

fan
flying angel news

UPDATES FROM THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS
FEBRUARY 2025 | ISSUE 44



inside: Reuniting seafarers and their loved ones in ports around the world

A time to reflect Lent 2025



5 March
- 17 April
2025



In the long, hard months at sea, your care truly matters. This Lent, please help us to continue to reach seafarers and their families.

Our Lent Appeal will be mailed to supporters soon.
If you are not on our mailing list but would like to be, please email:
info@missiontoseafarers.org or call +44 (0)20 7248 5202.

Welcome to the latest edition of FAN!

As I've been learning about the world of global shipping, the sheer scale of it all has, in some ways, struck me. I daily find myself receiving information and updates, or hearing stories from all corners of the world. Global shipping is truly huge.

Yet, despite its reach, it is in other ways a small world. A contact working for a company on the east coast of the USA will be dealing with one end of a situation I have been discussing with one of their colleagues thousands of miles away. At an event I attend in London, I may find myself running into people I last met at a conference in Australia or a round table in Singapore.

Nothing perhaps exemplifies the reach yet internal connection of the shipping world more than the 1.9 million seafarers on whom the world's wellbeing relies.

Even though you may have little daily contact with global shipping, I hope that this FAN magazine will offer you a way into that world that is both huge and global and also local and personal.

Maybe you will be struck by our family network in Tuticorin, which, concerned as it is with the daily lives of individual families, has a huge impact for seafarers who may be thousands of miles away. Perhaps it will be the story of the father and son unexpectedly reunited through

the work of the Mission even though the oceans' vast distances have separated them for a long time.



Whatever your connection with the shipping world, through your support of The Mission to Seafarers, it is your world too. You are part of it all. You make these things possible, and I thank you for all that you do.

With every good wish,

The Ven. Dr Peter Rouch
Secretary General

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Editor: Nina Edy
Design: Yeomans Marketing
FAN magazine
+44(0)20 7248 5202
contactus@missiontoseafarers.org
www.missiontoseafarers.org

The Mission to Seafarers,
First Floor, 6 Bath Place, Rivington Street,
London EC2A 3JE

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“ You make these things possible”

Celebrating 10 Years of Service and Support in the Philippines



From its humble beginnings as a volunteer-led initiative with the Philippine Independent Church to one of the nation's most respected welfare organisations, we reflect on a decade in the Philippines.

The Mission's journey in the Philippines began in 2014, driven by a need to better support families in the world's largest seafaring nation. Its aim was simple: to build community resilience and unite families with shared experiences.

The Mission's early efforts were coordinated through seven local chapters run by teams of volunteers. Their primary role was in organising community events

such as Sea Sunday and activities around International Seafarers' Day.

By 2019, our work had gained momentum, transitioning into a professional organisation with expanded reach and capacity. Through this, we were able to provide more services, including training for families and seafarers across the country and Filipino crews serving overseas.

DEVELOPING THE FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

Today, a team of full-time staff and more than 130 committed volunteers support the Family Support Network across 17 chapters. They've been at the forefront of addressing the evolving needs of seafarers through activities ranging from financial and employment support to disaster response and training initiatives.

In recent years, that training has included initiatives such as SafeTALK, a suicide prevention course, and WeCare Financial and Social Wellbeing courses to provide families with critical skills to navigate the challenges of modern seafaring.

Industry leaders, such as the UK P&I Club, Shipowners' Association, and Pacific Basin, have partnered with the Mission to fund many of these programmes.

In 2023, we also introduced annual leadership training for volunteers in the cities of Manila and Iloilo to ensure our teams are providing a consistently high level of care across the country.

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS

As we look to the future, we'll continue

“ **At the forefront of addressing evolving needs”**

to foster relationships with a broader range of stakeholders in the industry – including shipowners, training institutions, and governments – to broaden our reach.

As Thomas O'Hare, the Mission's Programme Manager says, 'The Mission to Seafarers Philippines and its Family Support Network programme has become integral to The Mission to Seafarers' global presence and operations.'

This milestone was marked with activities across the country, including our Seafarers' Welfare Forum and the Family Support Network Chapters' Regional Leadership Training, held in conjunction with International Seafarers' Day.

