



**National Maritime Conference:
HUMAN CAPITAL AND THE WAY FORWARD
FOR MALAYSIA**

14 - 15 July 2008, Kuala Lumpur

PROCEEDINGS



**Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA)
November 2008**

SESSION 2:

MALAYSIAN SEAFARERS – ISSUES and CHALLENGES

Chairman: **Mr M. Adthisaya Ganesen,**

Chief Executive Officer, Akademi Laut Malaysia (ALAM)

The session commenced with a concise presentation on the Maritime Institute of Malaysia's (MIMA) findings on maritime manpower requirements by **Captain Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah**, Senior Fellow of the Centre for Ocean Law and Policy, MIMA, based on two (2) previous studies conducted in 2001 and 2004 undertaken by Captain Nor Apandi Osnin, ex-Fellow of MIMA.

Captain Aziz explained that both studies on the human resource development for Malaysian seafarers were conducted to identify measures to improve the human capital development in the maritime industry. He compared the findings of MIMA's 2001 and 2004 studies and mentioned that the number of Malaysian seafarers serving onboard showed an encouraging increase from the year 2001. Nevertheless, he reiterated that more Malaysian applicants are encouraged to pursue maritime training programmes to reduce the current reliance on foreign seafarers. The Marine Department has been instrumental in encouraging more maritime training institutions to be established to provide for the larger number of fresh entrants.

Although there are positive improvements in the number of interested applicants to pursue maritime training programmes, Captain Aziz said that there is a need for additional measures to be implemented to improve the maritime training infrastructure in Malaysia. A recurring problem is the lack of training berths for sea-service training phase and,

based on the survey done in 2004, only 49% of Malaysian shipping lines were willing to provide berths for training. It was felt that perhaps legislation has to be introduced to make the requirement to provide training berths compulsory.

Captain Aziz repeated the plea of MIMA made in 2001 to the industry to implement an official monitoring regime to record data on Malaysian seafarers'. Although Malaysia is plagued with a brain-drain problem, there is no official data available to map the migration of Malaysian seafarers to foreign shipping lines. Data pertaining to the number of Malaysians serving onboard foreign vessels, seafarers who have left the profession and ex-seafarers serving ashore are crucial in analysing the development of maritime human capital. Official data would enable regulators to chart directions to curb the migration and improve the seafaring industry of the nation.

Captain Aziz also said that the Government should consider offering income tax exemption to Malaysians serving on board Offshore Supply Vessels (OSV) to encourage more Malaysians to reap the benefits of the booming oil exploration industry. He felt that the maritime industry in Malaysia has to be packaged in an attractive manner with perks, fiscal incentives, subsidised tuition fees, and sponsorship programmes to attract the younger generation to embark on the challenging career at sea.

Captain Aziz ended the presentation with a call for a body to be established to champion the development of seafarers and also to ensure their welfare. It appears that Malaysian seafarers were willing to work for foreign shipping lines not solely due to better remuneration, but, more so for the care and concern displayed by these companies. Captain Aziz

said that it is time for Malaysia to address the shortage of manpower as swiftly as possible to prevent a severe scarcity of Malaysian seafarers in the near future.

Captain Othman Ali, the second presenter of the session, led the participants through seafarers' issues from the realm of his vast experience as an officer who had served a good 33 years at sea.

Captain Othman began with an examination of the shortage of seafarers worldwide. He said that Europe, China, and the Philippines are gravely concerned with the decline in the supply of seafarers. He succinctly listed out the reasons for the decline in the number seafarers recorded in Malaysia and worldwide. He said that the stress level on board has increased tenfold due to excessive working hours and stringent regulations in place. Crew members are deprived of simple pleasures of leisure activities, writing to loved ones at home, and lesser shore leave. Off hours are spent correcting charts, filling out log books and completing checklists.

