

# Day of the Seafarer encourages learners to enter oceans economy

At the 7th Day of the Seafarer (DotS), more than 1,000 high school learners from the rural town of Bizana in the Eastern Cape were empowered with information on how they can enter the maritime economy.

South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) in partnership with other transport stakeholders including the Department of Transport (DoT), Ethekweni Maritime Cluster (EMC), South African International Maritime institute (SAIMI), Road Accident Fund (RAF), Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) set up a special exhibition on the day to expose the learners to the various career opportunities available in the maritime industry and the broader transportation industry.



Sobantu Tilayi

The exhibition was followed by a DotS main event which was characterised by a series of moving lectures which sought to present the maritime industry as a viable career option to the learners.

In his address, Sobantu Tilayi, SAMSA chief operating officer, inspired the learners to consider joining the more than 1.5 million community of seafarers worldwide.

“Life as we know it depends on shipping. At the core of the formation of civilisation, there has always been a need for transportation. This is an important career field for you to consider as the future generation of professionals.

“Seafarers are responsible for transporting about 90% of commodities - such as food items, clothing, cars - which we use in our everyday lives. Seafarers are a pivotal asset in the global trade economy,” continued Tilayi.

## **Benefits could be lucrative**

Tilayi added that benefits of seafaring could be lucrative: “Seafarers don’t pay tax. Not only do they get to perform the admirable task of transporting important cargo which contributes in our daily living, they also get paid in dollars.”

At a press conference which followed the main event, Tilayi assured the media that current maritime jobs were sustained in the foreseeable future as the international maritime community, persuaded by the ‘African bloc’, recognised risks such as increased unemployment and piracy if they allowed the commercialisation of unmanned ships solely controlled by technology or robots and without any seafarers on board.

Clement Manyungwana, acting deputy director general of the DoT said: “Today, our aim is to make some contributions that can have an impact on the community here in Mbizana and outlying areas. We would really like to make an impact on the livelihoods of young people through educational initiatives, maritime heritage, skills development and training opportunities that will ultimately make an impact in your lives.”

“I invite you to go around the exhibition stalls here today to have a better understanding what the sea – the blue oceans economy stands to offer you,” asserted Manyungwana.

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