

Report on the TMD's Voluntary Observing Ships' (VOS) Scheme

The Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) has discussed and coordinated with the Marine Department about inviting the locally-registered ocean liners under its responsibility to become the members of the VOS Scheme and perform voluntary ships' weather observations. In order to respond the TMD's request, the Marine Department has forwarded such invitations to the owners of ocean liners.

In the past, the TMD's marine meteorological officers had gained an experience to perform the ship's weather observation on a research ship in order to obtain additional data for the sea areas where no weather stations are available. In addition, the TMD's marine meteorological officers had an opportunity to visit Hong Kong Observatory during 8th – 11th April, 2008 in order to observe its marine meteorological activities, particularly for the ship checking visits. The TMD's marine meteorological officers learnt from the meteorological officers of the institute about the ship registration (including how to fill the enrolment forms to join the VOS Scheme) and checking visits procedures which has not been put into practice in Thailand before.

Currently, the enrolment to become the members of the VOS Scheme has just begun in Thailand. Since the TMD has been asked about the weather observation procedure on board from the owners of ocean liners, it has planned to provide a training course on "Ships' Weather Observation" for those who have become the members of the VOS Scheme later on.

From what mentioned above, it can be clearly seen that the VOS Scheme in Thailand must be based on the close cooperation between 2 governmental units: the TMD (responsible on observing; analyzing; and forecasting the weather) and the Marine Department (in charge of the ships registration and control nationwide).