Captain Othman said that the working ambience is rather unhealthy as some inexperienced high ranking officers are forced to learn the minute details of operations from lower ranking subordinates on board. He added by saying that some Malaysian shipping firms were found to have had instructed Second Officers as Chief Stewards to meet the needs of manpower in the kitchen. Although it may sound resourceful, it is a gesture of not maximising a seafarer's skills and qualification in an appropriate manner.

Seafarers are now exposed to risks other than marine perils at sea. They are faced with hazards of the accusation game often manipulated by the

masses who intend to blame someone for the mishaps at sea. Seafarers are vulnerable in the eyes of the law, and easily held liable for aftermath of collisions. Captain Othman feels that these frightening developments deter seafarers' from being passionate towards their job at sea.

Captain Othman who has been a seafarer for many years said that shipowners' failure to address welfare needs of seafarers is enough to force seafarers to quit and head ashore.

He said that taking good care of seafarers is truly for the benefit of the shipowners who reap huge financial gain from shipping operations.

Captain Othman took pride in the abilities of Malaysian seafarers and appealed to shipowners to pay heed to ensure that welfare of Malaysian seafarers on board conforms to the international standards. He said that the seafaring industry is soaring to greater heights and providing everyone with golden opportunities to excel at sea. Malaysian seafarers ought to answer the call and strive to be reckoned as premier seafarers across the globe.

The third presenter, **Captain Thayalan G. Muhundan**, summarised the needs of the Offshore Support industry in Malaysia. He said that currently, the demand for Offshore Support Vessels (OSV) is high; but there is limited supply of such vessels. However, the industry is experiencing positive growth and the rate of growth is expected to increase up to 62% within the next twelve (12) years.

Captain Thayalan explained the growing concern over the lack of seafarers to serve on OSV, and in particular, the scarcity of Dynamic Positioning Officers (DPO). Malaysian shipowners are compelled to resort to the services of foreign DPO to compensate for the insufficient

Malaysian DPO. The shortage of trained Malaysian DPO is aggravated by the lack of DP vessels for training programmes.

Captain Thayalan said that the training providers in Malaysia are not equipped with the resources to provide specialised OSV manning trainings. Although Bumi Armada has pioneered a joint venture with ALAM to train Malaysians as DPO, the lack of proper and specific training facilities hinders the training process.

Captain Thayalan said that as the demand for OSV seafarers is higher than the supply, wages are ascending; but sense of loyalty, dedication, and professionalism to serve are descending. He said that lack of supply has resulted in grave consequences affecting the offshore support industry. Captain Thayalan cited poaching of seafarers as an unhealthy trend that is lurking in the industry due to the high demand for seafarers. Poaching suppresses shipowners' efforts in providing sponsorship programmes for the benefit of seafarers.

As noted at the commencement of the session, a peculiar aspect that is another major contributor to the lack of entrants to the OSV industry is the requirement for OSV seafarers to pay income tax unlike seafarers serving onboard cargo vessels. Captain Thayalan suggested for the imposition of income tax to be eradicated to pave way for more seafarers to serve onboard OSV.

Captain Thayalan feels that it is time for shipowners and operators to play pivotal roles in providing the training berths needed for sea services training. Combined efforts would generate more trained seafarers to man OSV, thus increasing the capabilities of Malaysian shipping lines to

hoist the sails beyond the Malaysian offshore industry into the global offshore industry.

The final presenter for the second session, **Captain Johari Mohd Noh** of the Malaysian Shipowners' Association (MD of Gagasan Carriers Sd. Bhd.), disseminated the perspective of Malaysian shipowners on issues pertaining to Malaysian seafarers today.

Captain Johari enunciated the concerns that shipowners today are burdened with. Although shipowners' main concern is to be cost-effective whilst carving the competitive edge against competitors in the industry, shipowners are concerned with seafarers' welfare onboard. Good seafarers are great assets to have at sea. Captain Johari said that good, skilled and qualified seafarers will ensure compliance to major governing maritime regulations thus reducing exposure to maritime risks at sea. This would promote operational efficiency onboard and the shipowner's reputation will be placed in the good-books of the trade worldwide.

