



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Singapore, 2 December 2024 | **For Immediate Release**

### **Staying Safe at Sea during the Monsoon Season**

During this current Northeast monsoon which will continue until March 2025, stronger winds, choppy sea conditions, moderate to heavy rain, as well as an increased risk of lightning can be expected. The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) urges members of the public to exercise care and remain vigilant at sea. Industry stakeholders and port users are reminded to implement the necessary safety measures during their operations to safeguard lives and property.

2. Those travelling on ferries and other vessels are advised to adopt basic safety practices to prevent accidents. These include maintaining three-point contact using handrails when embarking and disembarking between vessels and landing steps, staying seated when onboard, securing their belongings to avoid tripping hazards, and familiarising themselves with the storage locations of life jackets in case of emergencies.

3. Individuals engaging in activities such as canoeing, kayaking, water skiing, sailing, and windsurfing must wear life jackets. Before heading out to sea, they should check weather forecasts and tidal conditions, conduct pre-activity checks, observe relevant safety guidelines, know the emergency protocols, be equipped with the correct safety equipment and act responsibly for their safety and the well-being of others under their care. The public is reminded to avoid activities during inclement weather; operators have the right to refuse service if they assess users pose a safety risk to themselves or others, or if weather conditions are deemed to be unfavourable. Operators must also ensure that their equipment and craft are in good condition and ensure customers wear life jackets before commencing activities.

4. The Code of Practice for Inland and Open Water Sporting Activities, launched by Sport Singapore as a new Singapore Standard in January this year (<https://go.gov.sg/ss701>) offers valuable safety guidelines for recreational, competitive,

and educational activities planned by public and organised groups in inland and open waters.

5. MPA also reminds port users, including shipowners, operators, masters and crew, to ensure that vessels and cargoes are properly secured at sea. Firefighting and life-saving appliances on board ships must be properly maintained and in working condition, in compliance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations and applicable Singapore Port regulations. Masters and crew must be familiar with the safety and emergency procedures, especially when embarking and disembarking passengers during adverse weather conditions. Vessels should maintain safe speeds, observe the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS), and ensure proper mooring arrangements when alongside. At anchorage, crew members should maintain vigilance, monitor weather conditions, ensure the readiness of main engines for immediate manoeuvring, and don appropriate life jackets when boarding or leaving the vessel.

6. To enhance vigilance during this monsoon season, MPA inspectors will conduct additional checks on ferries, harbour craft, and pleasure craft. These inspections will assess the general condition of the vessels, the embarking and disembarking process, the readiness of firefighting and life-saving equipment on board, and the operators' familiarity with emergency procedures.

7. Captain Chong Jia Chyuan, Port Master of MPA, said, "During this monsoon season, all port users should exercise greater care and vigilance. This will go a long way to ensure safety for all."

8. As part of efforts to improve maritime safety and with the support of the pleasure craft community and marina managers, MPA launched the Safer Seas Volunteer Programme during Singapore Safety@Sea Week in August 2024. Under this initiative, , volunteers whose craft are near the incident site can assist in search and report operations.

9. Mr Ishak Ismail, Chairman of the National Maritime Safety at Sea Council, said, "Safety at sea is a shared responsibility requiring partnership between government, industry and the community to foster a culture of vigilance and preparedness. It is also about personal responsibility. I encourage those engaging in recreational activities at seas to stay informed, prepare for emergencies, and understand their limits when engaging in these activities."

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## **About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)**

MPA was established on 2 February 1996 with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre, 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, maritime and port regulator and planner, international maritime centre champion, national maritime representative and a champion of digitalisation and decarbonisation efforts at regional and international fora such as at the International Maritime Organization. MPA partners industry, research community and other agencies to enhance safety, security and environmental protection in our waters, facilitate maritime and port operations and growth, expand the cluster of maritime ancillary services, and develops maritime digitalisation and decarbonisation policies and plans, R&D and manpower development. MPA is responsible for the overall development and growth of the maritime domain and Port of Singapore. In 2023, Singapore's annual vessel arrival tonnage crossed 3 billion Gross Tonnage and remains the world's busiest transshipment hub, with a total container throughput of 39.0 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs).

For more information, please visit [www.mpa.gov.sg/](http://www.mpa.gov.sg/)

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