

Coastal Shipping Reform



Workforce Skills and Training

Reference Group

Report

June 2011

Contents

Group Membership 3

The Work of the Group 4

The Group’s Recommendations 6

Appendix A – Activitied identified by previous reviews 16

Terms of Reference

The strategic intent of the Government's announced shipping policy is to provide a secure and adequate maritime skills base into the future, achieved through a partnership between industry, unions, education providers and government. Within the framework of a well-known set of maritime skills issues, the Workforce Skills and Training Reference Group (the Group) was established to provide advice to the Minister on how that collaborative approach could be best used to progress that policy.

The Group's Terms of Reference were to:

- identify, assess and prioritise the emerging labour and skills challenges in the Australian maritime workforce and industry as a whole;
- identify current and future industry demands and the mix of skills required to meet industry needs;
- identify sources of, and mechanisms to collect workforce data that will establish a robust evidence base for responsive policy formulation, planning and development into the future;
- develop principles that could support an integrated and collaborative approach to the development of maritime skills and training between the blue water and offshore sectors;
- identify an appropriate collaborative governance mechanism that could support whole-of-industry workforce planning and skills development into the future; and
- consider appropriate mechanisms that could support skills development into the future, including measures such as:
 - the training of cadets by shipping businesses that opt in to the new taxation arrangements;
 - partnership arrangements between industry, unions and education providers to achieve common outcomes;
 - resource-sharing in the development and delivery of training;
 - collaborative arrangements to attract and retain industry entrants and enable their transition across industry opportunities in a way that does not disadvantage a given industry sector.

Group Membership

Members of the Group invited by the Minister to participate were:

Dr. Daryll Hull – Chair

Managing Director, Transport and Logistics Centre

Mr Tony Wilks – General Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Relations

SVITZER Australia Pty Ltd

Mr Rod Pickette – Policy Executive Officer

Maritime Union of Australia

Mr Fred Ross – Industrial Officer, Offshore Division

Australian Maritime Officers Union

Ms Sarah Cerche – Manager, Industry Employee Relations

Australian Shipowners Association

Professor Malek Pourzanjani –Principal

Australian Maritime College

Mr Mal Larsen – Strategic Relations Manager

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Mr Geoff Bull – Director, Workplace Policy

Australian Mines and Metals Association

Mr David Anderson – Chief Executive Officer

Ports Australia

Ms Jill Jamieson – Managing Director

Challenger Institute of Technology, Western Australia

Ms Linda White – Branch Manager, Industry Workforce Development

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Mr Geoff Gwilym - Chief Executive Officer then Ms Robyn Stepnell – Interim Chief Executive Officer

Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council

Mr Phil Cox – Director, Hunter Institute

TAFE NSW

The Group met on three separate occasions in the first half of 2011; on 8 February, 25 March and 30 May. The Chair of the Reference Group also ran a number of sub-group meetings with group members to address particular issues.

Mr Martin Byrne, Assistant Federal Secretary of the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers (AIMPE) was invited to participate in the Group, but he declined the invitation.

The Work of the Group

Introduction

On 1 December 2010, the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, released a discussion paper outlining a series of shipping reform initiatives being proposed by the Government. The Minister also established three Reference Groups including the Workforce Skills and Training Reference Group (the Group) to provide industry's best advice on how the announced reforms could be implemented (the Group's Terms of Reference are at page 2).

The Group's discussions

The Group met on three occasions between February and May 2011 and progressed activities outside of the meeting arena.

The issues pertaining to workforce skills in the maritime industry are well understood and documented. At its first meeting, the Group broadly canvassed the issues that were summarised as:

- The lack of a complete and agreed national maritime skills and workforce data set;
- The lack of a workforce development and planning framework as a mechanism that could inform industry and government of key issues and engender collaboration on workforce capability across all of industry;
- The need for more flexible and efficient training models to be created, while maintaining industry and international standards;
- The need for flexible, coordinated and nationally-focussed delivery of training, with a greater use of competency based training and recognition of prior learning;
- A 'one-size fits all' approach to skills that cannot address specific sectoral issues and needs;
- The need for specific occupational solutions – enhanced recognition of job roles, better alignment of certification/qualifications and career pathways;
- The need for skills and training funding to better accommodate industry wide needs; and
- The need for regulators to better align with industry needs.

