WINTER 2026 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 26.2

Mission to Seafarers Sydney

THE MASTER'S MARINER

Image: 'Lunch Above the Hull' - "*During a lunch break inside a ship repair hold in China, workers sit on a crane structure surrounded by steam and steel. A quiet human pause in the middle of heavy industry.*" Congratulations to Stratos Mastrantonis, a deck cadet from Greece, for a winner in our Life@Sea Photography competition – more on page 3

Father's Day Appeal

Brighten a Seafarers' tough day!

What do you do if there's a tragedy or a disaster back home and you're sitting in the middle of that ocean and you have no way of really connecting with them? Life at sea for Dads – or those missing their Dads - can be extra lonely during occasions so to make Father's Day a little special, we have a gift of socks for seafarers who visit us in the weeks before and after Father's Day and during ship visits. Funds raised will be used for the socks and towards welcoming touches to help our Centre feel like a home away from home – next on the wish list is fresh, new carpet! Thank you to Worklocker Leeton, for sponsoring the socks.

Please make a tax-deductible donation via our website or use the enclosed giving card.

Get a glimpse into the challenges faced by seafarer Dads:
see our video 'Daddy Come Home':
https://tinyurl.com/DaddyMtS

Two Tug Boat Experiences to win - ideal gifts for Father's Day!

Thanks to Svitzer Australia - you can help seafarers and win a gift voucher for a trip for four on a working tug boat!

The gift vouchers will be emailed in time for you to present as the ideal Father's Day gift and can be used at any mutually agreeable time this year.

Two ways to win

1) Raffle - tug trip for 4 on Sydney Harbour

Tickets $5 and more info at: https://tinyurl.com/26FDayTug

2) Auction - tug trip for 4 on Port Botany

Bidding and more info at: https://tinyurl.com/26TugAuction

Our first ever auction!

Or phone us to buy via credit card or drop into our Mission!

Both finalised at 10am on August 31 - in time for Father's Day, Sept 6.

All funds raised go towards our Father's Day Appeal

Rev Simon delivering donuts on the International Day of the Seafarer!

EVERYONE WELCOME

THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION FOR 145 YEARS!

Please join us to celebrate and give thanks for all those past and present who have helped to show God's love to seafarers for 145 years!

Saturday November 28 | 2pm

St Anne's Ryde Anglican Church 42 Church St, Ryde

RSVP: support@missiontoseafarers.org.au by 20th Nov

Our Ship Visits Have Doubled!

Images - Rev Simon on ship visits. Seafarers trust us because we turn up, ship after ship, without regard to nationality, passport, faith, gender or rank. That trust is what allows serious concerns to surface before they become crises.

All the Missions in NSW were recipients of this year's NSW Seafarers Welfare Fund Round 3 grants. Since our first Round 1 grant, the number of ships MtS Sydney has been able to visit and crews supported has doubled from 370 in 2023, before the funding, to over 800 in 2025.

"That's not just a statistic. It's thousands more human beings reached, more broken hearts touched, more moments where someone in pain was not alone. Just a few days before the grant announcement, our chaplains were at a vessel where a 350-kilo engine had slipped and pinned and appeared to crush a seafarer's leg. Our chaplains ferried him to medical care and stayed with him, reassured him that he would receive the best attention here in Australia. He was physically and mentally distressed. He was far from home in a country and system he didn't know. He sent message after message of thanks. His family expressed enormous relief, and the captain of his vessel personally thanked our chaplains for their care, not just for the injured man, but for the whole crew. This is what the fund makes possible...Yet around 800 cargo vessels still remained unvisited last year because of capacity."

Our CEO Clayton Strong at our 2026 Seafarers Welfare Event

2026 Seafarer Welfare Event - Leaders call for more Seafarer Support

MtS Sydney Joint Vice Regal Patrons ***Her Excellency the Hon Margaret Beazley*** *AC KC and Mr Dennis Wilson attended. Her Excellency especially praised the contribution of volunteers. She said that more than half of the people in NSW volunteer, giving over 2.5 billion volunteer hours. "Do you know how much this supports our economy? So as a community, first you need to be thanked and you are doing it for the people who are unseen who would be otherwise without the help that they need...the Mission is a most unique organisation which really gives the most precious service, and something about which you can all be just so proud."*

The NSW Seafarers Welfare Fund provides reliable, sustainable support for seafarers. The Fund co-founders explained the impact of the Fund half way into its 5 year term, and the need for more members.

