung, led a Hong Kong maritime delegation to Taipei from October 29 to 30, 2013, for exchanges with the local maritime industry, and to promote Hong Kong's maritime services.

The 18-member delegation comprised the Director of Marine, Mr Francis

Liu, members of the Hong Kong Maritime Industry Council (MIC) and Hong Kong Port Development Council (PDC), as well as industry leaders and the Legislative Councillor for the transport functional constituency, Mr Frankie Yick.

While in Taiwan, the delegation visited the Evergreen Marine Corporation, Taiwan Ocean University and the Port of Keelung to network and exchange views with Taiwan's maritime and port industries.

Professor Cheung also officiated at the Hong Kong-Taiwan Maritime Services Seminar, which was organised by the MIC, PDC and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, on October 30. At the seminar, Professor Cheung introduced to the Taiwanese audience Hong Kong's diversified services in ship finance, ship management, shipbroking, marine insurance, maritime law and arbitration.

Also, in his capacity as Vice Chairperson of the Hong Kong-Taiwan Economic and Cultural Co-operation and Promotion Council, Professor Cheung paid courtesy calls on the relevant Taiwan authorities.

Regular meeting to enhance maritime safety

The 21st regular meeting between the Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration (GDMSA) and Hong Kong Marine Department (MD) was held in Zhanjiang, Guangdong on November 20, 2013. The Director General of GDMSA, Mr Liang Jian-wei, and the Director of Marine, Mr Francis Liu, led delegations to the meeting.

Both sides exchanged views on a number of issues including safety and traffic administration at sea; seafarers' training and certification management; marine accident investigation; port state control and flag state control; emergency response in tackling pollution; as well as safety management during the construction and operation of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge.

Other issues discussed were the management of ships using liquefied natural gas; submittal of pre-arrival notice by Mainland river trade or coastal vessels prior to entering Hong Kong waters; setting up of a closer-cooperation mechanism between Hong Kong and Mainland authorities on safety management of high-speed passenger vessels plying between Hong Kong, Macao and Mainland ports; inspection on some cross-boundary

Mainland high-speed passenger vessels; and the execution of legislation and working guidance in compliance with Annex II of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships (MARPOL) on MARPOL surveyors.

Visit of Minister of the Ministry of Transport

The Minister of the Ministry of Transport, Mr Yang Chuan-tang, led a delegation and visited the Marine Department on November 18, 2013. The Director of Marine, Mr Francis Liu, briefed him on the operations of the department and the marine facilities in the port.

Accompanied by Mr Liu and the Assistant Director (Planning & Services), Mr KM Fung, Mr Yang paid a visit to the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals.

Director of Marine commends brave acts at sea

54 heroic people who had risked their lives to rescue others in Hong Kong waters were presented with commendations by the Director of Marine, Mr Francis Liu, on December 17, 2013.

Receiving the commendations were 34 police officers, five officers of the Marine Department, six staff of Star Ferry Company Limited, three staff of Hong Kong Pilots Association Limited and six members of the public.

“Without brave and public-spirited people like our heroes here today, some lives would have been lost and families bereaved. On behalf of the Marine Department, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to our heroes and offered my congratulations to all of them on their selfless and public-spirited acts,” said Mr Liu at the presentation ceremony.

Mr Liu pointed out that the Marine Department, being the administrator of the port, was committed to promoting maritime safety. Seminars on navigational safety were held from time to time and industry stakeholders were reminded of the importance of navigational safety and the need for constant vigilance.

The department would continue to co-operate with the Marine Police and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in the water sport high season

to promote marine safety and enhance public awareness through publicity campaigns, he said.

Mr Liu added that not all accidents placing people in peril in the waters could be avoided, and the Marine Department was conducting a comprehensive review of the regulatory measures and requirements governing safety of local passenger-carrying vessels with a view to enhancing the safety of passenger-carrying vessels and navigational safety. The first phase of improvement measures was announced on November 29.

APSN holds workshop on green port

Environmental sustainability has become one of the key issues in the maritime industry. At the “Workshop on Green Port: Time for Actions and Innovations”, held in Phuket, Thailand on November 5, 2013, the Director of Marine, Mr Francis Liu, reported that the government would not only continue to step up measures on emission controls within the HKSAR waters, but it would also cooperate with stakeholders to create a sustainable environment for future development of the Hong Kong port.

The workshop, organised by the Secretariat of the APEC Port Services Network (APSN) Council and co-hosted by the Port Authority of Thailand, was held in conjunction with the 6th APSN Council Meeting. Mr Liu said in the workshop that the government had taken positive measures to reduce the SO_x and NO_x emissions from vessels since 1990. The government, in addition, had rolled out a three-year incentive scheme in September 2012, giving ocean-going vessels a 50 per cent reduction in port facilities and light dues by switching to fuel with sulphur content of not more than 0.5 per cent while berthed in Hong Kong.

Mr Liu said that in order to achieve the MARPOL Annex VI emission requirement of 0.5% sulphur cap in 2020, the government planned to mandate the use of cleaner fuel of the specified sulphur content by ocean-going vessels while at berth in Hong Kong waters in 2015. On another front, the government would upgrade the diesel standard for local vessels, Mr Liu said.

Over 40 representatives from 12 member economies of the APEC region attended the 6th APSN Council Meeting.

Experience sharing with United States Coast Guard

In November 2013, General Manager (Government Dockyard), Mr Stanley Luk, and Senior Surveyor of Ships, Mr WH Leung, visited the USA to meet with members of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the engine manufacturer Caterpillar.

At the USCG's Acquisition Directorate, they met with the staff and learned the USCG's procedures for buying patrol launches and off-the-shelf products. Both sides also discussed the management of new shipbuilding projects. The staff of the Acquisition Directorate also shared their experience in employing private consultants for help with these new shipbuilding projects.

Mr Luk and Mr Leung then visited their counterparts at the USCG's Surface Forces Logistics Center. They shared experiences on vessel maintenance and established contacts with the USCG for future technical cooperation.

Mr Luk and Mr Leung also visited the Caterpillar Foundry in Mapleton and its Power Laboratory in Peoria. There they learned about the latest development of engines to meet IMO Tier III Exhaust Emission Standards. They also visited the Foundry's engine maintenance training facilities.