



MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore, 24 December 2020 | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Staying Safe at Sea for the Year-End Holiday Season

1. Singapore is currently experiencing a monsoon season, which is expected to end early March. Particularly from December this year to early January next year, monsoon surges are expected to cause widespread continuous moderate to heavy rain, with strong winds and choppy seas that can increase risks at sea. Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) would thus like to remind all port users and members of the public to stay safe at sea during this year-end holiday season.

Joining Hands with the Industry for a Safety-First Culture

2. MPA inspectors have been conducting checks on ferries to ensure that shipboard fire-fighting apparatus and life-saving appliances are in good working condition. These checks are in addition to the statutory surveys and certifications for regional ferries carried out by MPA and its authorised recognised organisations. Ferry masters are also briefed on any new developments along their operating route and are reminded to remain vigilant when navigating in the Port of Singapore and the Singapore Strait.

3. Advisories have been sent to owners and operators of port facilities and ferries to stay alert for security threats and to ensure that ship crew are familiar with safety measures such as the location of emergency exits, storage of lifejackets and donning instructions, as well as assisting with passenger safety during embarkation and disembarkation of ferries.

4. For contractors that are involved in marine projects such as the development of Tuas Port, as well as land reclamation at Tuas West Coast and Pulau Tekong, MPA has reminded them to exercise due diligence to prevent workplace accidents during this festive period. Companies are also encouraged to carry out safety time-out drills as a reminder that everyone at the worksite has a role to play to ensure that safety is not compromised.

5. “The Port of Singapore never sleeps, and neither does Maritime Singapore. Particularly at this time when many of us are looking forward to time with family and

friends, we should continue to remind ourselves, our colleagues and the public to put safety first so that we remain safe, and can spend this holiday season with our close ones,” said Mr Ishak Ismail, Chairman of the National Maritime Safety at Sea Council.

Safe Management at Ferry Terminals and Staying Safe at Sea

6. There has been increased travels to the Southern Islands and Pulau Ubin since restrictions for travel to other countries were implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the Marina South Pier and Changi Point Ferry Terminals, the following safe management measures have been put in place:

- a. Dedicated queue lines with floor markers for high footfall touchpoints, such as the departure waiting hall and jetty areas. This is to allow passengers to wait and board the ferries, as well as clear security screening in an orderly manner with safe distancing in place.
- b. Regular broadcasting of announcements to remind passengers to practise safe distancing and to wear their masks at all times except when eating or drinking.
- c. A team of Safe Distancing Ambassadors walking the ground daily to assist and help ensure the compliance to safe management measures. A robot Safe Distancing Ambassador has also been deployed, as a trial, to remind visitors to observe safe distancing and wear their masks.
- d. Increasing berth usage at Marina South Pier during the weekend peak periods to cater for the increased number of ferry trips given the larger number of weekend passengers departing for the Southern Islands to alleviate overcrowding.

7. In recent weeks, there have been two incidents involving visitors to the Southern Islands. Individuals who participate in recreational activities at sea should be aware of the potential dangers such as strong waves and currents, deep drop offs, underwater hazards and other craft in the vicinity. Beachgoers should only swim in areas manned by lifeguards or within marked areas for swimming. Whilst on the Southern Islands and Pulau Ubin, visitors are also reminded to observe the safe management measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

8. President of the Singapore Boating Industry Association and member of the National Maritime Safety at Sea Council Mr Y P Loke said, “With the restrictions on travel due to the COVID-19 situation, we see more users of the sea space for recreational activities and we would like to remind everyone to keep a safety-first mindset when out at sea. Simple measures like wearing life jackets for sea sports activities, and observing boating etiquette at the anchorage, will help ensure that safety incidents continue to remain low in the Port of Singapore.”

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About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) was established on 2 February 1996, with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre (IMC), and to advance and safeguard Singapore's strategic maritime interests. MPA is the driving force behind Singapore's port and maritime development, taking on the roles of Port Authority, Port Regulator, Port Planner, IMC Champion, and National Maritime Representative. MPA partners the industry and other agencies to enhance safety, security and environmental protection in our port waters, facilitate port operations and growth, expand the cluster of maritime ancillary services, and promote maritime R&D and manpower development.

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