MD spares no effort to support resumption of normal travel between Hong Kong , Mainland and Macao

With a consensus reached after deliberation and coordination among the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Central Government, the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government, and upon obtaining approval from the Central Government, the normal travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland has resumed in phases since 8 January this year in a progressive, orderly and comprehensive manner. Cross-boundary ferry services between Hong Kong, Shekou and Macao resumed gradually on the same day.

- **Resumption of operation of Hong Kong – Macao Ferry Terminal and China Ferry Terminal**

On 8 January, the Hong Kong – Macao Ferry Terminal and China Ferry Terminal (CFT), which had suspended operation for nearly three years due to the epidemic, finally resumed operation! In addition to the preparatory work to ensure that the two terminals would be ready for operation, the Marine Department (MD) also actively communicated with the relevant cross-boundary ferry service operators to facilitate the smooth resumption of ferry services. During the preparation, MD deployed its staff to inspect and test the facilities and equipment of the two ferry terminals daily and collaborated with the ferry service operators to complete sea trials and berthing trials for ferries. Drills were also conducted jointly with relevant government departments and ferry service operators to ensure a safe, orderly and smooth resumption of ferry services.

- **Support for cross-boundary ferries and crew**
  Training for crew

The ferries registered in Hong Kong to ply between Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao are high speed craft. According to the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers)(Certification of Officers) Regulation, all officers and engineers working on high speed craft must hold valid Certificates of Competency and Type Rating Certificate (TRC). To revalidate the certificates every two years, the officers and engineers must perform corresponding duties on board for not less than five months within two years. However, the suspension of cross-boundary ferry services since early 2020 has disqualified some officers and engineers as they cannot meet the relevant requirements of sea services experience stipulated in the TRC. In view of this,

MD discussed with the two cross-boundary ferry service operators and subsequently formulated a refresher course recognised by MD. Upon completion of the course and passing of the relevant assessment, the concerned officers and engineers will be granted a temporary renewal of the TRC with an exemption of sea service experience.

In addition, MD requires cross-boundary ferry service operators to arrange for their crew to undergo relevant sea trial training and tests under the supervision of MD staff in order to ensure that their performance is satisfactory for the issue of TRC, thereby ensuring the navigation safety at sea after the resumption of cross-boundary ferry services.

Ship inspection

The suspension of cross-boundary ferry services due to the epidemic has led to the expiry of High Speed Craft Safety Certificates for many high speed craft. To facilitate the resumption of cross-boundary ferry services to the pre-epidemic level, MD has deployed manpower to make an extra effort to conduct safety inspections for those ferries that are about to resume service, and expedited the processing of applications for renewal of High Speed Craft Safety Certificates.

MD strives to safeguard and promote marine safety

Going out to sea is full of fun, but not everyone is aware of potential navigational hazards. Performance and conditions of machineries on board, navigational behaviour of vessel operators, traffic conditions of fairways, as well as environmental factors like weather can pose threats to marine safety. In fact, marine safety owes much to the full co-operation of vessel operators and passengers, apart from MD's effort. In this issue of the Hong Kong Maritime News, the editor will tell you how MD has strengthened measures on all fronts to safeguard and promote navigational safety, as well as the safety of crew and passengers onboard.

Passengers need to know

- **Enjoy a safe voyage by choosing an endorsed pleasure vessel**

MD often reminds the public that they should only hire pleasure vessels endorsed by MD to be let for hire or carry passengers for reward as it can ensure that the vessel holds a valid certificate of survey and appropriate third party insurance, as

well as maintaining sufficient life-saving applicance and fire-fighting apparatus according to the law. If MD finds that a vessel is let for hire or provides passenger carrying services without the relevant licence or endorsement from MD, the owner, agent and/or operator will be prosecuted. Simply by scanning the QR code concerned, members of the public can refer to the list of vessels with the endorsement given by the Director of Marine to verify if a vessel is allowed by MD to be let for hire.

To further enhance the safety of passengers at sea, MD has attached additional conditions to the licence of Class IV vessels to require vessel owners to display conspicuously lifejacket stickers, common lifejacket user guides, and QR code posters that can be scanned by the public to verify if a local pleasure vessel is endorsed by MD to be let for hire or carry passengers for reward. When carrying out vessel inspections, MD staff also check whether the vessel owner has displayed the above materials in accordance with the licence conditions, and count if the vessel is equipped with sufficient number of life-saving and fire-fighting equipment required by law.