It was an opportunity to give thanks for, reflect on, and celebrate all we have achieved together. At the same time, we renewed our commitment to safeguarding the wellbeing of seafarers and their families for the next decade and beyond.



MTS PHILIPPINES TEAM AT THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT AT LUNETTA PARK, MANILA

Life at Sea: The Hidden Struggles of Seafarers

While seafarers love the adventure and purpose their work brings, loneliness, financial stress, and disconnection from loved ones are constant struggles.

At The Mission to Seafarers, we're working with the industry to support the crews who keep the world moving.

GENERAL WELLBEING AND FINANCIAL STRESS

Seafarers can sometimes face financial worries, from pay disputes to delays in salaries. These pressures affect their mental health and morale. As one seafarer put it, 'Every day feels like a

struggle to make ends meet, and it's hard to stay positive when you're constantly worrying about your next paycheck.'

To help, The Mission's WeCare Financial Wellbeing course equips seafarers to plan ahead and manage fluctuating salaries. Our teams are also available to step in

“ Every day feels like a struggle”



MTS CHAPLAIN GIVING A SEAFARER ONE OF THE 300 FREE VODAFONE SIM CARDS IN THE PORT OF FELIXSTOWE



A SEAFARER AT WORK ON THEIR SHIP

centres. It's often one of the first things that seafarers ask for and is crucial to their personal wellbeing.

THE DECLINE OF SHORE LEAVE

Shore leave is essential for rest and reconnection, but it's harder than ever for seafarers to make the most of it with reduced turnaround times and greater automation. One seafarer described feeling like a 'prisoner on my own ship.'

While shore leave is a legal right under the Maritime Labour Convention, it is sometimes restricted. The Mission's teams work tirelessly to ensure crews' rights are respected and the positive impact of shore leave on mental health, safety, and productivity is recognised.

MANAGING WORKLOAD AND STRESS

Seafarers are under immense pressure with intense workloads, the challenge of working in different time zones, and smaller crews. Many feel like they are numbers on a spreadsheet rather than valued crew members. As one said, 'We're not just numbers; we're human beings who deserve respect and understanding.'

Our ship visitors and chaplains are trained to spot signs of burnout and offer support. Tools like the Ship Visitor app make sure that different welfare organisations are connected so they can alert each other to look out for specific ships and crew members who may be in need of assistance. In recent years, with programmes such as safeTALK, our suicide alertness course, we have been helping to change attitudes from within the industry.

and advocate for seafarers whenever they find themselves in these situations.

STAYING CONNECTED WITH LOVED ONES

For many, staying in touch with family is a lifeline, but unreliable internet remains a major frustration. While more ships are kitted out with satellite technology, like Starlink, access is restricted by some countries, leaving seafarers feeling isolated. One crew member shared, 'I just want to hear my children's voices, but I feel like I'm sailing alone.'

In response, our ship visitors and chaplains always carry SIM cards, and free Wi-Fi is available in our seafarers'

“ I just want to hear my children's voices”

Funding Fuels the Mission

Donations from trusts and foundations play a pivotal role in ensuring the sustainability of our work. These partnerships allow us to reach more seafarers, develop innovative programmes, and address urgent needs, reflecting a shared commitment to improving seafarers' lives.



SEAFARERS IN THE ITF-FUNDED MINIBUS IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

EXPANDING WELFARE PROVISION

The Seafarers' Charity awarded the Mission £30,000 in 2023 and £35,000 in 2024 to fund our new port development manager – a role crucial in ensuring the delivery of our 2023-2026 strategic plan. This position focuses on expanding welfare services in underserved locations and enhancing support in existing ports.

“ safeTALK is very relevant to seafarers.”

SAFETALK – SUICIDE ALERTNESS TRAINING EXPANDS

In 2023, a £43,475 development grant from MNWB enabled us to deliver the safeTALK suicide alertness programme in six ports across the UK, where we trained 64 delegates as Suicide Alert Helpers, and a further 42 Suicide First Aiders. In October 2024, a Seafarers' Charity grant allowed 253 cadets from the National Indian Maritime University in Tuticorin, India, to become certified Suicide Alert Helpers. In November, a further 65

cadets were trained at Warsash Maritime School, Southampton. As one cadet remarked, “After attending safeTALK I would like to motivate everyone I meet to attend it in the future. It's basic approach and clear methods, can help us help another save their own life”.

