

HKMPB organises Hong Kong Maritime Industry Week

The first Hong Kong Maritime Industry Week (HKMIW) organised by the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board (HKMPB) took place from November 20 to 27, 2016. Through a series of events, and with the strong support of Hong Kong's maritime and port community, the HKMIW seeks to promote Hong Kong as a preferred base for maritime business and to raise public awareness of the contribution of the sector to our economic prosperity.

The Chairman of the HKMPB and Secretary for Transport and Housing, Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung, officiated at the opening ceremony for the HKMIW 2016 on November 20. He said that the maritime sector has always been an important industry in Hong Kong and has evolved in tandem with the city's development.

He pointed out that along with Hong Kong's growth into a major business hub and international financial centre, our maritime industry has also diversified and moved on to high value-added services. At present, over 800 companies offer multifarious professional maritime services including ship management, maritime law and arbitration, ship finance and marine insurance.

Professor Cheung thanked various maritime-related organisations for offering nearly 30 events at the eight-day HKMIW. These events covered a wide range of topics and took various forms such as seminars, business meetings and forums, including the 6th Asian Logistics and Maritime Conference, the Lloyd's List Hong Kong Briefing, a marine insurance law seminar by the renowned Professor Rob Merkin, and an industry forum looking into the national Belt and Road Initiative. Vibrant and fun-filled events and trade gatherings were staged during the week.

MD promotes the maritime industry

The Marine Department (MD) launched thematic webpages on “Maritime Industry” on January 18, 2017 to introduce the maritime industry and encourage aspiring talents to join and become maritime professionals.

The contents of the thematic webpages include the differences between the deck crew and the engineering crew; the development ladders for the deck crew and

engineering crew in local vessels, river trade vessels and seagoing vessels and the career paths for local pleasure vessel operators. The webpages also provide information on the posts and vacancies in the MD, with description of the job duties and entry requirements of the respective posts etc.

The thematic webpages on “Maritime Industry” can be accessed at www.mardep.gov.hk/theme/maritime_industry.

On the other hand, the Facebook page of the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB), “Any Walker”, interviewed the staff of the MD to introduce their daily work and how they joined the department as well as to share their feelings about the career. The Facebook page of the THB can be accessed at www.facebook.com/anywalker.hk.

Videos of the interviews are also uploaded to the thematic webpages on “Maritime Industry”.

MD reminds passengers on high-speed craft to fasten seat belts

The Marine Department (MD) started to launch a new round of publicity on December 13, 2016 at three marine ferry terminals to further promote the message that passengers on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau should have their seat belts fastened for marine safety purposes.

Marine inspectors of the MD distributed promotional leaflets to passengers of high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau at the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan and the Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal in the morning on December 13 and at the China Ferry Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui in the afternoon, appealing to passengers to buckle up their seat belts at the appropriate time to ensure safety.

A spokesperson for the MD said, “‘Have a Safe and Happy Journey with Your Seat Belt Fastened’ is the slogan of the new round of publicity, which aims to remind passengers on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau to be aware of the master’s announcement during the voyage. When the master announces the instruction, passengers should fasten their seat belts to ensure a safe journey.”

The spokesperson said the MD will continue to distribute the leaflets to

passengers at the waiting halls of the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan, the China Ferry Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui and the Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal. Other promotional materials such as posters have been displayed prominently in these ferry terminals. In addition, the MD will enhance passenger awareness of fastening seat belts on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau by making use of different channels.

MD holds seminar to promote navigational safety

The Marine Department (MD) held the Navigational Safety Seminar 2017 on January 12, 2017. About 200 representatives from the shipping industries, coxswains and operators of local vessels, as well as representatives of marine works projects attended the seminar.

The Deputy Director of Marine, Mr Wong Sai-fat, reminded coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels to post extra lookouts, proceed at a safe speed and strictly comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea when navigating in restricted visibility.

Coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels have the responsibility to uphold safety at sea and fully comply with the marine legislation. Coxswains and crew members should take appropriate and adequate safety precautions and prepare contingency arrangements before setting sail. Vessels should have sufficient life-saving and fire-fighting equipment. Coxswains and crew members should ensure that vessels, engines and equipment are maintained in conditions that are suitable for navigation. In addition, they should be aware of the contact numbers of the port traffic control unit and units that provide emergency services, and be fully aware of the latest weather conditions and related MD Notices.

On another front, to avoid accidents caused by fatigue, owners and operators of all local vessels must ensure that the duty rosters of crew members, including coxswains, have sufficient rest periods to avoid fatigue at work.

As more infrastructure projects are being undertaken in Hong Kong these days, coxswains and crew members should pay special attention to MD Notices on marine works. Vessels working in marine works areas should comply with safety measures and those navigating in the vicinity of marine works areas should exercise extra

caution to avoid accidents.

To enhance safety of navigation and life at sea, the MD proposes to introduce new legislation to control boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs in Hong Kong with reference to the Road Traffic Ordinance. The proposed new legislation should apply to all vessels navigating within the waters of Hong Kong, including locally licensed vessels, river-trade vessels and ocean-going vessels. The MD is now consulting the industry to solicit its views.

The MD organises education seminars and publicity campaigns to promote marine safety on a regular basis. Since mid-December 2016, the MD has launched a new round of publicity at three marine ferry terminals to further promote the message that passengers on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau should have their seat belts fastened. A veteran coxswain of high-speed craft also spoke about the navigational safety of high-speed craft in restricted visibility at this annual seminar.

The issues discussed in the Navigational Safety Seminar 2017 covered the application of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea in Hong Kong waters, safety precautions required for vessels navigating in the vicinity of marine works areas, electrical safety onboard vessels, analysis of marine accidents and their implications, and navigational safety of high-speed craft in restricted visibility. The MD also distributed leaflets at the seminar to promote navigational safety.

MD Notice No. 8 of 2017 on safe navigation in poor visibility has been issued and uploaded to the department's website (www.mardep.gov.hk).

Marine traffic control and safety measures for New Year's Eve countdown celebrations

The Marine Department (MD) implemented marine traffic control and safety measures for the National Day Fireworks Display held on December 31, 2016.

On the event day, the MD established a closed area in the waters where barges for the fireworks display were anchored, and a restricted area in the Central Harbour. To ensure vessels disperse in an orderly manner, the Eastern and Western Cordon

Lines of the restricted area were lifted in stages after the event.

To enhance marine safety, the MD officers strengthened inspections of spectator vessels, which included providing sufficient life-saving appliances on board, ensuring that children wear a lifejacket at all times and having coxswains keep a passenger and crew list on board.

The MD and the Police officers also strengthened inspections especially on speeding and overloading, and they maintained order at major landing facilities after the event to ensure the smooth and safe disembarkation of passengers.

Director of Marine commends brave acts at sea

The Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, presented commendations on November 15, 2016 to 38 police officers who risked their lives to rescue others in Hong Kong waters.