Over the past decade numerous reports have been produced by governments, industry associations and training organisations highlighting a wide range of maritime skills and training issues and potential approaches for dealing with them (see Appendix). Historically what has been lacking is a coordinated, collaborative and whole-of-industry effort to take ownership of the issues and work to address them.

The strategic intent of the Government's announced policy is to provide a secure and adequate maritime skills base, achieved through a partnership between industry, unions, education providers and government. A collaborative approach to workforce skills and capability will allow strategic planning and its implementation to ensure the maritime industry is well served by skills into the future.

"The Compact"

In announcing the shipping reforms, the Minister stated that they were conditional on a Compact between industry and unions to deliver productivity and efficiency reforms that would better align practices in the Australian shipping industry with international best practice.

Maritime training issues have, over time, largely become an industrial consideration for individual employers; as a result many issues discussed in the Group had industrial and therefore Compact considerations. As some members of the Group would also be participants in the compact discussions they were asked to take issues highlighted as compact issues to the compact meeting for discussion and report back to the Group.

The existence of the Compact represented both a constraint on the discussions of the Group as well as an opportunity for some of these issues to be progressed. There was a clear preference within the Group not to confuse broader training issues with industrial training considerations; discussions and options for resolutions were, therefore, at times constrained and were perhaps not as fulsome as they could have been.

The Group did recognise, however, that successful compact negotiations could present a clear opportunity for key workforce skills and training issues to be progressed on a national basis that could move them towards resolution.

The Group's Recommendations

Of the broad range of issues listed, the Group acknowledged that it was important to focus on a smaller number of core workforce skills issues that could form a strong foundation to address other needs into the future.

The Group therefore agreed the following priorities -

Priority One - Workforce Planning (WP) – ensuring the Maritime industry has access to appropriate and adequate workforce information to assess and plan for future workforce needs.

Industry estimates that three times more deck officers and five times more engine officers will enter retirement age than those that have recently entered the industry. A survey conducted by the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations estimates that 49 per cent of the maritime workforce is over 45 years of age. These figures are estimates as, at the moment there is no single, agreed source of constant and comprehensive data on the demand and supply of seafarers across sectors.

A workforce plan is needed in order to assess and manage the significant workforce transitions facing the industry over the next few years. Clear and agreed workforce data will provide guidance to what skills are needed in each sector of the industry and a real workforce plan that puts the appropriate structural and strategic elements in place will allow the wider industry to build those skills into the longer term.

Outcomes

- The maritime industry (including unions, shipping, shippers, training providers and government) works collaboratively to address workforce needs and challenges.
- A key part of this collaboration is strategic and focussed workforce planning for the maritime industry underpinned by quality data from industry that enables:
 1. a strong understanding of workforce supply and demand factors;
 2. security of industry investment in labour; and
 3. delivery of a broad-based workforce capacity that supports the longer term operation of the maritime sector.

Outputs

- An agreed aggregated data set that industry, unions and governments contribute to and can access and that is regularly updated for accuracy and completeness.

- An agreed workforce plan that will ensure the supply of skills to the maritime sector for the medium term.
- Agreed mechanisms for workforce data to be provided by, and collected from, industry, regulators, unions and training organisations, and the protection of commercially sensitive information.
- An agreed funding mechanism to ensure workforce planning can occur across the sector.
- A report by the Workforce Development Forum that summarises progress and action is completed and communicated to the Minister and industry as a whole.

Recommendations

WP1 National Data Set

Data should be collected from employers and training organisations as a matter of priority on the following basis:

- a. Tier one: employees who apply maritime skills in seafaring roles (i.e. a deck officer, an engineer or an integrated rating, using their relevant skills on board a vessel.).
- b. Tier two: employees who apply maritime skills and experience in non-seafaring roles. (i.e. ports and related on shore occupations such as broking and marine surveying)

WP2 Employer Data

The *employer data* to be collected across the two tiers could include, but not be limited to:

- a. Numbers of employees in each qualification;
- b. The age profile of employees in each qualification; and
- c. Employers' intentions to employ across each of the qualifications in the next three and five years;
- d. Attrition during sea-time.