The demand for good seafarers is high, but sadly, there is no adequate supply to match the escalating demand. This forces the industry to rely heavily on foreign seafarers to man Malaysian vessels. According to Captain Johari, the apparent shortage in manpower at sea is caused by the myriad opportunities waiting ashore. The expansion of the offshore maritime sector in Malaysia has resulted in more job opportunities onshore awaiting experienced seafarers.

Furthermore, Captain Johari feels that the shipping industry lacks the appeal factor to encourage the younger generation to embark for career at sea and entice seafarers to remain onboard. He said that maritime

training providers are also faced with a formidable problem of lack of training berths for sea services training requirements. This then provokes questions on the quality, standard and efficiency of training received by our seafarers thus undermining their abilities to perform at sea.

Captain Johari denoted that shipowners are worried of the astronomical increase in fuel prices that automatically leads to increases in operational and human costs. Poaching is also increasingly becoming a menace to shipowners, and coupled with seafarers' wages hitting the roof, shipowners are forced to dig deeper into their pockets to ensure prolonged service of seafarers on board vessels.

Sharing the same concern as the second presenter of the session, Captain Johari said that shipowners today are excruciatingly worried over the recent spate of arrests of vessel masters and officers due to collisions and environmental damage caused by accidents at sea. He reiterated that international organisations such as the International Maritime Organisation and the International Transport Workers' Federation and the International Labour Organisation are taking the necessary steps to counter this unhealthy trend of criminalisation of seafarers.

Discussion

A participant queried on the reasons for Malaysian seafarers opting to work for foreign shipping lines followed by a comment on the lack of training berths as the probable reason for the shortage of seafarers in Malaysia. In response, Captain Sivasundram of Bumi Armada said that it is a natural choice for any seafarer to opt to work for shipping lines that would provide them higher remuneration. Captain Thayalan said the industry ought to find a solution to prevent seafarers from leaving Malaysian ships for foreign ships. He cited the measures taken by Bumi Armada to attract more Malaysian seafarers to join its fleet, including offering Dynamic Positioning training for them as an incentive. He also said that Bumi Armada constantly revises its salary package to remain competitive and in line with the global development in seafarers' wages.

The Chairman, Mr Adthisaya Ganesen added that experienced trainers are also needed to train Malaysian seafarers.

Captain Johari bin Mohd Noh of the Malaysian Association of Shipowners' responded to the comment with a detailed description on the differences in facilities available and training regimes required between new vessels and second hand vessels. He said that new vessels are equipped with excellent facilities that assist in providing ample training opportunities as well as excellent adherence to international regulations. Unlike them, second hand vessels lack these facilities thus severely restricting training capabilities. He remarked that, in Malaysia, efforts to have more training berths for the sea service training are being addressed by MISC, but, it, too, had to struggle in sustaining a healthy balance between operational efficiency and commitment to provide training berths to seafarers.

A participant from a private university (UniKL) initiated a discussion by requesting Malaysian shipowners to accept marine engineering cadets graduating from his university to serve on board their ships and lamented that reliance on foreign seafarers is not a healthy exercise for Malaysia in her pursuit of realising the status of a successful maritime nation. The participant's request and lamentation invited a chain of response from six speakers.

Captain Othman bin Ali of SISMA said that UniKL cadets are welcomed to the industry. Captain Intiaz of MASA added that MASA was willing to consider providing UniKL cadets with training berths to facilitate practical training requirements.

Captain Abdul Aziz of MIMA exhorted participants on the fallacy of accepting, as fact, that Malaysia has to rely on foreigners to perform essential services to the nation. Such a belief, he declared, would be the start of the decline of a nation. He sounded on the possibility of getting ex-seafarers into the political arena so as to be able to initiate the necessary will in addressing the situation whereby almost half the numbers of seafarers serving on board Malaysian ships comprise of non-Malaysians.