Vessel operators and engine operators (if applicable) need to know

- **Safe navigation at unimpeded principal fairways**

Keeping fairways clear is one of the prerequisites for safe navigation at sea. There are 13 Principal Fairways and 2 Traffic Separation Schemes in the waters of Hong Kong, and the purpose of providing them is to improve the safety of navigation in areas where traffic is heavy or traffic movement is restricted. To ensure that these waterways are not obstructed, MD deploys patrol launches to patrol different areas within Hong Kong waters every day.

It has come to the attention of MD’s Habour Patrol Section that many "fishing enthusiasts" hire boats to go angling during holidays, especially during the fishing season. Some of them even have their boats stayed in busy principal fairways for fishing, which not only obstruct marine traffic, but also pose a great danger when large vessels approach these boats.

To combat illegal angling activities on vessels, MD has been working closely with the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) to conduct special joint operations in black spots like Ma Wan Fairway to investigate and restrain those wandering vessels in fairways. During operations, life-saving equipment onboard, the vessel operator's

certificate of competency, the vessel's certificate of survey, etc. are also checked so as to preserve navigation safety of vessels using the fairways.

Under the Hong Kong Maritime legislation, any person who carries out angling or fishing activities in any prohibited fishing areas such as principal fairways, etc., is liable to a fine of $2,000.

For areas with heavy marine traffic, including the Victoria Harbour and typhoon shelters, as well as various speed restriction areas, popular beaches and water sports areas during the summer holidays, MD conducts blitz anti-speeding operations in addition to regular patrols to combat illegal or reckless vessel activities. Prosecutions will be taken out against speeding vessels.

Rapid checking of compliant lifejackets with Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)

Lifejackets can greatly increase the chance of being rescued for victims of sea accidents. In 2019, newly amended regulations to enhance marine safety came into effect, requiring all local vessels to carry on board sufficient lifejackets not less than the total number of persons which the vessel is licensed to carry and every adult or child (other than infant) shall be provided with at least one suitable lifejacket. All commercial passenger-carrying local vessels which are licensed to carry more than 12 passengers, including pleasure vessels let for hire, must carry on board infant lifejackets, the quantity of which must not be less than 2.5 per cent of the number of passengers the vessel is licensed to carry. A list of passengers and crew must also be kept by the coxswain of the vessel for emergency uses.

As the number of children and adults on board on each journey may be different, to ensure the implementation of the amended regulation, the Government with the assistance of a local tertiary institution successfully developed a life jacket suitable for use by both adults and children (common lifejacket). In addition, an RFID tag is attached to each common lifejacket, which not only facilitates the trade to fulfill the legal requirements but also enables MD officer to count the compliant lifejackets accurately and efficiently.

During a vessel inspection, the Editor observed that with the use of RFID technology, MD staff could read the serial number of all lifejackets on board and update MD's database by utilizing an RFID reader. This enables the staff to confirm if there are sufficient compliant lifejackets on board in an accurate and timely manner.

- **Implementation of Fast Speed Passenger Vessel Endorsement Regime**

Coxswains and marine engineers are responsible for ensuring the safety of navigation and lives at sea. MD commissioned a consultant to conduct a risk assessment on locally licensed fast speed passenger vessels in 2015. The study found that a large portion of marine casualties were attributed to human errors. To improve such passenger vessels' safety, recommendations were also put forward in the areas of training, assessment, refresher requirements and certification for local fast speed passenger vessel operators to enhance their awareness of safe navigation and ability in dealing with emergencies.

After careful consideration and trade consultation, MD, in 2023, introduced a new endorsement on the Local Certificate of Competency (LCoC) for coxswains and engine operators operating locally licensed Class I vessels (Fast Speed Passenger Vessel or FSPV) with maximum cruising speed above 20 knots, i.e. the FSPV endorsement.

To obtain the FSPV endorsement, an operator is required to complete a FSPV Familiarisation Programme, a Practical Ship Handling Skill Assessment and a Local Maritime Resource Management Course, to prove that the operator possesses safe navigation awareness, ability in identifying risk and emergency handling abilities when operating a FSPV. The new measure aims to reduce FSPV accidents and ensure the safety of passengers.

Public education and publicity to raise marine safety

To enhance public safety at sea, MD has been promoting the importance of marine safety to the general public and sea users including vessel owners, vessel operators, fishery organisations, local vessels' trade associations and other maritime stakeholders through various channels.