WP3 Training Organisation Data

The data to be collected from *training organisations* could include, but not be limited to:

- a. Number of students in each qualification;
- b. Age profiles of students in each qualification/skill set;
- c. Rates of attrition from each qualification.

WP4 Mandatory Data Provision

Data provision by employers and training organisations should be mandatory and be provided annually on the same date, recognising that regulating data collection in this area at the Commonwealth level may prove problematic and thus data collection may require a cooperative approach from employers and training organisations.

WP5 Funding of Data Collection

Funding of the data collection activities could be provided jointly between industry and Government:

- a. Seed funding from the Government could establish the data collection model;
- b. Ongoing operation of the data collection and analysis should be funded by industry and unions by either an agreed formula for contribution or on a subscription basis.

WP6 Ownership and Governance of Data Set

Ownership and governance of, and access to, the data set could be determined through the Workforce Development Forum, but should be as open as feasible to allow agreement on data across the stakeholders for the purposes of planning and training.

WP7 Review of Data Set

The operation of the data collection process should be reviewed within five years to ensure its effectiveness and usefulness in delivery of workforce skills outcomes.

Priority Two - Workforce Training (WT) – providing a maritime training system that is fit for purpose, equitably and appropriately funded and responds to industry needs and to change.

Accredited and certified maritime training needs to be fit for purpose, delivered at the appropriate location and time and to be responsive to industry's (sectoral) needs. One of the greatest issues facing skills and training in the Australian maritime industry is the costs associated with providing accredited and certified training to seafarers at both Vocational Education and Training (VET) and university levels; they include labour, tuition, travel and accommodation costs. Increasing cost pressures arising from the growing offshore industry and a strongly competitive international maritime market mean that every dollar spent must represent value for money and be focussed on serving the Australian industry. Flexible training provision that is appropriately funded will reduce costs, enabling more employers to take on new, or more, trainees.

Outcomes

Training development and delivery that:

- accurately reflects the current and future workforce development needs of the maritime industry;

- meets sectoral skill needs;
- provides flexibility in delivery and models, while maintaining Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) and Marine Order standards;
- is aligned across the Higher Education and VET sectors;
- that makes best use of Competency Based Training and Recognition of Prior Learning; and
- can appropriately respond to key industry developments such as the impact of technology.

Outputs

- Nationally aligned education and training programs deliver the knowledge and skills required for career pathways within and across the maritime industry, including streamlined RPL (recognition of prior learning) processes and partnerships with industry.
- Increased uptake of training within the maritime industry where it accurately reflects the industry's skill needs across a range of Australian Qualification Framework levels.
- Employees are trained and delivered to meet the skill needs of professional roles in a timely manner.
- Funds have been secured to support training in the maritime sector.
- The extent of the talent pool is maximised by offering a variety of career entry points
- Where appropriate, for Competency Based Training to be provided and to move beyond training focussed on compliance.
- For the industry to value the positive outcomes of workforce development and how it can impact an organisation's bottom line.
- Clear and accessible career pathways that encompass integrated ratings, engineering and officer roles are articulated and accessible.

Recommendations

WT1 Marine Order Part 3

Having regard to the importance of Marine Order 3 in determining the conditions for the attainment of certificates of competency and proficiency, AMSA should finalise a consultation draft of Marine Order 3 in time with the finalisation of the Government's shipping reform package and undertake a consultation process.

WT2 Support TLISC Review of skills package

Support the current review of the maritime skills package by the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council.

WT3 MOU between training providers

The three approved maritime training providers should progress and sign a Memorandum of Understanding that will facilitate the delivery of maritime skills on a national basis.