"The truth is this, our industry depends on them [seafarers]. The question is, can they depend on us? ... Sometimes all goes well, sometimes it does not. And when it does not, the Mission is there..." said Mr Hayworth. He shared the story of a seafarer who became seriously ill and was supported by MtS volunteers while far from home. Months later, the Filipino seafarer named his newborn son "Stephen Dave" after the volunteers who had cared for him. *"You don't do that because someone gave you a lift to the hospital,"* Mr Hayward said. *"You do that because someone changed your life. That is what this fund is supporting. Not programs, not paperwork, people."*

"In the transport space, I couldn't think of any organisation that's doing work that's more important, that's more critical, and that is so focused than what this organisation [MtS] is doing...[thank you all for] providing seafarers with dignity, with respect, and with the compassion they deserve..."

NSW Minister for Transport John Graham

Event Speakers (l to r)
NSW Ports CEO Marika Calfas,
Port Authority of NSW CEO John McKenna
Port of Newcastle Glen Hayward.
see Highlights of their speeches here.

"Our annual event at NSW Parliament House helped to bring a record 230 members of the maritime community together to raise industry awareness and continue building the practical, sustainable care that seafarers need. Seafarers' health and safety is essential not only for their wellbeing but to protect our infrastructure and environment. Ports and ships work best when the people operating them are rested, supported and able to make good decisions under pressure – our support is quietly behind the scenes, but it does that... The work is trusted. The need is clear. The results are visible. The opportunity is now before us: help us reach more seafarers." - MtS Syd CEO Clayton Strong

More News and Images from the Event in our Latest news on our website.

Meet Our Corporate Champions - see the videos on our website.

Please contact Clayton if you can introduce him to a maritime corporate leader.

Seafarers can still to share their concerns and experiences at the MtS Happy@Sea App - Photos not needed! See https://app.missiontoseafarers.org/

BEST PHOTOGRAPH #2

Life@Sea Photo Comp Winners Announced on International Day of the Seafarer

Congratulations Filipino seafarer Erick Peter Boco for 'Bahid – Stain': "Seafarers brave all weather. Cold, wet and the fierce sun."

On behalf of the judging panel David Minty, of *'All About the Light Photography*, thanked and congratulated all the entrants for their "excellent range of subjects and skill" – 4 seafarers won gift vouchers for US$100.

See all the finalists on our website: https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/life-at-sea-photographic-competition/

More AGM news at: https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/stats-stories-gratitude-and-camaraderie-at-agm/

2026 AGM

Gratitude, Commeraderie & Stats

In 2025, MtS Sydney identified 359 justice, safety and conditions concerns, including issues such as underpayment, unsafe conditions and welfare concerns. More support means more ship visits, more shore leave, more transport, more welfare conversations, and more seafarers reached before a problem becomes a crisis. The need is there and be confident, the dollars do make a difference.

"Thank you to everyone who has supported our work financially or as volunteers. Each donation helps to keep practical care available: transport, communication, chaplaincy, hospitality, emergency support and the human presence seafarers need when they are far from home. Beanies and gifts can open the door to potentially life-saving conversations.

It means sometimes, we happen to be there during life's hardest moments - when grief strikes after the loss of a loved one, or when the ache of missing a child's birth or a family celebration becomes overwhelming. In those moments, our Chaplains step beside them, they listen, and show that someone cares. I was deeply moved recently when one seafarer shook my hand and simply said: "You care — and I am so grateful." - Clayton"

Although ships are now larger, crews are smaller and port turnarounds are faster, the human need for compassion and connection remains unchanged said Rev Tay at the AGM as he led us to reaffirm our commitment to standing beside seafarers whenever they need practical help, a listening ear or simply a caring presence.