In view of the popularity of water sports activities in recent years, MD has stepped up the relevant public education including distributing leaflets about safety advice on various water sport activities to further arouse public safety awareness of using local vessels for water sports. In addition, MD, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Police Force and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, organises seminars on water sports safety annually to remind coxswains and vessel operators to be well prepared before taking part in water sports activities and to arrange an

experienced personnel to provide guidance to players on board to ensure their safety when performing water sports.

To ensure the smooth and safe navigation, MD explains marine legislations to fishermen organisations and reminds them that fishing and angling in any principal fairways are prohibited.

- **Navigational Safety Seminar 2023**

With the community's gradual resumption to normalcy, the Navigational Safety Seminar, which had been suspended in the past two years due to the epidemic, was finally held physically on 17 January in the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Science Museum to reinforce and enhance the awareness of navigational safety among members of the industry. The Deputy Director of Marine (1), Mr. Wong Sai Fat, reminded coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels that they bore the responsibility to strictly comply with marine legislations to uphold safety at sea the opening speech of the seminar.

Nearly 160 representatives from the shipping sectors as well as marine works projects, coxswains and operators of local vessels attended the seminar. The issues discussed included international regulations for preventing collisions at sea and their implementation in Hong Kong waters, knowledge of fire-fighting and fire prevention on vessels, and the establishment of vessel height restricted areas for the Tseung Kwan O Cross Bay Bridge, the Tseung Kwan O Interchange and the Tseung Kwan O Southern Bridge.

The industry and the public gained a better understanding of the maritime legislation through exchanging views at the seminar and thereby enhancing safety at sea. A question-and-answer session was held after the seminar and sets of materials featuring the discussed issues were also distributed to the attendees. Members of the public can download the materials from Marine Department’s website as follows: https://www.mardep.gov.hk/hk/publication/materials/publicity_material.html

MD attracts and nurtures talents

- **Education and Careers Expo 2023 – promoting the maritime industry**

The Marine Department (MD) and the Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board respectively set up exhibition booths at the Education and Careers Expo 2023 held at

the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre between 2 and 5 February, to introduce Hong Kong's maritime industry with an aim to deepen young people's understanding of MD's functions and the relevant job opportunities, so as to help them forge their professional career paths in the maritime industry.

At its booth, representatives from four core grades of MD, namely Marine Officer, Surveyor of Ships, Marine Controller and Marine Inspector, introduced to visitors their respective entry requirements, job duties as well as career prospects. To inspire young people to choose a MD grade suitable for them, an interactive panel on career aptitude test was set up at the booth this year. By simply answering a few questions, the system would suggest an MD post which suited the visitor's personality for their reference.

Under the guidance of MD staff, visitors could steer by themselves a full mission ship simulator through which they could ship steering in Hong Kong waters and understand the importance of marine traffic safety.

- **Industry attachment programme for AMOs and ASoSs**

To alleviate the manpower shortage problem in the Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships grades, the Marine Department (MD) started the recruitment of Assistant Marine Officers (AMOs) and Assistant Surveyors of Ships (ASoSs) in 2018. Since January 2022, MD has arranged AMOs and ASoSs to undergo a 6-month industry attachment programme with various renowned shipping entities, which enables them to accumulate practical experience and master professional knowledge. Through the programme, a solid foundation can be laid for their future professional development in MD.

In this issue, we have three ASoSs, who just finished their industry attachments in February, to share with us their experience.

Ms. Yoyo Chan, ASoS, attached to Hong Kong Ming Wah Shipping Co. Ltd. 'During my internship, I went to two shipyards in Zhoushan and Shekou, China for participating in the special surveys for two vessels. One of the most memorable experiences was to inspect the hull bottom of a 400,000 deadweight tonnes (DWT) Very Large Ore Carrier (VLOC). The vessel is specially designed for carrying ore with its structures quite different from ordinary bulk carriers, which indeed is an eye-opener for me. In addition, through the inspection of its giant ballast tank, I

realized the importance of using finite element structural analysis software to grasp the condition of the hull structures in advance of the inspection work. The accumulated inspection experience is also of great benefits to my future work and career development in MD.'

