



# Why Domestic Ferry Safety is Improving in Asia

A Presentation by Dr Neil Baird

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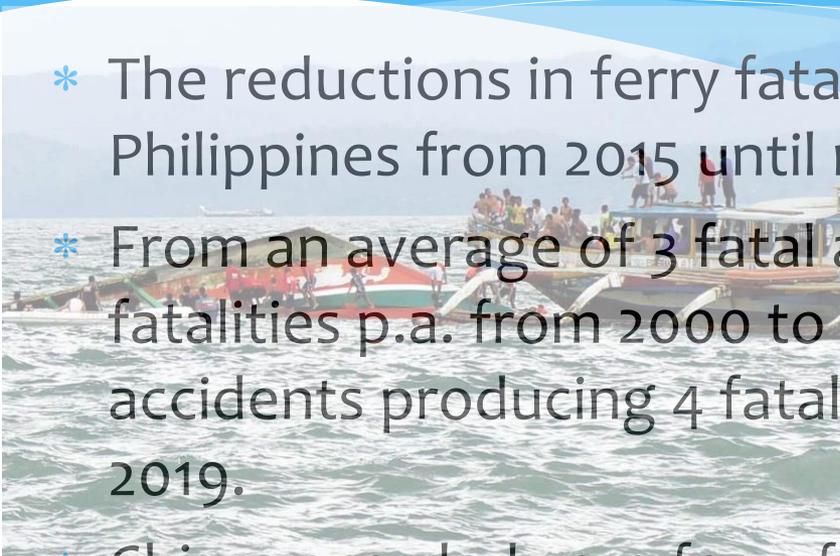
# Latest data shows significant decline in domestic ferry deaths in Asia

- \* The years 2016 to 2019 have shown a dramatic improvement in domestic ferry safety in significant parts of Asia.
- \* This followed a similar reduction in ferry fatalities in Northern Europe from 1995 to 2000 and since then in Southern Europe.
- \* Worldwide, ferry fatalities have fallen from at least 2,000 per annum to about 1,500 from 2015 to 2019.
- \* **We still have a long way to go but this is a very encouraging start.**



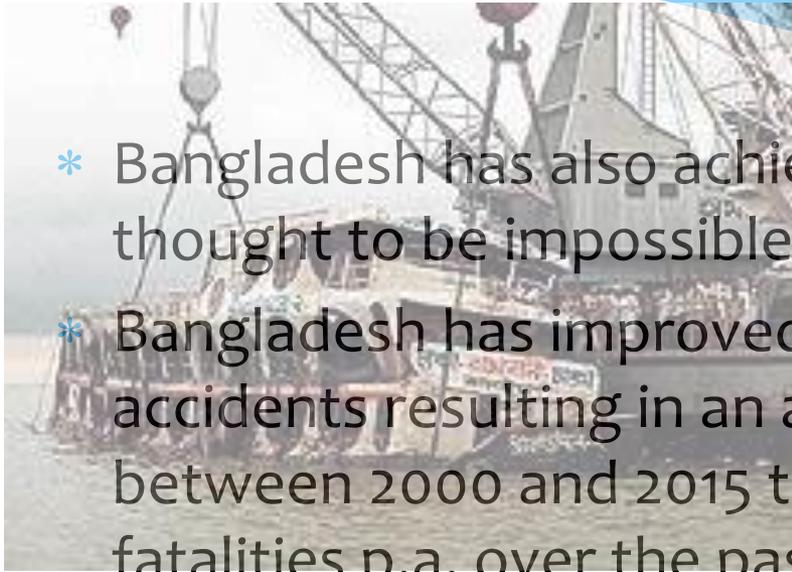
# China and the Philippines have improved very impressively

- \* The reductions in ferry fatalities in China and the Philippines from 2015 until now have been impressive.
- \* From an average of 3 fatal accidents producing 90 fatalities p.a. from 2000 to 2015, China fell to 0.25 accidents producing 4 fatalities p.a. from 2016 to 2019.
- \* China recorded zero ferry fatalities from 2017 to 2019.
- \* Over the same period, the Philippines reduced from an average of 3 accidents and 168 fatalities p.a. to 2.5 accidents and 35 fatalities p.a.
- \* **THIS IS REMARKABLE!**



# Bangladesh has also done well

- \* Bangladesh has also achieved what was widely thought to be impossible not long ago.
- \* Bangladesh has improved from an average of 4 accidents resulting in an average of 383 fatalities p.a. between 2000 and 2015 to 5 accidents resulting in 53 fatalities p.a. over the past 4 years.
- \* Bangladesh recorded zero fatal accidents in 2019.
- \* **PRETTY GOOD!**



# Other countries have not performed so well

- \* Regrettably, other countries have not performed so well.
- \* Indeed, some countries are actually suffering more ferry fatalities than previously.
- \* Part of their problem is that, with the wide adoption of the Internet, more news comes out of such places than before.
- \* That better reveals the true extent of their problems.
- \* **Those countries could learn a lot from China and the Philippines!!**