NEW VEHICLES GROW OUR REACH

The ITF Seafarers' Trust has provided £457,664 over five years to fund 12 vehicles for ports worldwide, including Mombasa, Durban, Yokohama, Singapore, and the Solomon Islands. Additionally, over the same time period, MNWB have provided £101,000 to support the purchase of 6 vehicles in the UK. This funding has enabled thousands more seafarers to access welfare services and connect with the outside world.



BELFAST CRUISE HUB

RESPIRE FOR CRUISE SHIP SEAFARERS

A grant from MNWB in 2024 facilitated collaboration with Stella Maris and the Seafarers Christian Friends Society to create a dedicated safe space for cruise ship crew in Belfast. Open during the cruise season, this hub offered rest, privacy, and free Wi-Fi. As one seafarer shared, “I wish we had something like this in every port we visit.”

CAPACITY BUILDING IN WALES

Our friends at Trinity House have recently funded a new part-time ship visitor in South Wales. Milford Haven is the largest shipping port in Wales and one of the busiest ports in the UK. With a new ship visitor, we will be able to reach around three ships per day, which equates to approximately 2,880 seafarers receiving support in the first 12 months.

MAINTAINING WELLNESS AT SEA

WeCare, the Mission's well-being training programme, supports the mental health and wellbeing of seafarers and their families globally. With £90,416 of funding from the TK Foundation (alongside funding from the UK P&I Club), we were able to develop two e-learning courses – Social Wellbeing and Financial Wellbeing, which have since become a pivotal part of our service provision, empowering over 60,000 seafarers with the knowledge and tools to maintain wellness at sea.

“ I wish we had something like this in every port we visit”

To find out more about bespoke funding opportunities and how we can unite your team in fundraising efforts, contact Jan: Jan.Webber@missiontoseafarers.org

The Mission's Oceania and Pacific Region: **At the Heart of It All – People**

In the Oceania and Pacific region, listen out for the Māori proverb: *He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.* Or in English: **What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.**

The concept underpins the Mission's work here – no small feat in an area covering 13 diverse ports across New Zealand, Fiji, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Tahiti.

'Tahiti can be as cosmopolitan as Paris, but the Solomon Islands face

“ **It is people, it is people, it is people**”

significant social challenges. And one of our chaplains in Vanuatu sometimes goes months without power or internet,' explains regional director, Revd. Lance Lukin. But it's a challenge that the team is rising to. The region's vessels are equally as diverse, ranging from cargo ships in New Zealand to smaller fishing boats across the Pacific. Despite the difference in size, the seafarers' challenges remain the same: isolation, loneliness, and concerns about family and job security.

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY

This is where the Mission steps in. 'Everyone who boards a ship has an



CREW AT THE HUNDERWASSER IN WHANGAREI, NEW ZEALAND



NELSON, NEW ZEALAND, SEAFARERS CENTRE OPENING IN NOVEMBER 2023

agenda, but we board with no agenda other than to listen,' says Revd. Lance. But this in itself can be tricky as crews get smaller, turnaround times quicker, and shore leave more limited.

The fishing industry is an area of particular concern for Revd. Lance and his team. Last year, the Mission used new technology to monitor a Taiwanese ship that left Busan in South Korea. Tracking showed that the vessel didn't return to port for 572 days.

No one knows if the crew ever disembarked, which raises important welfare concerns. As Revd. Lance explains, 'There's a lot of human trafficking that occurs within fishing fleets.'

INVESTING IN PEOPLE

The Mission in this region is doing everything it can to ensure that the needs of seafarers are put first as the industry evolves. To do this, the Mission has secured government funding for frontline staff in New Zealand, while Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Tahiti have also received funding for new chaplains.

“ **These are highly skilled individuals**”

These aren't just bodies on the ground or good-hearted volunteers. As Revd. Lance points out, 'These are highly skilled individuals ready to intervene in life-or-death situations.' No matter what the future holds for the region, the Mission's focus will remain the same: it is people, it is people, it is people.