Mr. Chin Wong, ASoS, attached to American Bureau of Shipping (ABS). 'With ABS's arrangement, we were fortunate to witness the procedures of the acceptance of a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) vessel at Hudong Shipyard in Shanghai. Since building a LNG vessel involves high level technical requirements, workmanship and safety, only a few shipyards in the world have the capability to build this type of vessel. With this valuable opportunity, I acquired good knowledge about the construction process of the cargo containment system of a LNG vessel and had a close look over the cargo tank internal after the sea trial. In addition, the engineers and surveyors at ABS demonstrated a high level of meticulousness and professionalism throughout the ship building process; from drawing approval, product and equipment certification, construction surveys, on-site commissioning tests, to sea trial. The attachment enabled me to understand more about the role of classification surveyors in different aspects.'

Mr. Jeff Woo, ASoS, also attached to American Bureau of Shipping (ABS). 'During the attachment in various departments in ABS, our duties included studying the design drawings of vessels, inspecting and witnessing the acceptance of vessels in accordance with the rules of the classification societies. To ensure that the quality of a vessel meets the relevant rules of classification societies and statutory requirements of the flag State, there are a number of "hold points" in the construction of a new vessel and the vessel must meet the relevant standards before proceeding to the next step. These experiences not only consolidated my knowledge of shipbuilding process and equipment, but also helped me accumulate experience in ship surveying. I also had the opportunities to deepen my understanding of the features of LNG vessels and all these have been beneficial!'

The ASoSs took this opportunity to express their sincere gratitude to Hong Kong Ming Wah Shipping Co., Ltd. and ABS for their support and assistance.

- **Maritime talents joining MD to help HK excel in maritime services**

Surveyor of Ships (SoS) is one of the core professional grades in the Marine Department (MD). The grade is divided into three streams, namely Engineer & Ship,

Nautical, and Ship. Officers in the grade undertake multifaceted work spectrums to help Hong Kong excel in maritime services.

In this issue of the Hong Kong Maritime News, Mr Byron Kwok, SoS (Engineer and Ship) from MD's Marine Accident Investigation Section, will share with us how he started a seafaring career on ocean-going vessels and joined MD for furtherance of career.

Professional path starts from seafaring on ocean-going vessels

Byron recalled that two decades ago, he did not have any concrete career plan in mind despite having worked for a year after Form 7. He then enrolled on a three-year programme of Higher Diploma in Maritime Technology and Management offered by the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE). Byron did not realise that students were expected to go seafaring upon completion of the programme until he joined various visits arranged by IVE during Year 2 and 3 studies to learn about the maritime industry. For example, a study tour to a shipyard in Guangzhou where he learnt about repair and maintenance of ocean-going vessels. He also had the opportunity to learn from some experienced professionals in the industry. Their sharing of seafaring experience not only allayed Bryon's worries about seafaring, but also let him aware of the good promotion prospects and large salary increment in the trade. In the year of graduation, he decided to join the maritime industry with ten of his classmates.

The Government also launched various schemes through the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund to nurture talents for the trade. That also backed Byron's decision to start seafaring. He recalled, "When I began seafaring career as an engineer cadet in 2004 and 2005, my monthly salary was only US$350. The monthly subsidy obtained through the Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme really motivated me to continue a career in the maritime industry."

Maritime and Aviation Training Fund

- Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme
  A monthly subsidy of HK$6,000 is provided to cadets on ocean-going vessels for a period of 18 months (for deck cadets) or 12 months (for engineer cadets) in addition to an examination subsidy. During onshore preparation for examination and engaging as cadets on ocean-going vessels after obtaining the Deck Officer Class 3 / Marine Engineer Officer Class 3 Certificate of Competency, a monthly

subsidy of HK$3,000 and HK$6,000, will be provided up to 6 months respectively.

- Professional Training and Examination Refund Scheme
  Eligible applicants are refunded with 80% of the fees after completing approved courses or passing examinations (covering seafaring-related training courses and examinations), up to HK$30,000 per applicant.

  For details, please visit: www.matf.gov.hk

The contract period of seafaring officers normally lasts for six to nine months, which involve working on different types of vessels. Byron had experience of working on bulk carriers, container ships, roll-on/roll-off (RORO) ships, etc. “Due to the differences in vessel size and cargo loading speed, berthing arrangements of each vessel type at ports will differ, for instance bulk carriers which are relatively smaller can access more ports and berth for longer periods, hence the crew have more time to explore ashore. I was so lucky to have many opportunities to travel around the world during seafaring, such as Rio de Janeiro, Jerusalem, Kenya and Egypt. It was so rewarding!”