# There have, for example, been more tourist boat accidents

- \* The four years from 2016 to 2019 have seen a significant increase in the numbers of fatalities arising from accidents involving tourist boats.
- \* Several countries have recorded increasing numbers of both accidents and fatalities. These have mainly involved tourist boats.
- \* **This cannot be good for their tourist industries.**



# China and the Philippines lead the way

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- \* The disastrous sinkings of the *Eastern Star* in China in 2015 and the *Princess of the Stars* in the Philippines in 2008 seem to have awakened the governments of those countries to their serious ferry safety problems.
  - \* Both governments then gained the **WILL** to seriously, practically and very rigorously tackle those problems.
  - \* A combination of sensible regulation and rigorous enforcement has led to dramatic improvements.
  - \* **Real safety improvement is achievable.**

# Simple, sensible reforms are the key

- \* Last year's two FerrySafe missions to the Philippines, supported by INTERFERRY and the Lloyd's Register Foundation discovered how and why the Philippines reforms have been so successful.
- \* Participation by FerrySafe in the 2017, 2018 and 2019 ARF Workshops in Guangzhou, organised by the China Maritime Safety Administration, revealed more.
- \* Essentially, good ferry safety is ensured by **WILLING** governments regulating sensibly and enforcing rigorously.
- \* **Simple, sensible reforms are the key.**

# Philippines Ferry Safety Improvements

- \* Government appreciation of the problem and development of the **WILL** to reform.
- \* MARINA mandated and PCG enforced “no sail” policy.
- \* Insurers became involved with ensuring higher standards of vessels, their maintenance and operation.
- \* Rigorous PCG and port enforcement of loading controls.
- \* Phasing out of wooden vessels.
- \* Banning imports of unsafe vessels.
- \* Compulsory fitting of approved life saving equipment.
- \* **All simple and very effective changes.**

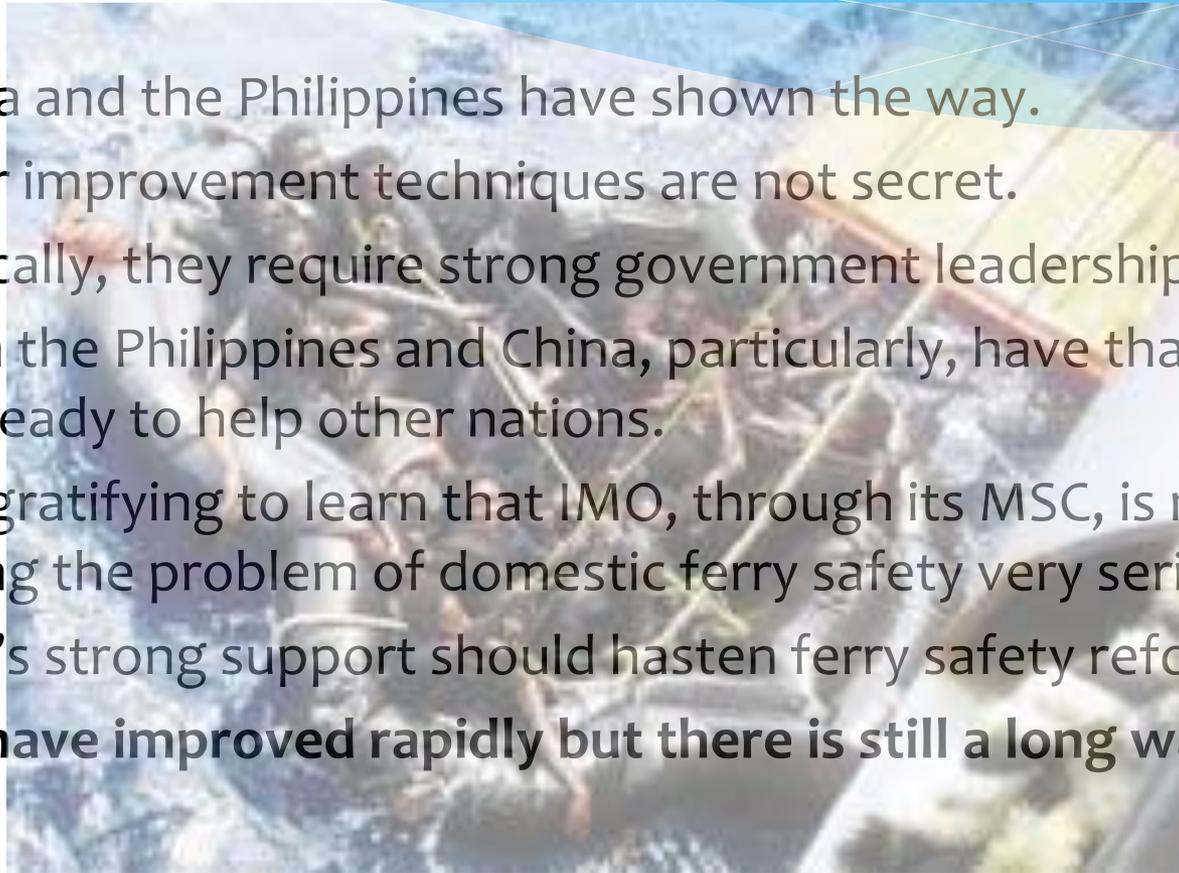


# Government **WILL** to reform is imperative

- \* FerrySafe's work in China and the Philippines and our analysis of the Bangladesh data make it very clear that reform will not occur without a very strong national government **WILL** to achieve it.
- \* Where that government **WILL** is absent, little will be achieved by the local ferry industry or its insurers.
- \* Even the good example of safe, high quality local ferry operators is insufficient to achieve reform of the wider local industry. Strong government leadership is imperative.
- \* **National government WILL to reform is imperative.**