A VOLUNTEER (L) AND PORT CHAPLAIN JOEL PEARCE (R) WITH A SEAFARER IN TAURANGA, NEW ZEALAND

Christmas Unwrapped

THE MISSION OPERATE IN 200 PORTS IN OVER 50 COUNTRIES. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: WWW.MISSIONTOSEAFARERS.ORG/OUR-PORTS

Once again, the Mission was sharing Christmas joy with seafarers across the globe, many of whom were far from their loved ones during the festive season.

1 THE REVD. THOMAS MORROW, HOUSTON, USA



Distributing Christmas gifts at the Houston International Seafarer Centre during the holiday

season is truly the highlight of my year! Dressed in my red hat and sporting a big beard, I arrive with an armful of beautifully wrapped presents, and the seafarers light up like children in a candy store. In those magical moments, the stress of life on board seems to melt away, replaced by a sense of joy and camaraderie. Throughout December, we distribute an average of 10,000 Christmas gifts, each one a small reminder of God's love and care.

2 HELEN GLENN, MISSION MANAGER, HALIFAX, CANADA



Members of Armdale Yacht Club, Halifax, were at the Mission to donate

shoeboxes they had lovingly filled with Christmas gifts for seafarers. Seaman Adrian Gonzago from Tropic Hope was there, along with (left to right) Elaine Schnare, Karen Smith, Nancy Morrison, Greg Baker, and Stuart Schnare.

3 THE REVD. TIM LINKENS, CHAPLAIN TO THE HUMBER PORTS



At the Humber Ports, we collected and wrapped Christmas presents in

preparation for seafarers. Over the course of December, our team of ship visitors was able to deliver the gifts straight to seafarers on board ships as they fulfilled their duties.

4 REVD. ISSAC FRANKLIN, BAHRAIN



This Christmas, the children of St. Christopher's School in Bahrain prepared 100 special gift bags

for seafarers, distributed at Khalifa Bin Salman Port as part of the school's annual Christmas tradition. Each bag contained essentials like toiletries, treats, and souvenirs, including a Bahrain flag pin and mug. The primary school children designed and decorated the bags with festive messages, showing their personal gratitude to the seafaring community.

5 TOH SOON KOK, PORT CHAPLAIN, SINGAPORE



I was privileged to lead a beautiful Holy Communion Service on

board one vessel on 11 December. The service gave master and crew an opportunity to worship, fellowship, and reflect on Christ's hope. Thanks to support from The Shipowners Club, our team also distributed Christmas gifts, spreading love and unity onboard.

6 REVD. UN TAY, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



More than 40 volunteers, including pilots, office workers, and even seafarers on their

precious day off, joined the Mission to prepare more than 1,800 Christmas gift bags at Sister Mary's Cabin in Port Botany. NSW Ports CEO Marika Calfas, Chair Patricia McKenzie, and the Port Authority of New South Wales CEO Philip Holliday visited the volunteers to thank them for their work.

“The seafarers light up like children in a candy store”



Make a donation

If you would like to make a donation, please fill out the form below, and complete your contact details at the bottom of the page.

Please accept my gift of: £10 £25 £50

or £ _____ (your chosen amount)

My cheque is enclosed (payable to The Mission to Seafarers)

Please debit my credit/debit card: Visa/MasterCard/Maestro (delete as applicable)

Card number:

Start date: -- Expiry date: --

Issue no. for Maestro: Security no.

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Signature: _____

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Loved Ones Reunited

Relationships are at the heart of everything we do at the Mission—and sometimes that stretches to reconnecting loved ones who have been forced apart by the unpredictable rhythms of a life at sea.

Every year, we help reunite seafarers and their families. Most of these private reunions go unreported, but these heartwarming stories are a reminder of just how important connections are in this challenging industry.



HALIFAX, CANADA

In Halifax, Canada, a mother and son reunited after seven years, with a little bit of help from the Mission. Seafarers are used to extended time away from loved ones, but seven years is an extraordinary stretch. So when a seafarer named Patrick discovered he was docking in a port just a few hours from his mother, he knew it was an opportunity he couldn't miss. All the hard work in arranging tickets and port clearance was worth it when mother and son shared a tearful embrace at the dockside. 'The Mission's kindness and dedication made it all possible,' she said.

