

## Marine Department holds seminar to promote navigational safety (with photos)

The Marine Department (MD) held the Navigational Safety Seminar 2019 today (January 16) to enhance the awareness of navigational safety among members of the industry. The Deputy Director of Marine, Mr Wong Sai-fat, reminded coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels that they have the responsibility to uphold safety at sea and fully comply with the marine legislation.

Mr Wong said that coxswains and crew members should take appropriate and adequate safety precautions and prepare contingency arrangements before setting sail. Vessels should have sufficient life-saving and fire-fighting equipment. Coxswains and crew members should ensure that vessels, engines and equipment are maintained in conditions that are suitable for navigation. In addition, they should be aware of the contact numbers of the port traffic control unit and units that provide emergency services, and be fully aware of the latest weather conditions and related MD Notices.

On another front, to avoid accidents caused by fatigue, owners and operators of all local vessels must ensure that the duty rosters of crew members, including coxswains, have sufficient rest periods to avoid fatigue at work.

Coxswains and crew members should strengthen lookout, sail at safe speed and comply with regulations for preventing collisions at sea, during navigation in restricted visibility. As a number of vessels were damaged last year due to Super Typhoon Mangkhut, coxswains and crew members were reminded to adopt appropriate safety enhancement measures before and during the passage of tropical cyclones.

Meanwhile, a new mobile application, "eSeaGo", has been launched to display chart information on Hong Kong waters free of charge. Users can download the chart information provided by the Hydrographic Office of the MD via the app. With the mobile device's positioning function, "eSeaGo" will assist in position fixing in Hong Kong waters.

The MD organises regular education seminars and publicity campaigns to step up marine safety promotion. Over the past three years, the MD has launched publicity at three marine ferry terminals to further promote the message that passengers on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macao should have their seat belts fastened. Similar publicity will be conducted again this year.

Today's annual seminar was attended by about 200 representatives from the shipping industries, coxswains and operators of local vessels, and representatives of marine works projects. The issues discussed covered the

application of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at sea and the safe navigation in restricted visibility, miscellaneous permits, mobile application "eSeaGo", measures to enhance the safety of local vessels during the passage of tropical cyclones, and analysis of marine accidents and their implications. Leaflets on navigational safety were also distributed at the seminar.

