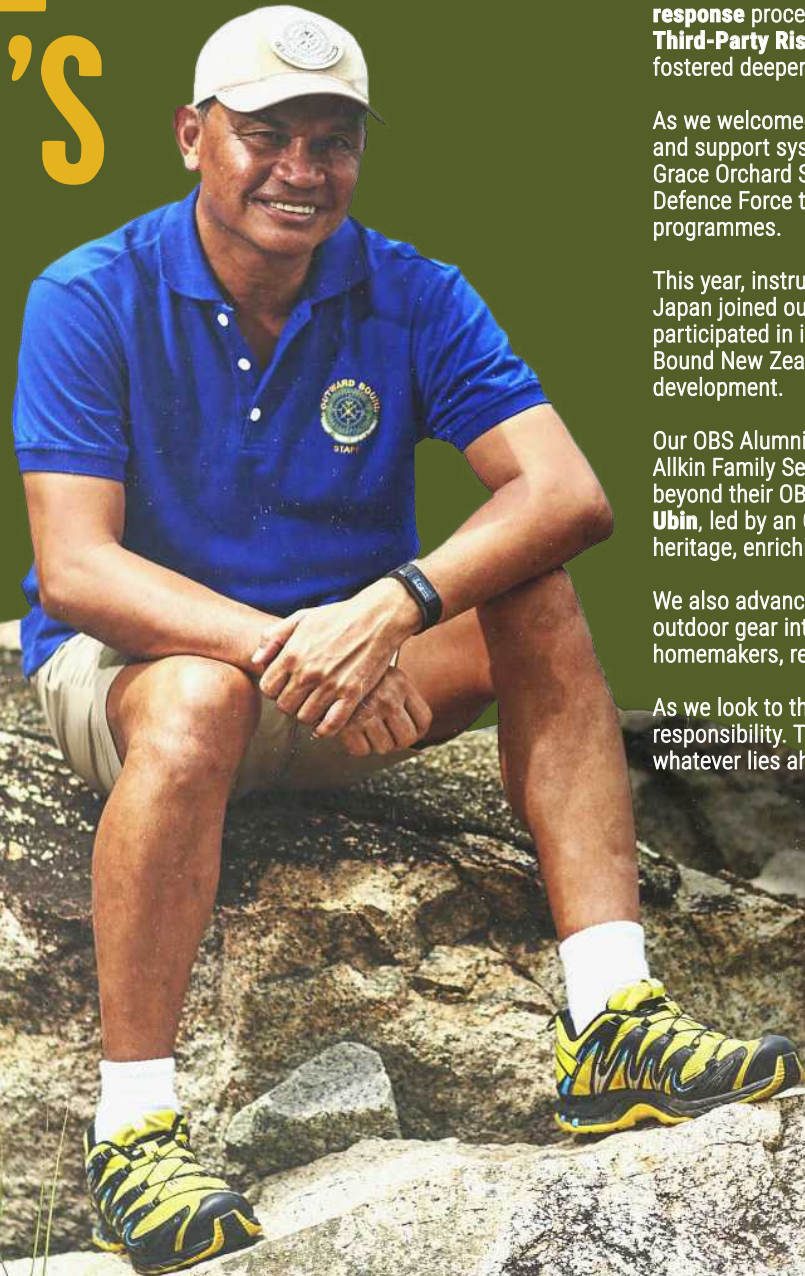


BOUND BY CONNECTION

OBS KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2024



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



2024 has been a year of strengthening bonds within our OBS crew, the communities we serve, and our global network. Like a steadfast vessel navigating changing tides, our foundation is built not just on systems, but on shared values.

At the heart of our journey is a commitment to safety. We've **enhanced emergency response** procedures through rigorous staff training and real-world scenarios. Our **Third-Party Risk Management (TPRM) system** reinforced safety protocols and fostered deeper collaboration with contractors, ensuring aligned practices.

As we welcomed students from diverse backgrounds, we **tailored our programmes** and support systems to address varied learning needs, working with partners like Grace Orchard School, Northlight School, Tasek Academy, and the Singapore Civil Defence Force to sharpen our instructors' skills beyond conducting mainstream school programmes.