“The Mission's kindness and dedication made it all possible”

How you can support us

There are many ways in which you can support our work with seafarers around the world.

Find out more about getting involved

Please tick the box below and fill out the contact details panel overleaf to find out more about:

- Fundraising
- Remembering The Mission in your Will
- Volunteering
- Involving your company
- Giving in memory of a friend or loved one

We will send you regular updates about the work, needs and impact of The Mission to Seafarers.

- Please tick if you would like to stop receiving communication from us by post
- Please tick if you would like to stop receiving communication from us by telephone
- Please tick if you would like to receive email communications from us

Please detach this form and send it in the Freepost Envelope Provided.

You do not need to write any other details on the envelope.



MARSDEN POINT, NEW ZEALAND

The Mission helped to instigate a heartwarming reunion between two Sri Lankan brothers, Kamal and Nuwan, who had not seen each other for seven years at Marsden Point in Auckland. When the seafarer knew he would be stopping in the very town where his brother was a chef, he contacted the Mission to ask for our help. Together, we were able to get the right access permissions to ensure the siblings could reconnect. Tears were shed, and laughter was shared as the brothers shared stories and memories. The touching moment really highlighted the importance of shore leave and human connection.

“The pair were deeply grateful”

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

The war in Ukraine has disrupted shipping, meaning routes are changing, contracts are extended, and loved ones are kept apart for longer. So when a shipping agent asked for our help in hosting a father and son who had not seen each other for more than a year, our team sprang into action. With just three hours of shore leave, there was no time to lose. The Mission arranged transport for father and son, who were in Colombo but at different ports, and hosted them at the seafarer's centre. With such a brief window to meet, the pair were deeply grateful to the Mission for both the transport and the venue to host their reunion.



Seafarers Happiness Index

The latest Seafarers' Happiness Index has revealed a concerning downturn in maritime worker satisfaction.

The latest quarterly report shows the overall happiness score dropping to 6.91 in Q4 2024 from 7.16 in the previous quarter, with restrictive port policies as a major factor impacting seafarer welfare.

SHORE LEAVE LIMITATIONS

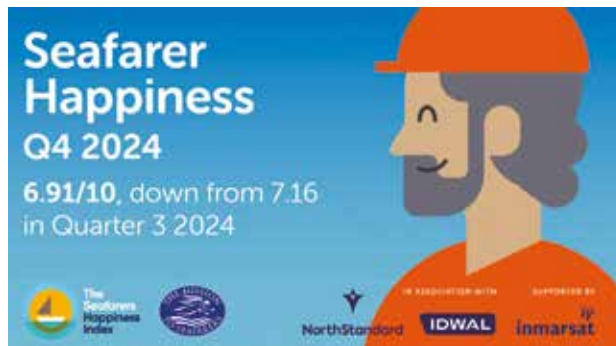
Many ports are failing to actively facilitate shore leave, preventing crew members from taking much-needed breaks from life onboard. Many report feeling isolated and frustrated due to limited shore access, poorly maintained facilities, and a lack of transport options. As one commented, 'Port stays are short, and terminals make shore access difficult.'

Ben Bailey, Director of Programme at The Mission to Seafarers, emphasised that 'shore leave is not a luxury but a vital opportunity for rest and mental recovery for seafarers.'

WELLBEING CONCERNS

The survey also identified that despite promises of free Wi-Fi onboard, unreliable connectivity continues to hamper

“Shore leave is not a luxury”



The Seafarers Happiness Index (SHI) is a quarterly survey undertaken by The Mission to Seafarers, delivered in association with Idwal and NorthStandard and supported by Inmarsat. To read the full Seafarers Happiness Index report in full, visit www.seafarershappinessindex.org

communication with family and friends. Stagnant wages amid rising living costs have led to growing financial concerns, while excessive administrative duties and inadequate staffing levels are driving up fatigue.

'There are not enough hours in the day to deal with all the paperwork from the office, charterers, flag, auditors, customs and officials,' reflected one seafarer.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

While some seafarers are expressing frustration at being asked to complete the same courses repeatedly without gaining new insights, others praise opportunities to enhance their skills and stay up to date with industry standards. Many have been encouraged by access to mentoring opportunities and professional development programmes.