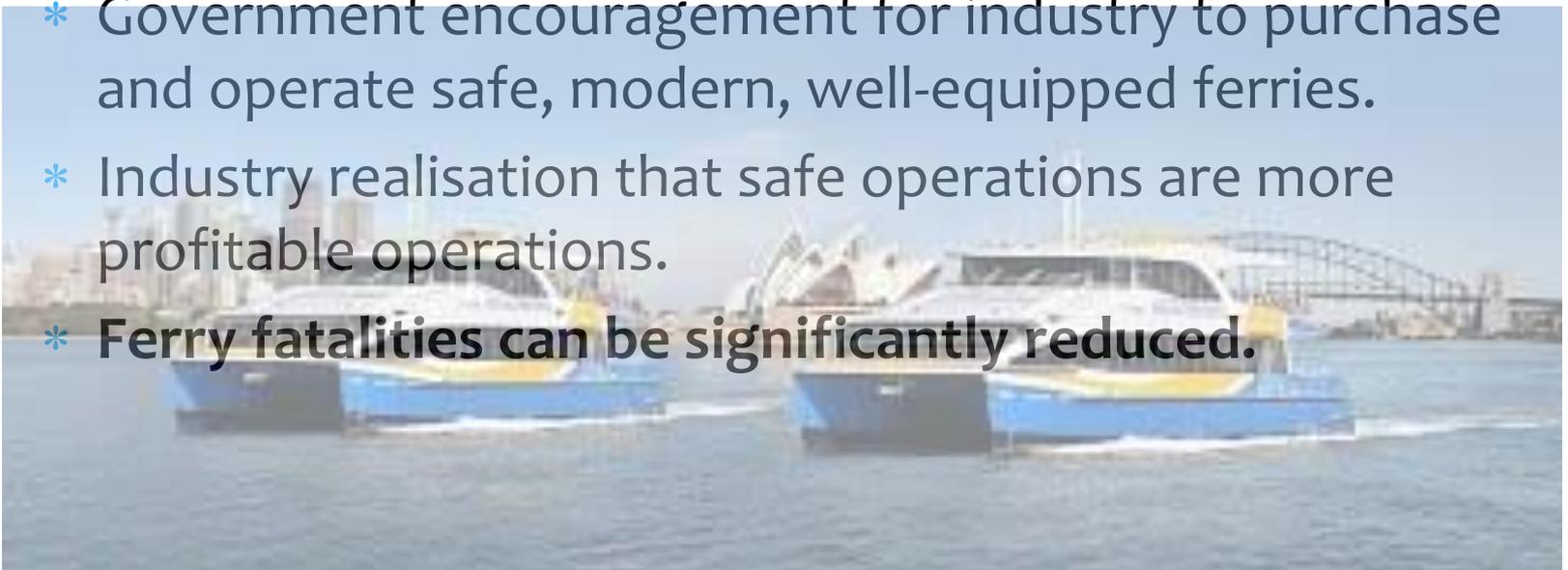
# Other Asia Pacific nations can readily follow China and the Philippines

- \* China and the Philippines have shown the way.
- \* Their improvement techniques are not secret.
- \* Basically, they require strong government leadership.
- \* Both the Philippines and China, particularly, have that and are ready to help other nations.
- \* It is gratifying to learn that IMO, through its MSC, is now taking the problem of domestic ferry safety very seriously.
- \* IMO's strong support should hasten ferry safety reforms.
- \* **We have improved rapidly but there is still a long way to go.**



# The ferry fatality problem is curable

- \* The ingredients of good ferry safety are obvious:-
- \* Government **WILL** to encourage good behaviour.
- \* Industry realisation that safe ferries are profitable.
- \* Government encouragement for industry to purchase and operate safe, modern, well-equipped ferries.
- \* Industry realisation that safe operations are more profitable operations.
- \* **Ferry fatalities can be significantly reduced.**



# Thank You

- \* Should you require further information or access to the *Baird Maritime Passenger Vessel Accident database*, please contact me:
- \* Dr Neil Baird, FerrySafe
- \* [neilrosebaird@gmail.com](mailto:neilrosebaird@gmail.com)
- \* All data presented above has been drawn from the lists of all “known” fatal ferry accidents contained in the *BMPVA database*. While it is readily recognised that it is incomplete, there is no better source.
- \* **Let’s follow the lead of China and the Philippines.**