This year, instructors from Outward Bound schools in China, India, Vietnam, and Japan joined our trainees for the **21-day Classic Challenge Course**. Our staff also participated in international attachments and conferences, such as those with Outward Bound New Zealand and the Wilderness Risk Management Conference, to further their development.

Our OBS Alumni made a meaningful impact by partnering with Rainbow Centre and Allkin Family Service Centre, furthering our mission to nurture active, engaged citizens beyond their OBS experience. Locally, our instructors' **learning journey on Pulau Ubin**, led by an Orang Pulau descendant, deepened their understanding of the island's heritage, enriching their programme delivery.

We also advanced sustainability through our **partnership with Commenhers**, upcycling outdoor gear into purposeful products and creating meaningful opportunities for homemakers, retirees, and youth.

As we look to the future, we carry forward the lessons of growth, service, and shared responsibility. Together, let's continue "To Serve, To Strive and Not to Yield," ready for whatever lies ahead.

Nicholas Conceicao

Executive Director

Outward Bound Singapore

2024 AT A GLANCE

Every year, youths from all walks of life embark on their OBS journey with a mix of anticipation and anxiousness. By the end, they've pitched tents in the great outdoors, made tough decisions in unfamiliar places and discovered that they are more capable than they imagined, especially when they work together, and support one another.

"The expedition was the toughest part. I had to push my limits, but my friends kept me going. I realised mindset is a person's greatest weapon, and that's what I'll carry with me the next time I face a challenge."

Ilhan Redza Bin Norhaizat
Temasek Polytechnic, Adventure Challenge Programme 2024

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

4.64 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

OVERALL COURSE
OBJECTIVES

4.47 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SATISFACTION

4.46 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"I learnt how important teamwork is as some things just can't be done alone. OBS helped me adapt to new situations, take initiative, and step out of my comfort zone. It was challenging, but also really fun!"

Charlotte Tan Huiqi
Evergreen Secondary School, Inclusive Sailing Programme 2024



MOE-OBS CHALLENGE: SHARED EXPERIENCE, LASTING BONDS

The first day brings a mix of emotions. Students from various schools arrive - some quickly forming new friendships while others take time to warm up. Over the next few days, they work together through shared challenges such as cooking meals outdoors, building trust through activities, and sharing stories that reveal moments of inspiration and quiet resolve.

In 2024, more than 30 MOE-OBS Challenge (MOC) courses were conducted for approximately 18,000 students from 86 schools across Singapore.

Through the MOC, these youths stepped out of their comfort zones, developed greater confidence in their abilities, and formed meaningful friendships with peers from diverse backgrounds.

RESILIENCE

4.18 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CONFIDENT PERSON

4.24 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CONCERNED CITIZEN

4.23 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SOCIAL COHESION

4.26 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"I come from a girls' school, so it's rare to do activities with boys. OBS gave me a chance to mix with peers from different schools and backgrounds. It was awkward at first, but after working together, we started to bond and connect."

Goh Enzy
Singapore Chinese Girls' School

"The hardest part of OBS was not giving up. It was tough, but I kept telling myself, 'You can do this.' I didn't want to quit, I wanted to prove I could be better than I thought."