- a. The MOU should support cooperation and collaboration across the organisations to facilitate and support a coordinated national approach to the ongoing development and provision of quality education and training for the Australian Maritime Industry.
- b. Underlying themes of the MOU could include:
 - i. Sharing information, resources and opportunities to work collaboratively on key projects of mutual interest;
 - ii. Assisting in streamlining all aspects of program development and delivery;
 - iii. Developing joint goals and capabilities consistent with their individual goals and capabilities;
 - iv. Developing and presenting joint advocacy, representation, expert advice and opinions to relevant forums and steering committees;
 - v. Developing a joint coordinated liaison process that supports a close working relationship with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council (TLISC);
 - vi. Developing a regular joint process for more effectively canvassing input from maritime employers, shipping companies and other relevant industry groups and stakeholders;
 - vii. Harmonizing and streamlining teaching programs and projects through exchange of data on program availability and website content;
 - viii. Producing and promulgating individual schedules for specific courses, projects and activities;
 - ix. Offering training and related services to the other parties and their clients through course delivery, staff contracting, staff exchange, professional development and similar initiatives;
 - x. Jointly marketing and promoting agreed training programs and services;
 - xi. Providing mutual support in meeting the requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework;
 - xii. Developing procedures that lead to mutual recognition of award statements, Certificates and/or Statements of Competency or Attendance that comply with regulatory requirements.

WT4 Funding of training outcomes

Funding of training outcomes should be addressed in a number of ways, including:

- c. Explore existing funding sources such as the recently announced national Workforce Development Fund, via the announced national Workforce Development and Productivity Agency;
- d. Exploring other sources of training funding outside the Commonwealth Government;
- e. The possibility of pooling State and Commonwealth public maritime training funds to enable training to be delivered to meet demand, irrespective of a student's state of origin, or the location base of training providers; and
- f. Developing an equitable funding arrangement where all industry beneficiaries could contribute to the cost of training.

WT5 Minimum training obligations under the tonnage tax regime¹

Training requirements linked to the taxation incentives provided in the regulatory regime should provide sufficient flexibility to enable a range of training outcomes and could consider matters such as:

- g. Ensuring that the obligation to provide training as a condition to accessing taxation incentives be included in primary legislation;
- h. A minimum training obligation being established in regulation as part of the overall shipping reform package;
- i. Penalties for failure to comply with the minimum training obligation should be at least the cost of training not provided by the group or company as required by legislation;
- j. Alternate contributions such as to a national training fund or making berths available;
- k. Providing training as a ratio of staff e.g. one person per 20 seafaring complement, rather than annual requirements for department based placements.

WT6 Alternative funding arrangements

Ensure that a broader base of trainers is captured, rather than just those who will access taxation incentives. This might include de-coupling training requirements from taxation and attaching them to other regulatory requirements (such as registration or the granting of a licence to operate).

Priority Three - Regulating maritime training – ensuring a robust, transparent and responsive framework for the development and oversight of maritime certification, qualifications and training that can delivery workforce capability into the future.

This priority area specifically addresses training (certification) issues administered and regulated by AMSA. Streamlined and accelerated processes for developing skills appropriate to the range of maritime tasks (and within appropriate timeframes) will reduce training costs, provide multiple career entry points and enable skills to be built over a maritime career. While it is vital that Australia’s reputation for highly skilled workers is maintained and that international conventions are complied with, broader recognition of widely-acknowledged frameworks such as recognition of prior learning will assist in time and cost

¹ It should be noted that while there was general agreement on the need for minimum training obligations to exist in the maritime industry, there was some disagreement over the extent of the obligation and the specific coverage of “strategic maritime skills” i.e. officers and engineers versus “meet the future skills need of the industry” i.e. all seafarers including integrated ratings.

impacts of training and provide greater opportunity for those wishing to enter the maritime industry from other fields.

Outcomes

- A regulatory certification system that appropriately recognises and delivers the flexibility required by different industry sectors at lower cost, while maintaining STCW and International Maritime Organization (IMO) standards.

Outputs

- The application of Competency Based Training is extended.
- Transportability of skills and skills attainment is enabled industry-wide.
- Improved integration of on and off-the-job training is enabled and supports activities such as distance education and the use of assessors in sea-time.