He narrated comments made by post-sea students at ALAM at a dialogue session with MIMA's representatives that highlighted reasons for the preference of Malaysian officers to opt for working with foreign shipping lines. One was their concerns on the inadequate provisions by Malaysian shipping companies of health and welfare benefits to members of their family. Another was the absence of adequate procedural guarantees by Malaysian shipping companies that would enable them to apply for housing and car loans from financial institutions. He challenged the

shipowners present at the conference to dismiss these allegations as inaccurate.

Dato' Captain Buang bin Ahmad of Murphy Sarawak Oil Co Ltd made an observation that MISC Bhd. still had too many foreigners serving on board its ships. He agreed with Captain Aziz and said that working conditions on board Malaysian vessels, especially the salary package offered, was rather dismal compared to those by foreign shipping companies. He alleged that the meals served on board were also atrocious. Seafarers are often engaged on contract basis and obtained their pay only while serving on board and not when they are on leave. This left them in a lurch without proper documentary evidence of a stable and continuous remuneration; thus, depleting their chances for obtaining bank loans. Captain Buang said that the shortage of Malaysian seafarers on board is an issue that is more than three decades old.

A representative of Gagasan Carriers (GC) disagreed with the comments made by Captain Aziz. She mentioned that GC always stressed importance on the welfare of its seafarers onboard. Although GC preferred to employ Malaysian seafarers rather than foreigners, the company's experience indicated that some Malaysian seafarers possess a lackadaisical and negative attitude, thus, discouraging the company from pursuing such a strategy. She also said that GC, unlike some other shipping lines, did not differentiate the payment of salary in terms of currency differentials, but, accorded wages commensurate with job specifications and requirements in a common currency.

Captain Johari concurred with the response and added by saying that it would be unfair to accuse Malaysian shipowners for not according due care to protect the welfare of Malaysian seafarers based on a small

sample of officers alleging so during the dialogue. He again reiterated that shortage of seafarers is a global and not local phenomenon.

Captain David Frederick of MISC Bhd. also echoed the stance of the representatives of GC by saying that MISC rewards its officers accordingly without bias. MISC Bhd. also places great importance on the welfare of seafarers' families ashore.

A participant raised a question on the possibility of shipping companies facilitating the progression of a Rating to become an Officer, thus, expediting the emergence of more qualified Malaysian Officers. He said that the current practise of cadet recruitment and training is rather laborious. Hence, circumventing the procedural requirements would enable more Ratings to move up the ranks quickly and fulfil the manning needs on board.

Captain Johari said that it is a shipowner's responsibility to encourage willing Ratings to enhance their qualifications by way of providing further training; securing attendance at advance courses and appearance at appropriate examinations.

Captain Abdul Aziz reminded that seafarer training is mandated by an established international standard. Should a seafarer wish to upgrade his/her competency, then it is compulsory for him/her to attend accredited competency training courses and pass the necessary examinations.

The discussion concluded with a question whether a difference existed between an officer on a merchant ship and one serving on an OSV requiring Dynamic Positioning (DP) training. Captain Thayalan responded

that OSV possess characteristics that are much different to normal merchant navy ships. An OSV may have to constantly maintain her critical position over a point on the water despite heavy seas and strong winds. To be able to do so, special equipment is fitted on such vessels that assists in attaining this capability. To be able to operate this equipment skilfully, the individual operating it had to be specially trained in DP handling. Thus, officers wishing to serve on board OSV must possess a DP Training Certificate. He also lamented that, while seafarers on board foreign-going merchant ships are exempted from paying tax, those on board OSVs are not granted same privilege.



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**RECOMMENDATIONS ON
THE WAY FORWARD**



**Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA)
November 2008**

**RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
NATIONAL MARITIME CONFERENCE:
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The two-days National Maritime Conference was jointly organised by the Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) and the Marine Department Peninsular Malaysia (Marine Department). It was supported by the Malaysia Shipowners' Association (MASA), Bintulu Port Authority (BPA); MISC Bhd.; Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) Sdn. Bhd. and Bintulu Port Sdn. Bhd. (BPSB).