Koh Mun Tong Joshua
Spectra Secondary School

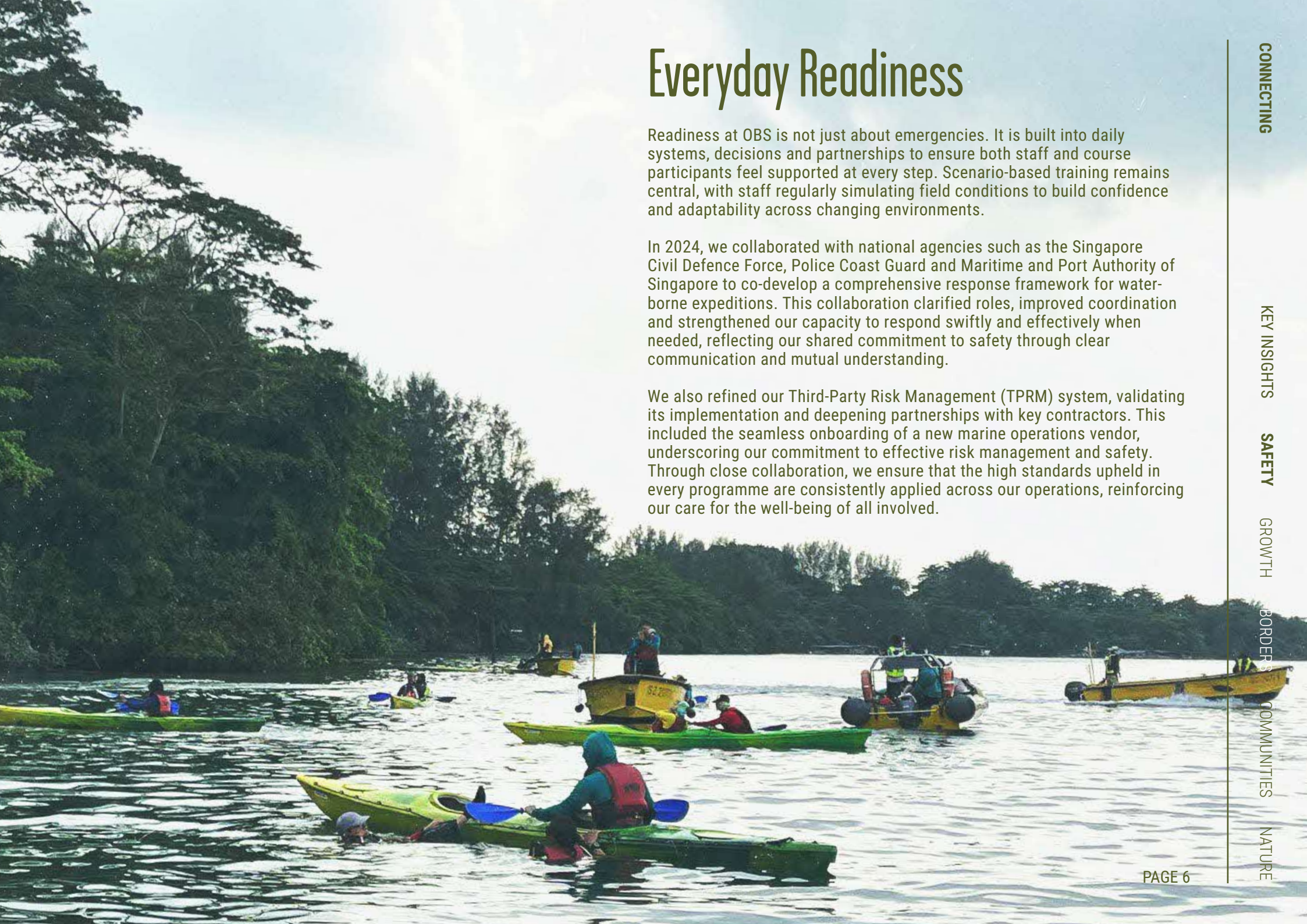
CONNECTING: ON SAFE GROUND

Advancing Our Risk Management Culture

Safety is more than a set of rules—it's fundamental to how we think, prepare and care for those under our responsibility. Our staff undergo immersive, scenario-based training that builds their confidence to act decisively, adapt to challenges, and support teammates in need. Behind the scenes, our Training Assets Development team ensures all training equipment and elements remain safe and ready.

We've strengthened risk management and operational effectiveness through technology. Our digital systems and inter-agency partnerships enhance field monitoring, coordination and response. The Integrated Operations Monitoring System (IOMS) enables real-time incident tracking across all sites. Integration with government weather and environmental data systems helps staff make informed decisions to protect safety and wellbeing in the field.

