

### **AMOs and ASoSs to report duty**

To address the manpower shortage problem of the two professional grades, an assistant rank for the Marine Officer (MO) and Surveyor of Ships (SoS) grades have been created with effect from August 2018. The recruitment process has completed. Offers of appointment are being issued and new recruits start to report for duty in the first quarter of 2019. The new assistant rank officers have to complete a designated training programme in about four years to acquire the necessary professional knowledge, consolidate work experience, attain the required level of competency and obtain the professional qualification from the relevant professional institution. The programme comprises on-the-job training, academic qualification training, and industry attachment opportunities, etc. The Department will also arrange officers in the MO and SoS grades as mentors to provide coaching to and share their experience with individual officers.

### **Education and Careers Expo 2019**

#### **Encourage new blood joining the Maritime Industry**

To promote the maritime industry and encourage more young people to join the field, MD and the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board set up booths at the Education and Careers Expo 2019 held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from January 24 to 27.

Representatives from several grades of MD, namely Marine Officer, Surveyor of Ships, Assistant Marine Controller and Marine Inspector II, were present at the booth to introduce to visitors their job duties in different units, and explain the entry requirements as well as career prospects. Guided by MD's staff, visitors could steer by themselves a full mission ship simulator through which they could experience seafaring and also understand the importance of marine traffic safety.

Besides, the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Joshua Law, visited MD's booth on the first day of the Expo and chatted with frontline colleagues to learn more about their daily operation duties and was briefed on the newly acquired Remote Control Survey Boat displayed at the booth.

### **HK Sea School's learning week to taste MD's work**

MD arranged several activities, including boat tours in the Hong Kong waters

(from Central to Tung Lung Chau), a visit to the Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) and the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC), during the Hong Kong Sea School's "All-Rounded Learning Week" for Secondary 5 students in early November, 2018. While the students could see for themselves harbour facilities and nautical devices on board, they also got a clearer picture about maritime career opportunities.

Thirty-one students from the Hong Kong Sea School participated in a range of outreach programmes arranged by various organisations during the school's learning week held from November 5 to 9. By transforming real life working environment into classroom, students got a taste of the maritime industry. Among a variety of activities, they visited the VTC and the MRCC of MD to get an idea of the role of the Department in managing harbour facilities and maintaining maritime navigational safety. Boat tours from Central to Tung Lung Chau were arranged with Marine Inspectors on board to demonstrate their duties including daily patrol and law enforcement, as well as to explain different harbour facilities and vessel types. During the voyage, students actively committed in the interactive activities, such as using Very High Frequency radio for the first time to communicate with the ferry terminal's control room, and role-playing on how a Marine Inspector carried their routine inspections on board the vessels. The students shared that this was a valuable opportunity for not only allowing them to understand the work of various grades in MD, but also inspiring them with new insights of the maritime industry. These would help them to plan ahead their future.

### **Aids to Navigation and Mooring Unit**

#### **Rigorous and quality work enhance maritime safety**

Unlike traffic on roads, there is no road marking or traffic signals in the sea to give instructions to vessels. Therefore, clear and precise aids to navigation (AtoN) are used to assist safe movement of vessels. The Aids to Navigation and Mooring Unit (ANMU) of MD is responsible for providing and maintaining AtoN in Hong Kong waters according to the guidelines set by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA). There is a famous saying in the unit: "the mariner bets his life on the quality of our work", meaning that the aids installed will lead the mariners to steer to the destination safely if the work involved is of high quality. In this Issue, Hong Kong Maritime News will introduce the work of this group of unsung heroes who have been contributing to maritime safety conscientiously.

## **Regular and emergency repairs to ensure reliable operation of AtoN**

ANMU is mainly responsible for the installation, repair works and maintenance of the AtoN. It also provides advice and support on installing the suitable device. AtoN can be classified into two main categories, namely the lighted buoys and beacons. A lighted buoy floats on the water and is attached to a concrete sinker by a mooring chain, while a beacon is a fixed structure with light on top. At present, there are more than 550 AtoN in the Hong Kong waters, of which around 130 are lighted buoys, around 300 are beacons and around 120 are pier lights. ANMU takes care of all the repair works and maintenance. Taking into consideration the importance of AtoN, inspections are being arranged every 1 to 3 months for AtoN in principal fairways or busy areas, whereas every 4 to 6 months for the remaining ones. ANMU will arrange priority inspection whenever there is a report of defective or damaged AtoN. If the problem cannot be fixed right away, temporary measures will be taken, such as putting up temporary light signals.

## **Outdoor work easily affected by weather**

As some of the AtoN are installed in remote areas or outside Victoria Harbour such as uninhabited islands, a launch or a helicopter is often used as transportation means. Weather has great impact to outdoor works. Strong wind will bring swells which increase the difficulties for officers to go on the buoys when they are swinging on waves, and even make the officers feel dizzy when standing on them. Moreover, the water flow, geographical environment and even the parasites on stairs or reefs may also increase the difficulty of boarding AtoN. As safety is always the priority, officers will suspend the outdoor works in time of bad weather until the conditions resume normal.

With the advent of technology and availability of new products in the market, ANMU is considering full adoption of renewable energy (such as solar energy) with energy-saving light such as LED lights to reduce carbon emissions; usage of Integrated Power Supply Lantern to reduce the time of outdoor works; and installation of GPS tracking, monitoring and control systems to improve the reliability of AtoN.

More AtoN and their functions will be introduced in the next Issue of Hong Kong Maritime News. Stay tuned!

## **Hong Kong Maritime Week 2018 concluded successfully**

The Hong Kong Maritime Week 2018, organised by the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board and co-organised by the Hong Kong Shipowners Association and the Hong Kong Maritime Museum, concluded successfully. During the week, more than 60 local and oversea organisations conducted 54 maritime activities to raise the community's awareness of the contributions of Hong Kong's maritime and port industries.

## **Departmental News**

MD held the Navigational Safety Seminar 2019 on January 16 to enhance the awareness of navigational safety among members of the industry. Deputy Director of Marine, Mr Wong Sai-fat, reminded coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels that they have to fully comply with the marine legislation.

A new mobile application, "eSeaGo", has been launched in early January 2019 to display chart information on Hong Kong waters. The app is available free of charge for Android and iPhone by downloading from Google Play and the App Store respectively. For more information, please visit [www.hydro.gov.hk/eng/eseago.php](http://www.hydro.gov.hk/eng/eseago.php).

MD and Macao Marine and Water Bureau held a meeting on maritime safety in Hong Kong on November 7, 2018. Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, and MD officers met with Director of Macao Marine and Water Bureau, Ms Wong Soi-man, and her delegation to discuss how to further enhance communication and cooperation on maritime safety issues between Hong Kong and Macao.

The delegation of the Shenzhen Maritime Safety Administration of the People's Republic of China, led by Director General, Mr Li Wei, visited MD on November 29, 2018 to join a regular meeting to strength cooperation on marine safety and communication between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

The delegation of the Hainan Maritime Safety Administration of the People's Republic of China, led by Deputy Director, Mr Wu Pingsheng, visited MD on December 18, 2018 to exchange views on maritime issues.