During the deliberations, recommendations were made by speakers, panellists and participants of the Conference on the way forward in addressing issues relating to maritime human capital in Malaysia.

1. It was acknowledged that amongst the features that makes Malaysia a significant player in global shipping are:
 - (a) In 2006 the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) ranked Malaysia 21st. on its list of most important maritime countries in terms of percentage of world's gross tonnage;
 - (b) Up to June 2008, 4343 ships of 10.5 million gross tonnage were registered under the Malaysian flag;
 - (c) MISC Berhad is the world's largest owner-operator of liquefied natural gas (LNG) carriers, with 27 vessels in service and 2 more on order;
 - (d) In 2006, American Association of Port Authorities placed Port Klang as 16th. and Port of Tanjung Pelepas as 19th. in terms of container throughput.

2. In terms of “hardware” (i.e. ships) Malaysia has performed reasonably well, but, for the “software” (human capital) aspect, Malaysia still relied heavily on services provided by foreign seafarers as indicated by the following data for 2007 derived from records maintained by the Marine Department:

- (a) Number of active Malaysian seafarers registered was 11482 whilst foreign seafarers employed on board Malaysian ships was 10200;
- (b) 3406 certificates of competency (CoC) were issued to qualified Malaysian officers; whilst, during same period, 4742 certificates of recognition (CoR) were provided to foreign officers permitting them to legally serve on Malaysian ships.

3. The consensus is that immediate measures should be taken to address the situation which has led to Malaysia suffering a critical shortage in having her own nationals serving as seafarers on board Malaysian ships. The Conference strongly urged the drawing up a strategic master plan relating to a holistic and comprehensive approach towards seafarers’ affairs in Malaysia.

4. The proposed solutions presented during the Conference are encapsulated in this paper as follows:

A. Establishment of a National Body/Agency on Seafarers’ Affairs

- (i) It was recognised that a dedicated body/agency should be established solely focussed on seafarers’ affairs, including facilitating and guiding seafarers’ development encompassing recruitment, placement and career development. Industry players should support towards its functions and operations.

- (ii) The same body could also be the focal point for the management of Malaysian seafarers by way of maintaining records of available seafarers for sourcing by shipping companies. Malaysian seafarers could register themselves with the body and Malaysian shipping companies may inquire availability of qualified seafarers from it.
- (iii) Part of the role of this body could be to provide initiatives on the continuous promotion of the seafaring career to students still in schools/colleges. It would direct awareness programmes of this “non-traditional” vocation to be aimed at target groups deemed eligible for it located in schools within the rural areas of Peninsular Malaysia as well as in riverine catchments of Sabah and Sarawak.
- (iv) This entity could also be entrusted with facilitating the drawing up of standard employment terms and conditions for Malaysian seafarers that is compatible to universally accepted norms.

B. Maritime Training

- (i) Maritime training in Malaysia is currently undertaken by private entities. Due to alleged high cost of such training, it was recommended that the government takes over the responsibility for provision of maritime training, akin to that of public tertiary educational institutions. Besides lowering of training costs, another accrued advantage of such take over would be the possibility of provision of loans to maritime trainees similar to those provided for students in higher educational institutions.

- (ii) Possibility of converting some of the 26 existing industrial training institutes under the Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR) into dedicated maritime-biased training centres. The Marine Department could assist MOHR towards realising this objective.
- (iii) Increase the number of seafarers trained annually taking into account the requirements of the shipping industry and expected attrition rate.
- (iv) Availability and quality of maritime lecturers and instructors should also be an important factor when considering an increase in trainee intake/number of training institutions. The issue of “poaching” experienced maritime instructors by the industry needs to be addressed.

C. Training berths

- (i) In cognisance of the fact that maritime training imposes mandatory “sea-time” fulfilment by cadet officer trainees, shipping companies should be encouraged to provide training berths to cater for them. Fiscal incentives could be offered to those companies willing to do so.
- (ii) Placement of Malaysian cadet officer trainees on board foreign-flagged ships offering such berths could be considered.