As our operations grow, we remain committed to continuous improvement through a safety governance framework built on five key pillars: fostering a safety-centric culture, implementing integrated risk systems, conducting research and benchmarking, accessing expert advice, and maintaining systematic reviews and audits. These ensure operational excellence and compliance with standards like ISO 45001. The Advisory Committee and Medical Advisory Panel provide expert guidance to enhance standards, address emerging challenges, and ensure we stay prepared for future developments.



Everyday Readiness

Readiness at OBS is not just about emergencies. It is built into daily systems, decisions and partnerships to ensure both staff and course participants feel supported at every step. Scenario-based training remains central, with staff regularly simulating field conditions to build confidence and adaptability across changing environments.

In 2024, we collaborated with national agencies such as the Singapore Civil Defence Force, Police Coast Guard and Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore to co-develop a comprehensive response framework for water-borne expeditions. This collaboration clarified roles, improved coordination and strengthened our capacity to respond swiftly and effectively when needed, reflecting our shared commitment to safety through clear communication and mutual understanding.

We also refined our Third-Party Risk Management (TPRM) system, validating its implementation and deepening partnerships with key contractors. This included the seamless onboarding of a new marine operations vendor, underscoring our commitment to effective risk management and safety. Through close collaboration, we ensure that the high standards upheld in every programme are consistently applied across our operations, reinforcing our care for the well-being of all involved.

CONNECTING: THROUGH SHARED GROWTH

Always Students, Always Leaders

At OBS, instructors are more than facilitators. They are lifelong learners. Whether leading a five-day expedition or supporting a student's first time away from home, they grow alongside the participants they guide.

In 2024, OBS deepened our investment in instructor development through a series of staff learning experiences. These included local attachments to educational institutions such as Northlight School, as well as regional platforms like the Outward Bound International (OBI) Regional Symposium and international conferences including the Association for Experiential Education and the Wilderness Risk Management Conference. These opportunities allowed instructors to share knowledge, explore diverse educational models and integrate fresh perspectives back to their practice.

CORE VALUES TEAMWORK
We contribute individually and as a team to our vision and mission.
CORE VALUES
We constantly challenge ourselves to grow.
CORE VALUES
We are committed to the growth of our community.

CONNECTING

KEY INSIGHTS

SAFETY

GROWTH

BORDERS

COMMUNITIES

NATURE

Leadership That Fits

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to leadership. A uniformed group like the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) and a social service partner like Tasek Academy have different needs, learning styles and organisational cultures. That's where the customisation process begins.

At OBS, each programme is shaped in close partnership with organisations to meet specific challenges. Each course is tailored to build participant's confidence in leading with purpose, empathy and adaptability. Participants are not told what leadership looks like. They take the lead, navigating complex tasks and learning to respond as a team.

In 2024, leadership development included courses for the SCDF in Brunei, National Healthcare Group's corporate programme in Bintan and Institute of Higher Learning (IHL)'s initiatives across the region.



Standing With Educators

Outdoor educators frequently encounter complex challenges in their roles.

