



The Master's Mariner

25th June, 2017.

What Do These Items Have in Common?



All of these products, and many more are brought in by sea. Australia

has relied upon seafarers for our prosperity ever since 1788. Over 98% of trade (items which every Australian relies on), is transported by ships. Industry spends millions reducing the vessels' port time, resulting in seafarer welfare being jeopardised, increasing fatigue and stress related accidents and illnesses. Seafarers often describe their vessels as "floating prisons". The rate of suicide among seafarers is 4 times that of the general population. However, despite all of this, seafarers are often forgotten about by all of us who rely upon them. Seafarers rely on MTS to meet their physical, emotional and spiritual needs by providing essential services to them.

The Mission's First 6 months in 2017

The Mission to Seafarers has seen many changes in the first 6 months of 2017. In January, our Senior Chaplain took extended leave which included his long service leave and accumulated annual leave. Since then he has handed in his resignation to take effect in the middle of July at the end of his leave. During this time our CFO, Gary King has been at the helm in the position of acting CEO, which has kept him very busy and presented him and the mission with many new challenges. He has been very ably assisted by the rest of the mission staff and the directors. We have welcomed three new staff members this year, as two of our chaplains moved on. Davo was offered a position as Senior Minister to 3 congregations in the Newcastle diocese, a position which he had wanted and prayed about for a long time, while Tony was offered more time as a guard at Silverwater prison whilst he awaits a prison chaplains' role there. They are both missed.

However, meet our new staff – First to join our ranks was Troy, who is driving for us every Saturday. He is doing a Diploma at SMBC and has previously worked at the missions in Dampier and Port Headland. Troy has a real heart for the seafarers, is very enthusiastic and has slotted in to his role seamlessly.

Then we welcomed Danny, a Christian refugee from Iran. Danny has proved to be a perfect fit for the mission, with a real understanding for the plight of those less fortunate than ourselves. He always has a smile on his face and happy to turn his hand to any job that he notices needs doing. Danny is a full-time driver for us, which allows our chaplains to spend more time ministering to the seafarers, both on board the vessels, in our mission centre, in hospitals and wherever needed.

Finally, Jim joined us as a chaplain 4 days a week. Jim is a very welcome addition and has also fitted in very well being a real team

player, very friendly, a calming influence and has a heart for ministry among the seafaring community. Jim comes from a Uniting Church background and has also done a Bachelor of Theology at Moore College, during which time and for 12 years was working at the Newtown Mission. He was also involved in a prison ministry at Long Bay Jail. He also has much needed computer skills which is wonderful.

An Urgent Request for a Chaplain to visit Gas Shuriken – A report from Jack

“On Thursday evening the 20th April 2017, I received a phone call from the two agents, representing both Inchape and Origin Energy, in reference to the gas tanker, Gas Shuriken. I was told that sadly, one of the crew had died whilst on board the vessel at Brisbane. Unfortunately, due to the movements of the ship, no chaplain was able to visit the vessel at the time, and so we were asked if we could make a visit to the crew. At 11a.m. on Friday 21st April, I visited the crew on board the Gas Shuriken. I made myself available to any of the crew members that wanted to talk about the death of their fellow- seafarer. I then conducted a communion service and gave an address on the hope we have in Jesus Christ when we put our trust in Him. The Captain then asked me to pray in different locations on the ship, where the seafarer had been. I prayed in his cabin, in the shower where he collapsed and in the hallway where they had attempted to revive him. From a welfare and pastoral care perspective it was well received by all the crew. The seafarers were most thankful that we had come on board, at such short notice, and comforted them with a communion service and the word of God. This assisted them in coming to terms with what had happened and in achieving some closure and peace surrounding the tragedy that had occurred on their vessel.”

This is just one example, of many instances, where our chaplains are ministering to seafarers and helping them deal with the traumas they face from a spiritual, emotional and welfare perspective.

On Sunday 25th June 2017, we are holding an open day for The Day of the Seafarer which is held internationally. As we recognise the importance of seafarers and our reliance on them we hope to be able to raise community and business awareness of the importance of the work that the Mission to Seafarers carries out on a daily basis.

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