

**SPEECH BY MR DAVID CHIN SOON SIONG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
SINGAPORE MARITIME FOUNDATION AT THE MSC MARITIME INSIGHTS  
FORUM 2016, HELD AT MPA ACADEMY AUDITORIUM, LEVEL 25, PSA  
BUILDING ON FRIDAY, 8 JULY 2016, 10.00AM**

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

1. Good morning and thank you for joining us at today's MSC Maritime Insights Forum. You would have noticed the view of the ships at sea and Pasir Panjang Terminal as you walked into the room just now. We thought this would be a good place to kick off our inaugural Forum organised specially for those in career counselling roles like yourselves – to bring you closer to the maritime industry, starting with this great view, and rounding up with a tour of the port terminal, which is usually closed to the public due to security reasons.
2. Maritime Singapore's achievements are well-known overseas, but less so back home. We are the world's largest transshipment hub, a premier Global Hub Port and a leading International Maritime Centre. You may also have heard about the Tuas mega port, which entered Phase 1 of its development in April this year. The entire Tuas Terminal could eventually handle 65 million TEUs of cargo annually. This is nearly double what Singapore handled in 2014.
3. To support Maritime Singapore's growth, we need a strong maritime workforce in both shore-based and seafaring jobs. This is why Maritime is one of the pilot sectors identified for focus under SkillsFuture. It is a key pillar of Singapore's economy contributing to 7 per cent of our GDP.
4. The maritime industry is diverse and dynamic, and those of us who are in it know that it offers multiple pathways to a rewarding and enriching maritime career. However, the challenge lies in reaching out effectively to students and jobseekers – to interest them, and to offer them the information they need.

5. The Maritime Singapore Connect, or MSC Office, is part of a national-level SkillsFuture initiative by MPA to address this need. Started in January this year, this unit under SMF will help to connect students, jobseekers and the general public with maritime employers, industry associations, government agencies and schools. As a central access point for target audiences of various profiles, the MSC Office elevates profiling efforts of the maritime industry and provides Singaporeans with easy access to maritime education, training and job opportunities. Apart from activities targeting students, career coaches and jobseekers, a new portal will also be launched later this year.

6. The Forum today is to meet an area of need for those in education and career guidance functions. Looking at the sign ups, we are encouraged by the good interest. There is a good representation of career counsellors working with students as well as jobseekers. We've also invited our partners from MPA, WDA, e2i, Mendaki SENSE, Singapore Maritime Officers Union, Wavelink Maritime Institute and the Singapore Maritime Academy so they could also help to share more about the programmes under their charge during the networking sessions.

7. Before I end, I would like to quote from Singapore's founding Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew's speech, at the inaugural Singapore Maritime Lecture organised by MPA in 2007.

8. Mr Lee had said, "Global developments in sea transport can be seen through the growth and transformation of Singapore as a maritime centre. The development of Maritime Singapore is about anticipating the future, adapting to change, creating and seizing opportunities, and the pursuit of excellence."

9. Government initiatives like SkillsFuture and the MSC Office are a step in that direction, but we need your support since it is career counsellors like you who walk the ground and guide students and jobseekers when they are at a crossroad.

10. I hope today's session will give you new insights to the maritime industry, and we are here if you need to get connected on maritime opportunities. Thank you.