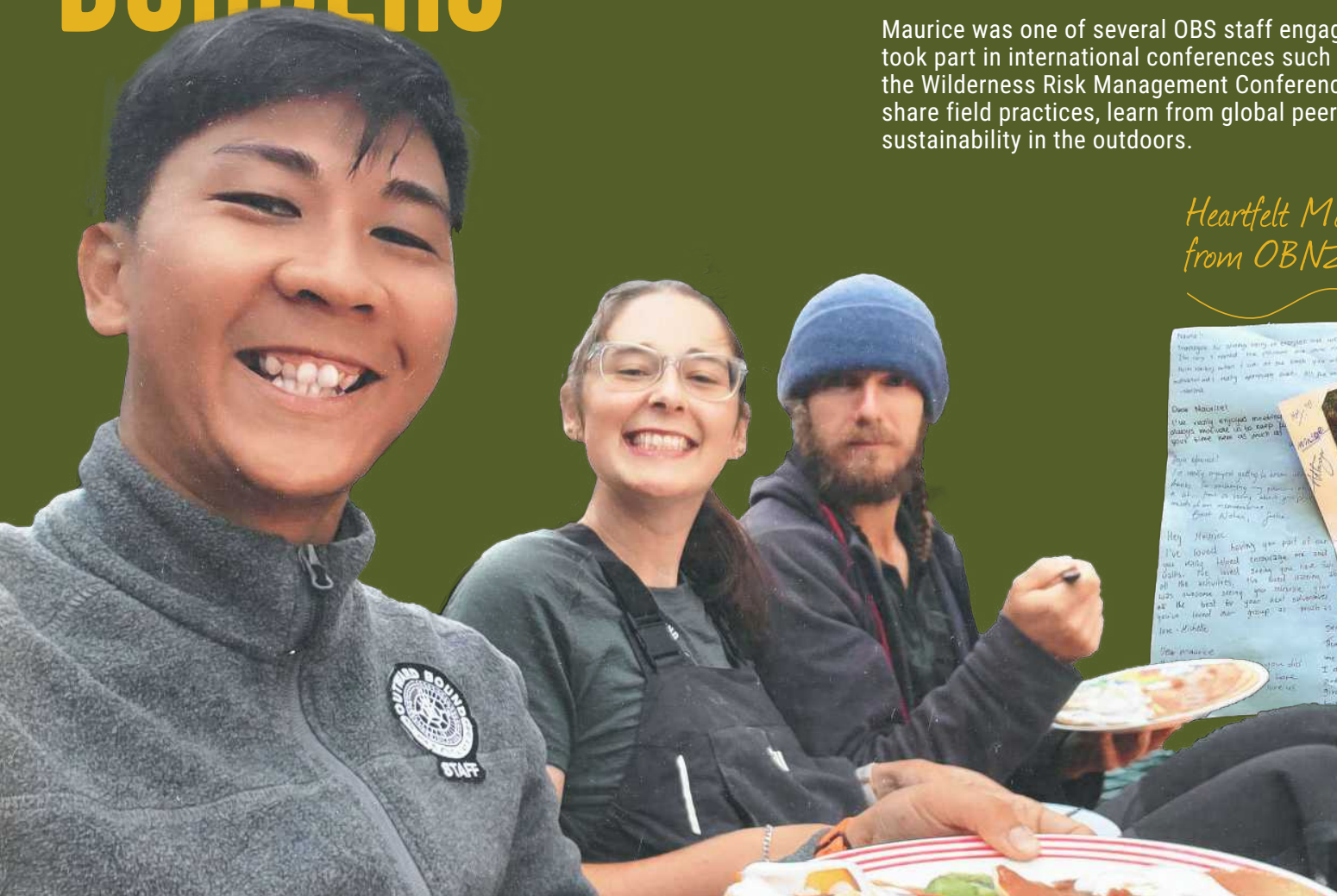
As the OAE Council Secretariat, Outward Bound Singapore's Sector Development team is dedicated to supporting them in navigating these situations.

Held in August 2024, the event "Beyond PPE*, What About Me" saw outdoor educators come together to address critical issues impacting their profession, from employment rights to understanding their liabilities in case of incidents. While the team facilitated the session, the most valuable insights emerged from the educators themselves, who shared their first-hand experiences.

Additionally, our Sector Development team collaborated with Meteorological Services Singapore to develop new OAE-specific weather advisories, giving educators clearer tools to read changing skies and remain steady at the helm when conditions shift. OBS also worked with key partners to develop practical safety guidelines under the Singapore Standard Code of Practice, further strengthening the sector's safety standards.