Welfare Video Gift for Global Network

Thank you to our event sponsors

To highlight the challenges some seafarers faced, this year we produced a documentary style short video of two seafarers we have helped to escape from slavery-like conditions. Thanks to our event sponsors, we have also been able to re-edit it for use by our global network to also bless them with this valuable resource. See the video on our YouTube channel - @MissionToSeafarersSydney

Mr Dunn (Above on the right)
(Below) Ms Calfas at our Seafarers Welfare event

Maritime AMs

Congratulations to our Chair Robert Dunn on being appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours List for his "significant service to international development, to the not-for-profit sector, and to the community."

Since joining us as Chair in 2023, Robert has led with skill, care and commitment to showing Christ's love to all through caring service. Our team greatly appreciates the way he takes an interest in the everyday work of the Mission and encourages and provides guidance and practical assistance those serving seafarers on the frontline. Thank you Robert for your leadership, integrity and generous heart for others.

Congratulations to NSW Ports CEO, Marika Calfas, who was also appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to the transport and shipping industry, to logistics, and to infrastructure. Pictured here speaking at our 2026 Seafarers Welfare Event.

Thank you to Graham Lightfoot AM and the knitters of Wahroonga Anglican for another faithful beanie delivery - Nadja had fun helping these Indian seafarers choose the best one for our wintery weather!

Thank you for everyone who supported our Easter Appeal to meet unexpected rising fuel costs for our buses which transport about 10,000 seafarers a year – we raised enough for over 8 weeks of fuel for the buses - including over $1600 from our Engage Tug Boat raffle! The winner, Philip Wyndham from near Newcastle, was thrilled!

'Flying Angel' Leads Sea Sunday Service

Our Rev Retchie only discovered this inspiring staging after he led a Sea Sunday Service in Filipino at St Marks in Granville. Thank you also to St Anne's Ryde for their special Sea Sunday services welcoming Rev Tay as guest speaker and other special maritime industry guests.

We greatly appreciate all the Sydney churches who joined congregations around the globe on Sea Sunday July 12, to pray for Seafarers and their distant families, and for the volunteers and Chaplains ministering in ports across the globe.

Please pray with Rev Tay - for Seafarers impacted by War

The IMO has confirmed 17 seafarer deaths around the Strait of Hormuz, with thousands more affected or awaiting safe passage and some being held captive following piracy attacks. Merchant vessels in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea have also been struck in the last week amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. In places marked by tension, conflict, and uncertainty, Lord God be their Shield and their Hope. Calm their fears, protect their crews, and open pathways for safe passage. Grant wisdom to leaders and nations, that fragile peace may prevail.

We also continue to listen and pray with Seafarers worried about their families in Myanmar trapped in a civil war. We pray for all those preparing to return to troubled homelands and those they have left behind.

Please pray for Seafarers in hospitals far from home, especially for God's strength, comfort, and provision for a Third Officer whose condition remains critical in a Sydney hospital due to a hemorrhagic stroke. His wife has had to leave their young children with family in the Philippines to be with her husband. We continue to seek God's healing hand and mercy upon him.

Pray for the Pakistani crew awaiting repairs in Sydney dry dock who are not granted shore leave. Thank you, that after our advocacy, the Captain kindly allowed their local relatives and friends to visit them onboard and allowed us to board to provide comfort including beanies, scarves, and SIM cards to assist them during their stay.

Legacy - Remember MtS in IAC Week

Include a Charity (IAC) week is held every September all over Australia to remind people of the importance of Including a charitable gift in will planning. Remembering our Mission in your will is a great way to have a meaningful impact on seafarers' welfare even after you've gone. You can get started today with a free online will from our partner EveryWill – still secure, easy-to-use and provided by Gathered Here, but with a new name. To create a free will go to: www.everywill.com.au or see our website if you prefer to use a solicitor to help leave your legacy: https://missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au/gifts-in-wills-leave-a-legacy/

Our Partners

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