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SOS to Set Aside More Than S\$1.5million to Help in Crew Change During COVID-19

The Seacare Hotel is one of the two facilities designated by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore to accommodate crew who are unable to transfer directly to his/her vessel or flight and require a temporary rest area of up to 48 hours. The hotel will be able to take in such crew members from 2 July 2020.

The 101-room hotel is owned by Seacare Co-operative Limited (Seacare), a co-operative founded by the Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS). It is the first hotel in Singapore that is owned by a co-operative.

The Seacare Hotel meets the stringent requirements to ensure safe accommodation criteria is met for the seafarers and the hotel staff. Located at Chin Swee Road as an annexe of the Seacare Building, the hotel was officially opened on 30 January 2013.

To support safe crew changes and the shipping companies during the COVID-19 pandemic, SOS will be setting aside more than S\$1.5million to help defray the cost of accommodation and meals for seafarers staying at the Seacare Hotel.

Shipping companies participating in the Seacare Sailors' Home Scheme (SSS)* can utilise the SSS e-vouchers to redeem full board accommodation at the Seacare Hotel. SOS will double the e-voucher entitlements of each qualified shipping company during this period.

For shipping companies that do not have collective bargaining agreements with SOS, SOS will sponsor three meals daily for their crew housed at the Seacare Hotel.

Mr Kam Soon Huat, SOS President, said: "Seacare, as a co-operative set up by a seafarers' union, knows what it takes to look after the welfare of seafarers. Seacare Hotel is a natural choice because the maritime industry knows that the hotel is for seafarers. We want to show our appreciation to seafarers who are

the essential frontline workers and encourage the shipping companies during these challenging times. The enhancement of the Seacare Sailors Home Scheme is our way of saying that we are in this together.”

As of 17 June 2020, there are more than 100 shipping companies with valid SOS Collective Bargaining Agreements and the majority of them participate in the Seacare Sailors’ Home Scheme.

“As many seafarers serving onboard vessels have worked several months beyond their contracts, we strongly encourage shipping companies to expedite crew changes and to take this opportunity to utilise the SSS e-vouchers at the Seacare Hotel to accommodate the seafarers,” Mr Kam urged.

** SSS is a scheme that provides accommodation and services for the benefit of SOS members, international seafarers and the shipping community. For qualified shipping companies, the SSS e-vouchers can be utilised to redeem for hotel accommodation at The Seacare Hotel, Staff Gathering Packages at Club@52 and Seminar Packages at the Maritime Hall.*

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The 16 storey-101 room Seacare Hotel, is located at the annexe of the Seacare Building.

About Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS)

The Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) is a global maritime trade union commissioned by the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) to promote good industrial relations between seafarers and their employers (shipping companies). In addition to helping seamen receive their just reward for their hard work, it also assists members in the retraining and upgrading of their skills in the competitive employment market. Since 1971, SOS has been actively representing seafarers through the Collective Bargaining Agreements with the shipping companies that employ them. It is affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the Nautilus Federation.

About Seacare Co-operative Limited (Seacare)

Seacare Co-operative Limited (Seacare) was formed in 1994 by the Singapore Organisation of Seamen. The founding mission is "to help and benefit Singapore seamen and their families through more work opportunities and appropriate investment projects". From the humble beginnings, Seacare now employs more than 1,100 staff and has global footprint in Singapore, Malaysia, China and the United Kingdom. Seacare has 32 subsidiaries and associate companies under its name.

Today, Seacare owned and co-owned 13 hotels in Singapore, Malaysia and the United Kingdom, with a total number of close to 1,000 rooms. The flagship hotel, the 16 storey-101 room Seacare Hotel, is located at the annexe of the Seacare Building.

The Seacare Building, a nine-storey building with a total floor area of 27,491 square feet at 52 Chin Swee Road, serves as the headquarters of Seacare and SOS, its Founder Member.

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