

SPEECH BY MR ANDREW TAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE AT THE MSC CONNEXIONS FORUM 2017 HELD AT, EMPRESS BALLROOM 4 & 5, LEVEL 2, CARLTON HOTEL ON FRIDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2017, 2.00PM

Introduction

1. Good afternoon. Thank you for taking time off your busy schedules to attend the 2nd MSC Connexions Forum. I am delighted to hear that there are about 150 HR representatives, career counsellors, educators, and colleagues from other partnering agencies here with us today to discuss the topic of “Developing a Multi-Skilled Maritime Workforce with a Global Mindset”.

Rising Awareness of Maritime Sector

2. First, some good news. Public awareness of the maritime sector has never been higher. Based on a recent public perceptions survey that MPA conducted over the course of 2016-17, familiarity amongst students has jumped from 6% to 23% between 2012 and 2017. About 7 in 10 recognise the industry’s indispensable contribution to the Singapore economy over the past 5 years. In 2017, significantly more respondents have a positive impression of the maritime industry – 64% of students up from 27% in 2012 and 60% of PMEBS up from 39% in 2012.
3. All this would not have been possible without the hard work and efforts put in by our MaritimeONE partners and all our stakeholders like yourselves in promoting the maritime sector. I was particularly heartened yesterday when I interviewed two bright mid-term scholars doing their studies in NUS and SMU, one of them in chemical

engineering and another doing information systems in SMU, and both found out about the upcoming developments in the maritime sector, the role that MPA was seeking to play, and was excited enough to take up a scholarship. And this was the only scholarship they had applied to.

4. That said, much more needs to be done. Every sector of the economy is in need of good talent. In a small country like Singapore, what this means, of course, is that everyone is competing for the same pool of talent. It also means that whatever pool of talent we have, we need to develop everyone to their best potential. For the maritime sector, this means we have to pay even greater attention to how we build a pipeline of talent for the industry.

Transformation an Imperative for the Maritime Industry

5. As you know, the Singapore Government is investing heavily in the maritime sector. Our multi-billion dollar investment into our new Tuas Next Generation Port is a good example of investing in future capacity ahead of demand. It gives the industry the assurance it needs, as container shipping consolidates around a few mega-alliances with their mega-vessels that the port is here to stay all the way into 2040 and beyond. Make no doubts about it. We will not only build a bigger port, but a better port.
6. When completed, it would be the world's largest, highly-automated and intelligent port located within a single site. MPA is also partnering with Jurong Port (JP) as it also embarks on its own transformation effort into the Next Generation Multi-Purpose Port. I want to take this opportunity to credit both PSA and JP for embarking on their respective Living Laboratories to testbed new and exciting concepts for their new facilities. So we can be sure that in the longer term, technological advancements will

change the way jobs are performed and assets are managed as ports and even ships become smarter, more intelligent and automated.

7. Our transformation efforts are not limited to our port alone. Shipping and maritime services must embrace change as well. For example, the advances in sensor systems and satellite communications, coupled with tightened security and regulatory requirements, have prompted shipping companies to set up shore-based monitoring centres to gather real-time updates on fleet performance and positions. I visited one such company recently, Thome Ship management, and was impressed by their 24/7 operations centre right in the heart of town. We are also seeing more maritime companies subscribing to cloud-based data analytics in search of new business opportunities. I believe it is only a matter of time before even the maritime sector will go the way of other industries where most of the operations and assets will be managed in the same way, either autonomously or remotely.
8. Recently, we established the IMC 2030 Advisory Committee to chart a new development strategy to take Maritime Singapore to 2030 and beyond. The Committee has recently submitted its report to the Singapore Government, outlining a vision for Maritime Singapore to be *The Global Maritime Hub for Connectivity, Innovation and Talent*. Talent has been identified as a critical success factor for Maritime Singapore. Competition is not simply about having the right number of people but also a future-ready workforce with relevant skills and a global mindset that anticipates the future needs of the industry.

Fostering Closer Collaborations in Maritime Talent Development

9. But MPA or any one of the MaritimeONE partners cannot do this alone. Close partnerships between various government agencies, companies, schools, and unions

are necessary. This is the essence of the tripartite efforts. Last year, to give these efforts a boost, the Singapore Maritime Foundation formed the Maritime Singapore Connect (MSC) Office last year to give Singaporeans easy access to information on maritime education, training and career options. Not only does the MSC Office support maritime companies' talent attraction and recruitment needs, it also profiles the diverse and rewarding jobs available in the maritime sector both online and in traditional media. These efforts would help us attract talent from across diverse disciplines, including those in emerging areas of demand such as engineering, data analytics and information security. You can check out the new MSC website (www.maritimesgconnect.com) which was just launched in July. It provides information on maritime careers, education options, and internship opportunities and for interested individuals to submit their resumes to prospective employers that are hiring.

10. Other manpower initiatives that have seen active collaboration among industry stakeholders, unions and institutes of higher learning (IHLs) include:

- a. Regular reviews on maritime curricula with IHLs, such as NTU's Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies and Singapore Polytechnic SMA's Diploma in Maritime Business.
- b. Comprehensive training support for seafarers during their career progression, such as Cadet Allowance Reimbursement and Certificate of Competency (CoC) Achievement Award.
- c. SkillsFuture Earn-and-Learn Programmes (ELPs) in seafaring and port operations. We are currently working on another ELP for shore-based job roles in shipping and broking.

11. Even as we continue to intensify our collaborative efforts with our partners and stakeholders, I hope we can form **a community of best practice** comprising all interested stakeholders that we have today. The MSC Connexions Forum provides maritime HR professionals, as well as the wider community of career counsellors, educators and union representatives, with a platform to network and exchange views on best HR practices and manpower trends. Let us build upon this platform into one which we not only address the challenges and opportunities in manpower development, but to develop common strategies for the industry and recognise those who have pursued enlightened HR practices. MPA will work with SMF and MSC to further strengthen this platform.

Linking Manpower Development Initiatives to Sea Transport ITM

12. Last but not least, all these efforts will complement the Sea Transport Industry Transformation Map (ITM) which will be launched in January next year to ensure Maritime Singapore stays ahead of competition. This ITM lays out strategies and initiatives under four pillars, namely Innovation, Productivity, Jobs & Skills, and Internationalisation.
13. As the lead agency for the Sea Transport ITM, MPA has been developing the ITM with inputs from our industry stakeholders, unions and relevant government agencies. Following the launch of the ITM, MPA will be organising several ITM-related workshops and talks under the “Maritime Industry Transformation” series to gather inputs as well as generate more awareness of the ITM in the industry. You can be assured talent, jobs & skills will be one of the key topics.
14. Through today’s Forum and upcoming workshops, I hope we can think through more deeply these three questions:

- a. How can we better anticipate the maritime skills of the future, particularly as the industry enters the digital era?
- b. How can we prepare both existing and future workers to equip themselves with the relevant skillsets and keep them relevant?
- c. How can we change perceptions about maritime careers and better showcase the opportunities available in the maritime sector?

Closing

15. I would like to thank the MSC office for organising this Forum as well as the presenters for taking time to prepare their respective presentations. I look forward to hearing more insights on the latest maritime manpower trends and developments and your feedback on how we can develop maritime human capital together.

16. Thank you.