Recommendations

RMT1 Marine Order Part 3 consultation process

Having regard to the importance of Marine Order 3 in determining the conditions for the attainment of certificates of competency and proficiency, AMSA should finalise a consultation draft of Marine Order 3 in time with the finalisation of the Government's shipping reform package and undertake a consultation process.

Notwithstanding the current work progressing through the Australian Transport Council to deliver a single national maritime jurisdiction for commercial vessels in Australia, which will fully implement the Tinny 2 Tanker proposal for a single suite of maritime certificates, the draft should be confined to Certificates of Competency and Proficiency currently covered by the IMO STCW Convention as well as those near coastal certificates that progress directly to them.

RMT2 AMSA to review industry linkages

Within the agreed premise of no diminution of STCW standards and international conventions being observed, AMSA should review how it could work with industry to enable specific sectoral requirements to be considered and how flexibility in adapting to external forces such as technology, could be built into the certification processes.

RMT3 Integrated training mechanisms to be explored

Mechanisms to deliver more integrated on and off-the-job training are explored and developed.

The Workforce Development Forum

The Minister's Discussion Paper of 1 December 2010 canvassed the establishment of a Maritime Workforce Development Forum to "improve maritime skills and training outcomes and develop mechanisms for workforce planning and sharing of resources in the delivery of training. However, such an initiative would need to draw on current programs and existing funding allocations". Noting that the composition and operation of the Forum were a matter for Ministerial determination, the Group felt that given the complexities and long term nature of the workforce planning and training task, an industry based Forum should be established as soon as possible to support the Government's delivery of its shipping reform policy objectives.

Recommendations

WDF1 Objectives and Scope of the Forum

The Forum should comprise high level representation from across the breadth of the maritime industry and relevant government agencies who are able to:

- provide the Minister with advice, at his request, on key strategic issues affecting workforce development in the maritime industry;
- make the strategic and operational links across industry(ies) and government(s) to progress maritime skills issues;
- act to implement requests and directions of the Minister.

WDF2 Key activities for the Forum

The Forum's activities should focus on maritime workforce skills planning and development. Key activities for the Forum could be:

- to review relevant maritime skills issues, undertake analysis and provide advice to the Minister;
- where agreed by the Minister, and together with appropriate Government agencies, guide and oversight implementation of the outcomes of the Workforce Skills and Training Reference Group;
- work collaboratively across industry and government to better articulate and explain the critical nature of the maritime skills issues;
- carry out other activities and matters that may be referred from the Minister.

WDF3 Governance

The Forum would be established by the Minister consistent with Government decisions on the implementation of the shipping reforms. Consideration should be given to providing a regulatory basis to the activities of the Forum, depending on the overall policy framework contained in the shipping reform process.

WDF4 Membership

- Membership of the Forum should be by invitation of the Minister.
- Membership would be voluntary and members would not be provided with sitting fees.
- Consistent with the Forum's Objectives, scope and activities, membership could appropriately be drawn from expertise in:
 - Shipping;
 - Maritime skills (including towage, ports and offshore);
 - Workforce development;
 - Training models;
 - Shore-based maritime occupations;
 - Industrial relations.

WDF5 Forum Chair

The Chair of the Forum would be appointed by the Minister.

WDF6 Duration of the Forum

- The Forum should be established for a period of up to five years with a review at the end of two years.
- The Minister may:
 - determine an alternative timeframe;
 - choose to extend the Forum's timeframe; or
 - choose to dissolve the Forum at any point within its nominated timeframe.
- The operation and effectiveness of the Forum should be reviewed (by the Department and/or other parties such as the Productivity Commission, Skills Australia or an appropriate maritime representative) before the expiry of two years. Such a review should consider, amongst other matters:
 - the overall operation of the Forum;
 - the Forum's delivery of outcomes consistent with its purpose;
 - the ongoing need for the Forum; and
 - the nature and level of ongoing support to the Forum.

