

MPA to work with A*Star on maritime tech projects

5-year deal to focus on areas such as next-gen communications and robots

By **JACQUELINE WOO**

AN AGREEMENT signed yesterday aims to boost Singapore's maritime technologies in areas such as communications and robots.

The five-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*Star) will centre on collaboration in research and development.

It will allow the MPA to tap all research institutes under A*Star's Science and Engineering Research Council to promote projects in maritime technology across the Government, academia and industry.

One focus will be on developing next-generation maritime

communications technologies, which include satellite, terrestrial and wireless systems, particularly what is called TV White Spaces technology. This refers to a wireless spectrum with a much farther range than traditional Wi-Fi that could be crucial in improving productivity and safety.

Research into new capabilities

that could boost efficiency in the industry, such as marine-grade robots and autonomous vehicles, will also be undertaken.

Environment technology – that is, applied research into marine sustainability, renewable energy and the use of emission reduction technology in ports – will be explored too, as will modelling, simulation and visualisation technologies.

MPA chief executive Andrew Tan noted at the signing ceremony at the inaugural Singapore Maritime Technology Conference that

the MOU's focus on the latest communications systems and technology will "enhance the competitive edge of our port and its operations, given the increasingly complex demands and challenges".

A*Star managing director Raj Thampuran said that the agreement will bring the partnership between both organisations to "a new level" by delivering even more ideas and innovative technologies to the maritime and offshore industry.

The MPA has entered into various collaborations with A*Star research institutes over the past decade to work on projects involving infocomm technology and environmental sustainability, among others.

The conference at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre was held in conjunction with the Singapore Maritime Week, which ended yesterday.

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