When asked if the long period of offshore living had affected his relationship with his family, Byron said that it in fact strengthened their bonding and they cherished the relationship even more. Technological advancement has also made communication easier than ever before. He reassured young people intending to join the trade not to worry, yet they should be prepared for times of danger and hardship during seafaring. “I was in the Pacific Ocean when Japan was hit by tsunami on 11 March 2011. It was a devastating blow which caused all the debris, timber and furniture floating in the sea. I still feel sad every time I recall it.” Byron also pointed out that marine engineer officers need to work in high temperature environments. “The usual temperature in an engine room is around 40 degrees, and the temperature can reach as high as 50 degrees if you are at hotter territories such as the Middle East. That makes it tiring even for simple tasks like twisting a screw. Besides, it is important for marine engineer officers to stay vigilant at all times. For each machinery equipment failure alert, decisive and swift actions should be taken to deal with the problem. “I remember there was an occasion being awakened by my alarm clock,” Byron amusedly recalled, “when I spontaneously intended to rush to the engine room, I just found myself at home.”

After ten years of seafaring and obtaining sufficient sea time and professional qualification, Byron took up the post of senior tutor at the Maritime Services Training Institute and studied part-time for a bachelor degree in mechanical engineering at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University as a springboard to MD's professional grades. He was then successfully employed by MD as SoS. Bryon is now working in MD's Marine Accident Investigation Section, responsible for investigation work of marine accidents as a means to safeguard lives at sea, protect marine environment as well as prevent similar incidents.

Byron's advice to young people who are interested in joining the maritime industry: "Be brave enough to take the first step to experience seafaring. A vessel is like a mobile city in which extensive and broad knowledge can be acquired. Marine engineer cadets must seize every chance to learn on board and to make good preparation for the Marine Engineer Officer Class 3 Examination. Always remember that machines do not speak, so marine engineer officers have to be observant, sensible and have a sense of responsibility. They should always keep guard over machinery's sounds and operation, and never conceal any mechanical problems that may occur. In addition, team spirit among marine engineer officers is vital. Understanding has to be fostered to support the needs of colleagues. Only such can nurture the qualities of marine engineer officers for the furtherance of your career!"

Young people aspire to take up a seafaring career should first choose to work in the deck or the engineering department.

- Master Mariner is the highest ranking officer in the deck department and on a vessel, responsible for overall command of the vessel and safe navigation.

- Chief Engineer is the highest ranking officer in the engineering department, responsible for ensuring that the vessel is structurally safe and sound, maintaining all machinery and electrical appliances on board, verifying for sufficient fuel reserves, as well as handling the engineering department's administrative work.

Accumulating experience while obtaining professional qualifications

Promotion prospects of ocean-going marine engineer officers are clear. To become a marine engineer officer, one only needs to complete a recognised mechanical engineering diploma/degree course and serve as a cadet in the engineering

department for in-service training. After completing workshop skills trainings and obtaining sufficient sea time, the cadet may pursue professional qualifications in a gradual manner.

Served as the third and fourth engineer on an ocean-going vessel (holder of Certificate of Competency (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 3) can get a monthly salary of up to HK$30,000. It can take as fast as five years (4 years sea time plus around 1 year for examinations for 3 Certificates for Competency and preparation etc.) to obtain the professional qualifications required for the pursuit of the career of marine engineer officers. A chief engineer (holder of Certificate of Competency (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 1) can be remunerated as much as HK$90,000 a month and his/her qualification is accredited at Qualifications Framework Level 5. The IVE currently offers a two-year programme of Higher Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Marine Engineering elective). If one aims at joining MD's SoS grade or taking up other jobs requiring degree qualification, he/she may undertake a four-year Bachelor of Engineering degree programme in mechanical or related engineering offered by the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong or the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

Entry as SoS (Engineer and Ship) requires a professional qualification at Certificate of Competency (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 1 and two years' experience at the rank of second engineer or above on oceangoing ships. In 2018, MD introduced the rank of Assistant Surveyor of Ships (ASoS); for which holders of Certificate of Competency (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 3 or above with a Bachelor's degree in a relevant engineering discipline from a university in Hong Kong, or equivalent may apply. Apart from coordinating a 4-year designated training programme for ASoSs, MD also offers a clear career progression path to officers who serve the grade with professionalism and dedication.

Departmental News

London ETO promotes Hong Kong as a prominent international maritime centre

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London, held a reception at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on March 15 (London time) to promote Hong Kong's position as a prominent international maritime centre. About 200 guests from delegations of IMO Member States, top representatives of international organisations, and key representatives of shipowners in London attended the

reception.