Appendix A – Activities identified by previous reviews

The issues currently facing the Australian Maritime Industry in the workforce skills area have not changed much in the last decade. During this time Government and the training and maritime industries has published a number of reports, around one per year, highlighting the issues and suggesting recommendations to address those issues. The following is a table of these recommendations. Most of these issues have been suggested across multiple reports during this time frame. It is suggested that this list including references to the reports be provided to the Forum on its commencement.

Recommendation	Reference/s
1. Develop a coordinated national all-of-maritime-industry/ies approach to managing the skills crisis	2,
2. Investigate and develop a model for the development of / propose the purchase of a workforce database for the maritime sector	8,9
3. Investigate and report on the potential for modifications to be made to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and marine industry data collections. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABS data collection is tailored to enable specific maritime industry data to be identified • The maritime industry aligns its data collection process with those of the updated ABS data • The maritime industry coordinates its data collection to make one annual call on industry sectors and in return, build in an obligation on all business to respond. 	2,
4. Investigate and develop a Workforce planning model for the Australian Maritime Industry	5, 8, 9, 11
5. Investigate and report on approaches to reduce the on costs associated with training	8,7,7a,14a
6. Investigate and report on approaches to reduce the overall time required to deliver training	8,9
7. Assess the number of training berths available in the Australian fleet and develop approaches to source further berths	8,
8. Investigate and develop a model/s to attract and recruit new seafarers	1,2,4, 8, 9, 14a
9. Investigate and develop a model/s to retain seafarers and or entice people back into the industry	1,4, 7a, 8, 9
10. Investigate and develop a model to increase the number of maritime trainers, including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options for willing experienced staff to deliver training during shore time; • Options for willing experienced maritime port staff to obtain trainer and assessor qualifications; etc 	8,
11. Identify and report on emerging challenges in the Australian seafarer workforce, global seafarer labour market and the shipping business for policy development to respond quickly and more strategically to change	8,9
12. In conjunction with AMSA investigate and report on the potential for sub classifications in the certification systems (e.g. towage master, blue water master etc)	16
13. In conjunction with AMSA investigate and develop alternate approaches to requirement for seetime eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater use of simulators as a partial substitute for seetime; and • Adjustment of seetime training based on specific skill sets for specific operations 	8,9
14. In conjunction with AMSA investigate and develop a model for the forum to facilitate the development of 'tinny to tanker'	8,9
15. Investigate and report on the possibilities of making qualified seafarers a priority immigration category	6, 7a
16. Investigate and report on the creation of a new training authority that will undertake the creation of a unified training system that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embraces new training methods; 	6,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonises international, national and industry specific training and certification requirements; and • Is agreed upon and implemented nationwide. 	
17. Investigate and develop a model for the equitable distribution for maritime training burden across the maritime industry/ies	8,
18. Investigate and develop a model for individuals to pursue a sea going career with or without an employer cadetship/traineeship	15, 16
19. Investigate and report on the applicability and acceptability of computer based training in the Australian Maritime sector	17a,
20. Investigate and report on the economic viability of a dedicated training vessel	6, 8,14a,
Recommendation	Reference/s
21. Develop career pathways for career progression, sea, sea to shore, and ashore, including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IR to officer • etc 	4,7a, 8,9,
22. Support and input into the work of the Transport and Logistics Skills Council in reviewing the Maritime with the view of streamlining training	4, 8,
23. Investigate and report on workforce skills models used in other industries or jurisdictions which may be applicable to the Australian maritime context and how these models could be adapted to the Australian context	8,
24. Investigate and report on approaches to expand the base of training providers without diminishing the quality of training.	8,
25. Exploring the opportunities to gain greater benefit out of the AMDC working group (joint industry – defence working group) in relation to maritime training, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigating and making recommendations on potential joint strategies to allow greater transfer of personnel between the RAN and the civilian maritime industry. 	6
26. Explore and report on the possibility of engaging a national generic Group Training Organisation to enter into the Maritime training sector	14a, 16
27. Investigate and promote available Commonwealth State and Territory skills funding sources to the Maritime Industry	7a, 9
28. In conjunction with ASA investigate ways to further develop the Careers at Sea Website.	2, 4, 14a

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