**PPE is short for Personal Protective Equipment.
Equipment worn to minimise exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries.*

CONNECTING: BEYOND BORDERS



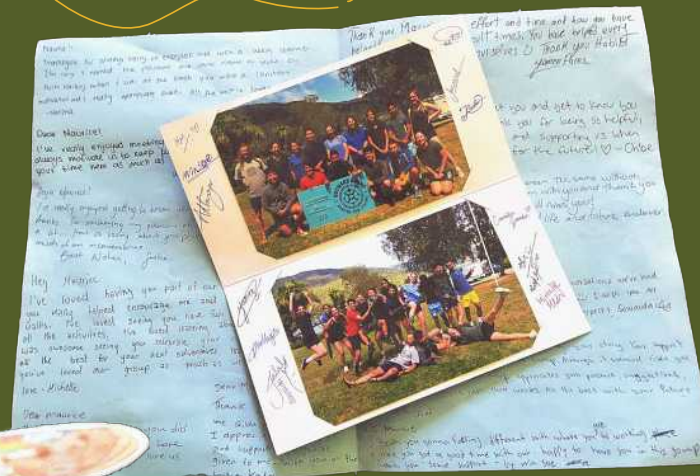
A Sustainable Perspective

In early 2024, OBS instructor Maurice joined Outward Bound New Zealand (OBNZ) for a six-week overseas attachment, stepping into a different rhythm of outdoor education. From the way culture was embedded into daily routines to how instructors were supported on the ground, every moment offered something to reflect on.

One thing that stood out was OBNZ's thoughtful approach to sustainability. Reused equipment, gear loan systems and ration management reflected a deep respect for both people and the environment. These practices sparked ideas around repurposing unclaimed gear at OBS, adjusting expedition timings for flexibility and composting short-life food products.

Maurice was one of several OBS staff engaged in overseas learning this year. Others took part in international conferences such as the OBI Regional Symposium and the Wilderness Risk Management Conference. These platforms offered space to share field practices, learn from global peers and strengthen our understanding of sustainability in the outdoors.

*Heartfelt Messages
from OBNZ team*



Expeditions Through Partnership

A team from OBS embarked on a seven-day expedition around the Riau Islands, covering 90 nautical miles by sea in the waters surrounding Bintan.

This journey was made possible through strong and trusted partnerships. Bintan Resort Cakrawala, along with local authorities, provided vital logistics and maritime coordination, while our service-partner, ST Engineering, ensured that our equipment was expedition-ready. Thanks to their combined support, the expeditionary team was able to concentrate fully on navigating the journey and strengthening key collaborations.

Though not our first overseas venture, this expedition was about more than just exploration. It reaffirmed the enduring value of strong partnerships and demonstrated how shared intent and capability can create meaningful development experiences—for our staff, and ultimately, for the youth they mentor.

*Support from
ST Engineering*



*Support from local
authorities in Bintan*



*Invaluable partnership
with Bintan Resort
Cakrawala*



Learning Across Cultures

In early 2024, instructors from Outward Bound centres in China, Vietnam, Japan, India (Himalaya), and Hong Kong joined Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) for a 21-day challenge. They paddled long distances, hiked unfamiliar trails, and adapted to Singapore's tropical terrain and environment, learning from one another throughout the experience.

While the physical challenges were demanding, the true value of the experience lay in the exchange of ideas—sharing facilitation techniques, inclusion strategies of participants from diverse backgrounds, and approaches to provide support to fellow colleagues. This programme sparked meaningful conversations and forged stronger connections, underscoring that while each centre has its own unique characteristics, our shared values unite us across diverse cultures and traditions.

As part of OBS' commitment to professional development, the 21-day Classic Challenge Course serves as a key experience for instructors. To further promote collaboration and growth, OBS extended training scholarships to staff from regional centres, deepening our ties within the global Outward Bound community.



CONNECTING: WITH COMMUNITIES

Life Behind The Lens

OBS harnessed everyday moments on social media to give audiences an authentic glimpse into life at work.

From team snapshots to personal reflections, the content was shaped by the voices and experiences of those who live it every day. The result was a vibrant, relatable portrayal of the OBS community, highlighting the shared spirit and unwavering commitment to youth development.

This momentum was driven by the dedication of everyone at OBS. Whether it was Training Unit Instructors, support teams, or a colleague caught mid-sprint between errands, each story contributed to a rich tapestry reflecting the organisation's personality and values.