- (iii) Malaysian shipping companies may consider pooling their resources together and introduce the concept of “training-cum-trading” ships. These vessels can facilitate training of seafarers whilst engaged in normal trading activities.
- (iv) As a last resort, legislation enabling mandatory provision of training berths by Malaysian shipping companies may have to be introduced.

D. Introduction of appropriate Bridging Courses facilitating entry by Engineering Graduates and ex-Royal Malaysian Navy officers

- (i) It was acknowledged that some students of engineering courses from Malaysian universities/polytechnics may be motivated to pursue a seafaring career after graduating. Bridging Courses could be designed to permit these graduates to enter the seafaring career and acquire the requisite sea time prior to appearing for their first CoC examinations.
- (ii) Some senior officers from the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) opt to leave the service at a relatively productive age. They possess the navigating and seamanship skills to serve on board merchant navy vessels and have the required sea-time to appear for CoC examinations. Introduction of appropriate Bridging Courses to cater for this group of potential entrants into the officers’ ranks of the merchant navy could be considered.

E. Ensuring universal standards of welfare/health benefits and appropriate emoluments for Malaysian seafarers

- (i) Malaysian shipping companies should ensure that the welfare and health benefits offered to their seafarers are on par with universal norms. These should cover the seafarer and his/her family and also be provided during periods that he/she is on leave ashore as well as when employed on board.
- (ii) Malaysian shipping companies that may still be offering their seafarers remuneration packages not compatible with global standards should be encouraged to rectify the situation, taking into consideration their commercial ability. The wage quantum offered may be less than global norms, but, the total package could include other measures particularly attractive to Malaysian seafarers. Neither discrepancy vis-à-vis currency nor quantum should exist between packages offered to a foreign seafarer and a Malaysian. Shipping companies should facilitate their seafarers in obtaining housing/car loans from financial institutions in view of the fact that their salary slips only indicate wages earned whilst they are serving on board, not when they are on leave ashore.
- (iii) Seafarers' union should inculcate in Malaysian seafarers an attitudinal change for the better. The common inference that they are ingrained with negative traits should be dispelled and be done away with. This requires a mindset shift from Malaysian shipowners too.

- (iv) Drop-in Centres providing recreational and communication facilities for seafarers should be established within the perimeters of Malaysian ports to cater for their needs due to very short port-stay and inability to access services provided by Seamen's Clubs normally located quite a distance away from ports.
- (v) The role and functions of existing International Transport Workers Federation (ITF)-affiliated National Union of Seafarers of Peninsular Malaysia should be enhanced to include the needs of seafarers in Sabah and Sarawak. Its existence should also be widely publicised and membership numbers greatly increased, especially from the Officers' category. This would be in consonance with the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC 2006) requirements.
- (vi) Malaysia should work together with other like-minded countries and relevant international organisations to address the issue of criminalisation of seafarers to ensure that due process is observed and practised in cases of maritime incidents occurring anywhere in the world.

F. Special needs of the Offshore Support Vessels (OSV) and Near Coastal Voyage (NCV) vessels

- (i) Dedicated training facilities solely catering for Malaysian seafarers intending to serve on board OSVs should be established.

- (ii) Consideration should be given towards granting income tax exemption to seafarers working on board OSV.
- (iii) Similar tax exemption could be granted to those operating vessels plying within the NCV.
- (vi) Eligible ratings serving on board NCV vessels should be encouraged and provided with incentives to upgrade themselves to be officers by attending appropriate courses and taking the requisite examinations.

