



In this feature we take a close up look at a NI branch. If you'd like your branch to be featured in this section email editor@nautinst.org

What keeps the Hong Kong SAR branch ticking?

Tell me a bit about your branch – when was it formed, how many members do you have?

The branch was formed officially in 1985, and generally has around 100 members. This figure has been fairly stable, but now that Hong Kong is training cadets again, we hope to see a gradual increase in our membership. We also expect to see an increase in both seagoing and female members.

How often does your branch meet?

Meetings tend to be organised whenever an interesting speaker is going to be in town, or whenever an interesting topic presents itself. We aim for a meeting every six weeks. All our events are free, and open to anyone who is interested, and we maintain a list of friends of the branch who regularly attend without necessarily being members. We normally expect between 50 and 60 people at our presentations

Food and drink are normally provided free of charge, and paid for either through sponsorship or from branch funds. These funds are replenished every two years when we organise a major full-day seminar on a topic of interest to the wider maritime community. This raises enough money to fund the branch, and also permits us to make donations to the three charities we support.

What sort of activities do you organise? Are there any topics of particular interest to your members?

Most of our events are presentations on a topic



Delegates at a Hong Kong Branch seminar on Competencies of a Future Mariner

of interest. The speaker is given one hour to present and answer questions, then we adjourn for refreshments.

Tales of maritime disaster are always popular, so an insider's account of the *Costa Concordia* wreck and recovery guaranteed us a full house, but it is often the more practical subjects which gain the biggest audience. A recent talk on the maintenance of wires and the consequences of improper maintenance was one of our most popular presentations ever, with a member of the audience even suggesting that our speaker should write a book on the subject. Older members, as always, shook their heads

in dismay and pointed out that 'once upon a time' seafarers were taught these things and would not have needed to be told how to maintain a wire.

Saturday morning visits are also popular, and we try to arrange occasional visits to the MRCC, Vessel Traffic Centre, Marine Police and the like. Perhaps the best-attended are trips to local lighthouses, some of which are in truly spectacular locations.

What kind of event do you find most successful?

Our AGM is always a great success, mainly because we incorporate a wine tasting session. The wine supplier returns every year, so he must benefit as well!

How do you engage with your local maritime community?

Our members come from a wide cross-section of the maritime community, so we have excellent links to government, ship managers and owners, surveying companies and maritime lawyers, among others. Several committee members are also appointed to government bodies such as the Pilotage Advisory Committee. Other members are active in voluntary work such as promoting maritime careers in local schools, and preparing local cadets for job interviews. We do our best to maintain a high profile, and the reputation of the NI in Hong Kong remains very good.

Whether this is because of, or in spite of the wine tasting, we have never been sure...

Branch fact file



Address:

The Nautical Institute Hong Kong Branch,
c/o Mariners' Club, 2 Container Port Road,
Kwai Chung N.T. Hong Kong S.A.R. P.R. China

Email: secretary@nautinsthk.com

Web: www.nautinsthk.com

Founded: 1985

Members: 100

Chairman: Paul Walton AFNI

Vice-chairman: Amit Bhargava AFNI

Secretary: Aalok Sharma AFNI

Upcoming events:

The Hong Kong branch will be hosting The Nautical Institute AGM and Technical Seminar in mid-2019. Keep an eye on *Seaways* for more information on dates and programme!