Our growth on social media reflected the impactful work of our diverse, dynamic team, united by a shared purpose. Beyond showcasing our culture, our platforms also played a key role in outreach and recruitment, offering potential hires an authentic window into the inclusive environment that defines OBS—and insight into who we are, where we work, and why our mission matters.



Stories From The Island

The walk through Pulau Ubin opened with stories of how life once moved without electricity or roads, where families shared wells, and where nature shaped both the land and the way of living. Organised by the Programmes Development unit, the Learning Journey was guided by a member of the Orang Pulau community who shared stories rooted in lived experience.

OBS instructors learned about Ubin's traditional practices and cultural heritage, including the way locals used native plants for food, tools and medicine. These insights now shape OBS expeditions, where students hear the same stories and begin to see Pulau Ubin not just as a place, but as a community with deep ties to nature and history.

Beyond stories, these visits also tie into environmental initiatives that support the Singapore Green Plan. One such example is the rainwater harvesting system at OBS's Ubin camp, which collects and reuses water for cleaning and irrigation. These efforts reflect our commitment to sustainability and resource responsibility, and show how nature, culture and infrastructure can align to shape the future.

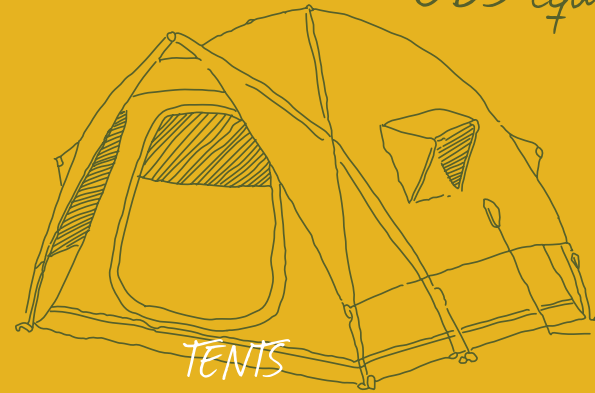


Threading Generations Together

A collaboration between OBS and Commenhers, a youth-led social enterprise founded by local university students, is giving decommissioned OBS equipment a second life. Tents, backpacks and life vests are upcycled into functional items through the hands of housewives, retirees and young changemakers.

The initiative blends sustainability with community action. It creates space for shared work, practical skills and purposeful reuse, connecting people across generations through craft.

Looking ahead, the project aims to expand its range of upcycled creations, with potential applications including corporate premiums and other useful outdoor products. This partnership reflects OBS' commitment to nurturing socially responsible youth and building a more connected, sustainable society.



Upcycle
decommissioned
OBS equipment



Into usable
everyday items



Tides of Service

For OBS Alumni, leadership often begins with hands-on service. The OBS Leadership and Service Award (LSA) participants from the March 2024 cohort led a cleanup at Chek Jawa, starting with a site assessment before removing 200 kilograms of marine debris from the coastline.

At the Istana Open House, alumni facilitated wildlife coexistence booths, sparking conversations with families about environmental awareness and human-wildlife co-existence. These efforts reflect a growing commitment among alumni to make sustainability relatable, practical and community-driven through real-world engagement.



Engaging the Youth



At the Istana Open House 2024





CONNECTING: WITH NATURE

Where Nature Leads The Way

Coney Island is one of Singapore's most biodiverse spaces. Its coastal forests, mangroves and grasslands provide important shelter for wildlife including kingfishers, weavers and monitor lizards. With over 80 species of birds and a variety of thriving plant life, it remains a valuable natural environment for both ecological conservation and outdoor learning. In the coming years, youths will walk these trails as part of OBS at Coney.

The new base has been carefully designed to sit lightly on the land, blending into the island's natural surroundings. Here, learning takes place not apart from nature, but within it, shaped by direct experience and close observation. This approach reflects our commitment to the 'OBI Environmental Charter' and 'Nature Bound' field guide. These frameworks guide how we engage with the environment, helping us build deeper respect for nature and understand the role it plays in personal growth.



<https://www.nyc.gov.sg/en/obs>



<https://t.me/OBSAlumni>



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