G. Shore employment opportunities

- (i) Serving seafarers should be encouraged to pursue other appropriate qualifications. In line with a “life-long learning” culture, they should endeavour to undertake relevant professional courses. This would assist them in their appointment ashore after leaving sea service.
- (ii) Many existing tertiary educational institutions are able to provide the appropriate courses/programmes. Seafarers should take the initiative to identify those that suits their particular needs.
- (iii) Substantial job opportunities exist in the ports as well as shipbuilding and shiprepair industries. Seafarers opting to leave sea service could explore the possibility of seeking employment in appropriate sectors within these industries that may require their previous seagoing skills and experience.

H. Implications of the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

- (i) Malaysia should take due cognisance of the requirements of MLC 2006 on seafarers' well being and undertake the necessary preparations to be ready for its international implementation irrespective of any decision on ratification since enforcement procedures by signatory states would affect all ships entering their ports, including those flying the flag of non-signatory countries.

5. A summary of these recommendations is attached as Appendix A to this paper.

6. Conclusion:

Besides papers presented by speakers and deliberations of panel members, the Conference also triggered quite an active engagement by participants from the floor. A recurrent remark heard throughout the two-days' session was the passionate exhortation that the Conference Organisers should do their utmost to follow through with appropriate stakeholders on the recommendations proffered so that the commendable objectives would be achieved and issues affecting Malaysian seafarers be effectively addressed. It is with such an intention in mind that these recommendations are compiled and forwarded for perusal and action by relevant parties.

Centre for Ocean Law and Policy
MIMA
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Summary of Recommendations

The Conference strongly proposed the drawing up a strategic master plan relating to a holistic approach towards seafarers' affairs in Malaysia.

It should encompass:

- A. Establishment of a National Body/Agency responsible for:
- * Facilitation and providing guidance on Seafarers' affairs covering recruitment, placement, career development and welfare;
 - * Direction on continuous promotion and awareness programmes carried out to selected potential "catchment areas" (eg. rural localities in Peninsular Malaysia and riverine areas of Sabah and Sarawak).
- B. Maritime training
- * Should come under the ambit of the government to facilitate lower costs and provide opportunities for grant of study loans;
 - * Increase in number of seafarers trained annually;
 - * "Poaching" of maritime trainers and instructors to be addressed.
- C. Training Berths
- * Offer fiscal incentives to Malaysian shipping companies providing training berths;
 - * Consider placement of Malaysian trainees on board foreign ships;
 - * Contemplate pooling resources by shipping companies towards introducing "training-cum-trading" ships;
 - * Ponder legislating mandatory provision of training berths by Malaysian shipping companies.
- D. Introduction of Bridging Courses for Engineering Graduates and ex-Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) officers
- * Source seafarers for merchant navy service from pool of available engineering graduates and retired naval officers by introducing appropriate Bridging Courses.
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- E. Ensuring universal standards of welfare/health benefits and appropriate emoluments
- * Welfare/health benefits offered to Malaysian seafarers and their families should be compatible with universal norms and practice;
 - * Emolument packages granted to Malaysian seafarers should, as far as is commercially viable to shipowners, be commensurate with global standards. Discriminatory practices should not be tolerated
 - * Attitudinal shift towards positive values amongst Malaysians seafarers is to be inculcated. Malaysian shipowners should undergo similar paradigm change;
 - * Recreational and communications facilities to be established within port areas;
 - * Seafarers' Union to be further strengthened and expanded to accommodate those in Sabah and Sarawak;
 - * Position to be taken on the issue of “criminalisation of seafarers” in cases of maritime incidents.
- F. Special needs of seafarers serving on board Offshore Support Vessels (OSV) and Near Coastal Voyage (NCV) vessels
- * Plan for establishment of dedicated maritime training centres for seafarers serving on board OSV;
 - * Consider income tax exemption for seafarers onboard OSV and NCV vessels;
- G. Shore employment opportunities
- * Practise concept of “life-long learning” by taking up relevant professional courses offered by tertiary educational institutions;
 - * Take advantage of job opportunities present in the ports, shipbuilding and shiprepair industries.
- H. Implications of ILO’s Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC 2006)
- * Measures to be taken in preparation of the coming into force globally of the International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) Maritime Labour Convention 2006.
-