“There are not enough hours in the day”

The Last Watch of the Old Mariner

Sean Paul Angus, a dedicated seafarer with 18 years of experience, honours the enduring spirit of seafarers within an ever-changing industry in his poetry.



In days of yore, 'neath the open skies,
Sailors roamed the seas, where adventure lies.
Kings of the tide, masters of the wind,
In each port, they found kinship, and bonds that bind.

But tides, they turn, as centuries fade, and so too do the sailors' trade.
Steel giants rose, with engines that roar, and hands of flesh, needed no more.
No longer the joy of the seafaring song, but schedules tight,
and turnarounds strong.

The soul of the sea, once wild, once free,
Now caged within efficiency.
Gone are the days of the tavern's cheer,
replaced by the hum of machinery near.
The sailor's life, once a journey grand,
Now a cog in a wheel, with scarce time on land.

Yet, Old Mariner, eyes a-gleam,
Hold fast your dreams,
Let your spirit beam and escape the clutches of the new machine.

Embark with tales of sea and sky,
Treasure the laughter of times gone by.
As you sail forth on this final journey wide,
Let those memories be your guide. In every wave's crest, your story be told,
A mariner's legacy, brave and bold.



Help us change lives

by leaving a legacy gift in your Will

We've been supporting seafarers and their families through some of the most significant moments in maritime history.



Scan to find out why you should support the Mission with a legacy gift.

missiontoseafarers.org/legacy

Embracing Tech to Support Seafarers

At the Mission we are proud to lead the way in embracing technology to improve the wellbeing of seafarers. Our innovative Ship Visitor and Happy at Sea apps are uniting the industry to better support our seafarers.

SHIP VISITOR APP

Our innovative Ship Visitor app helps maritime welfare teams worldwide plan, track, and report on ship visits in real-time using data from MarineTraffic, a global ship tracking service.

With support from The Seafarers' Charity, this unique tool enables welfare organisations to schedule visits, monitor activities, and share key information seamlessly across ports, countries, and vessels.

Since its launch in 2016, the app has facilitated over 270,000 ship visits and is now used by 16 maritime welfare charities. We relaunched the app in November 2024 to provide an even better experience for all those using it.

Further updates are already in the pipeline to help port welfare teams to gather more accurate data to shape support and services in the future.

HAPPY AT SEA APP

Billed as the world's first digital seafarers' centre, the Happy at Sea app empowers seafarers to take control of their welfare and safeguard their mental health.

Developed with funding from DNV, Cargill, and The Seafarers' Charity, the app is completely free to use. It contains plenty of useful advice on how to support mental health and what to do if they are concerned about themselves or a fellow crew member.

As seafarers approach a port, they can also download information and resources about their destination. Through the app they can reach out directly to our team to ask for practical support with things like transport, shopping for essentials or SIM cards, or to request a ship visit, book a pastoral counselling session, or alert our team to a welfare issue.

The app also gives seafarers an opportunity to complete the Seafarers Happiness Index survey, which helps to inform the way we develop our services and work with the industry. Once they've completed the survey, seafarers are immediately provided with tailored resources based on their responses.

As we look to the future, we want to ensure the app makes the most of the latest technology and is updated in response to seafarers feedback.

The Ship Visitor app is used by 16 welfare organisations. Since 2016 it has facilitated more than 270,000 ship visits.



Investing in **Our Staff**

Our Family Support Network staff in the Philippines and India have recently completed programme management and safeguarding training to keep their skills sharp and their impact strong.

As an organisation with welfare at its heart, we never compromise on the safety or quality of our programmes. Ensuring consistency across different cultures, however, can be a challenge. That's why we've partnered with leading trainers to help our staff develop essential skills that they can use in their local contexts.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

Five of our core staff in India and the Philippines have completed the Programme Management for Development Professionals (PMD)

“ **We never compromise on the safety”**

course. This globally recognised training is used by organisations across the development sector to help their staff shape social programmes that meet the needs of communities in diverse cultural settings.