The Director-General of the London ETO, Mr. Gilford Law, paid a courtesy visit to the IMO under the arrangement of Marine Department by meeting the Secretary General of IMO, Mr. Kitack Lim. Mr. Gilford Law attended the reception afterwards and delivered a speech in saying that as the fourth largest Shipping Register (amounting to about 127 million gross tons) in the world, Hong Kong's maritime sector is set to thrive with its strong international connectivity.

Safety seminars to uphold the quality of Hong Kong registered ships

Committed to upholding the quality of Hong Kong registered ships, the Marine Department (MD) organised two safety seminars at Hong Kong Sheung Wan Civic Centre in February, which were conducted in Putonghua and English separately. More than 300 participants from all over the world representing shipowners, ship management companies and recognised organizations attended the hybrid-mode seminars. The main topics discussed included reviewing the Port State Control (PSC) performance of Hong Kong registered ships as well as introducing MD's measures to enhance the quality performance of Hong Kong registered ships.

We are greatly honoured to have Mr. Stephen McMeeking, Manager Ship Inspection of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA); and Dr. Zhang Shuang, Associate Professor of Dalian Maritime University, to share with us respectively about AMSA Port State Control inspections and measures for the latest International Maritime Organization Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission/decarbonisation regulations.

In order to promote exchange of experiences and opinions, there were question-and-answer sessions at the seminars. The representative of MD and the speakers answered the questions raised. For the seminar presentation materials, please visit: https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/faq/pdf/safety_seminar_2023_feb.pdf

Inter-departmental exercise to test Government's response capabilities on Daya Bay Contingency Plan

A large-scale inter-departmental exercise based on Daya Bay Contingency Plan was conducted on 12 January 2023 to test and enhance the nuclear emergency preparedness of the relevant personnel and their knowledge of dealing with nuclear power station emergencies that may affect Hong Kong. About 1,400 personnel from

various government departments and organisations participated in the exercise, including the Marine Department (MD).

The exercise simulated equipment fault events at Guangdong Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station leading to a potential off-site emergency situation involving radiation leakage. The relevant departments assisted in evacuating residents and visitors from Tung Ping Chau, which is situated within 20 kilometer of the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station. They were transported to Ma Liu Shui Ferry Pier by a police launch and a fireboat to receive radiation assessment.

During the exercise, the MD deployed three patrol launches to assist in evacuating the residents and visitors in Tung Ping Chau as well as keeping them informed of the development of the situation via the public address systems of the launches, and to simulate escorting those suspected radiologically contaminated vessels to the anchorage at the southwest of Lamma Island for monitoring. Meanwhile, MD's Vessel Traffic Centre monitored ocean-going and river-trade vessels in the waters concerned and simulated regulating marine traffic via very high frequency radio broadcasting to prevent vessels from entering the contaminated areas. On the other hand, the Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre maintained communication with the Emergency Monitoring and Supporting Centre for responding to marine emergency situations.

Hong Kong Shipowners Association 65th Anniversary Table Tennis Tournament

The Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA) has always been a good partner with the Marine Department (MD), providing strong support in various aspects, including promotion of the Hong Kong Shipping Registry and nurturing of maritime talents.

In celebration of its 65th Anniversary, HKSOA hosted a Table Tournament and Fun Days in March. MD was honoured to be invited to play a friendly match against HKSOA. The friendly match was full of excitement and MD won at last. The Director of Marine, Ms. Carol Yuen also attended the event to celebrate the HKSOA's 65th Anniversary and to present prizes to winners.

Activities of MD volunteer team

The Marine Department (MD) volunteer team proactively engages in the

activities organised by various community organizations and voluntary groups to help the needy in an effort to build a caring society. In February and March this year, the MD volunteer team undertook voluntary activities organised by Caritas Hong Kong and Food Angel respectively.

On 25 March, 11 MD colleagues and their family members volunteered to help with meal box preparation. The activity aimed at benefiting more people in need of food assistance.

On 18 February, nine colleagues from MD and their family members participated in the Caritas Hong Kong's Territory-wide Flag Day in Kowloon Bay. The flag selling activity aimed to raise funds for services targeting elderly caregivers, students from low-income families and youth with special needs. The MD volunteers were paired with elderly volunteers for the flag-selling together. Through cooperation and communication during the activity, they could show their care for the elderly.