Unlike many technical courses that can feel rigid, PMD is designed to help practitioners plan, strategise, implement, and report on programmes in different environments. Participants gain hands-on experience with tools like risk registers and Gantt charts, which they can apply to a variety of situations to ensure their work is well planned and accountable.

Rev. Stephen Thanapaul, the Mission's chaplain in Tuticorin, India,

commented, “This course helped us to shape our Family Support Network in Tuticorin. It became our guide as we started some projects for the seafarers' families and it is also a check list to examine what and how we have been doing during the project.”

SAFEGUARDING

When it comes to safeguarding, we're running two tailored programmes:

- The **educator course** is for management-level staff who oversee programme delivery, policy implementation, and manage sensitive disclosures.
- The **support staff course** focuses on volunteer and project-based staff who deliver programmes face-to-face in their communities.

Across the Philippines and India, five members of staff have successfully

completed the educator course, and six have graduated from the support staff course.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

This learning is already being put into practice in our tuition centres in India. 116 children have proudly earned The Mission to Seafarers Scouts Badge across three tuition centres, where the volunteers now have the tools and confidence to deliver programmes and protect the welfare of everyone involved.

As we look ahead to 2025, plans are already in place to extend training further in our Family Support Network programme. Thomas O'Hare, Programme Manager at The Mission to Seafarers says, 'We take pride in building up our teams and investing in volunteers to ensure the safety and the impact of our programmes.'



PAUSE FOR REFLECTION

Secretary General, the Ven. Dr Peter Rouch, reflects on the importance of human connection in an increasingly digital world.

'...your presence reminds me I am not alone in this vast and sometimes frightening world. It's a quiet reminder that I am worthy of love, even when I feel broken.' Ernest Hemingway.

I encountered similar ideas in conversation with the German theologian, Jurgen Moltmann, although in his case reflecting on the presence of God during the Second World War. In the middle of bombing so intense he could not hear himself scream, Moltmann found himself asking, 'Where are you, God?'

As I have continued to visit our work and listen to accounts of Mission life, threaded strongly through these is the importance of presence – being there.

World shipping is so huge that even an organisation like the Mission can't be in every port and country. Over 200 ports and 50 countries is what we say, but it's

actually more than that, and numbers adjust as we continue to focus resources for the greatest impact.

PHYSICAL PRESENCE IS VITAL

Our digital presence is increasingly significant. Nevertheless, our experience is that real-world, port-by-port, in-person interactions are foundational to who we are and what we do. This extends to our work with seafarers' families and those in training.

It is not just our imagining; I also hear this repeatedly from port authorities, shipping companies, agents, brokers, insurers....

As you reflect on this edition of FAN, perhaps take a moment to

“ A sign and symbol of a God who never turns away”



recognise that the stories you read are made possible by a huge and costly investment in 'being there' for seafarers.

This costly commitment to being present is pivotal to the nature of chaplaincy work. It isn't always about the eye-catching stories. Sometimes our work can be quite mundane. Yet even that assures seafarers that we are there, a dependable presence when life gets tough, a sign and symbol of a God who never turns away, a quiet reminder that they

“ Thank you so much for being present with us in this journey”

are worthy of love, even when they feel broken.

All of this would be impossible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers and the support of industry partners and of people just like you.

Thank you so much for being present with us in this journey.



To donate please visit www.missiontoseafarers.org/donate/fan

If you would like to donate to a specific region, you can select this from the dropdown menu titled – ‘Why are you Donating?’

REGIONAL CONTACTS:

Africa Regional Director: **Cedric Rautenbach** cedric@mtssa.co.za

Australia Regional Director: **Sue Dight** rd@mts.org.au

Canada Regional Director: **Judith Alltree** glutenfreepriest@gmail.com

Europe Regional Director: **Stephen Morgan** steve.morgan@missiontoseafarers.org

East Asia Regional Director: **Stephen Miller** stephen.miller@mtsmail.org

Middle East & South Asia Regional Director: **John Attenborough** john.attenborough@mtsmail.org

Oceania Regional Director: **Lance Lukin** lance.lukin@mtsmail.org

Latin America Regional Director: **Ian Hutchinson Cervantes** ian.hcervantes@missiontoseafarers.org



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