Best Practice Guide for Recruitment, Welfare and Competence of Cadets
It's a career not just a job

Best Practice Guide for Recruitment, Welfare and Competence of cadets

The report of a study undertaken by INTERTANKO’s Human Element in Shipping Committee

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any material form (including photocopying or storing it in any medium by electronic means and whether or not transiently or incidentally to some other use of this publication) without the written permission of the copyright owner.

Applications for the copyright owner’s written permission to reproduce any part of this publication should be addressed to the publisher.

© INTERTANKO 2014

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is correct, neither the authors nor INTERTANKO can accept any responsibility for any errors or omissions or any consequences resulting therefrom.
FOREWORD

I consider cadets, and trainees, to be the ‘lifeblood’ of our industry – and the attraction of young people into our industry, and their professional development, are issues that I have been passionate about for many years. So it is a source of personal pride that INTERTANKO’s Human Element in Shipping Committee (HEiSC) has developed this document, which incorporates a Best Practice Guide.

I also believe that in addition to being the training pipeline in the industry, that cadets should also be regarded as potential future leaders.

We need to bear in mind that cadets are trainees – at the start of their journey in the maritime industry. The findings in this document indicate that there is still an attraction to a career at sea, despite the risks and well-documented incidents. Therefore, we as an industry, and a key industry sector at that, have an obligation to provide a consistent training platform (such as Tanker Officer Training Standards (TOTS) or equivalent) for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding, in an appropriate training environment and culture – with a focus on welfare and well-being.

Cadet Training Programmes should also underpin an organisation’s long-term manning strategy.

What a shipowner or a manager gets in return from investment in training cadets can be directly correlated to their organisation’s reasons for the investment. The feedback from the cadets in this study confirms that not all who invest in the training of cadets do so in the belief they will be future Senior Officers. If the objective is to develop leaders, we will get leaders, but if the aim is to reduce manning costs by utilising cadets as ‘extra hands’ – then we will get extra hands but no leaders.

Leadership is also a journey. Investing in cadets does not only entail cadet fees and allowances. We need to provide structured career progression – with real opportunity for advancement to the most senior ranks. There should also be a link between ship and shore – with the means to identify and further develop potential … our future business leaders.

Cadets starting their journey now do so in an entirely different world to that when the majority of the policy makers, and management, in the maritime industry went to sea. We cannot ignore the impact of technology in communication and in a young person’s well-being at sea. Receiving a month-old handwritten letter from loved ones at home upon arriving in port was like gold in the hands of a seafarer 20 years ago – and the same value is now attributed to an email or a short video chat by young officers and cadets on the ship. Access to internet and instant communications should now be viewed as essential and no longer a ‘nice to have’. *

I would like to acknowledge the support and contribution of all HEiSC members, in particular Ms. Claire Pekcan, Associate Professor, Course Leader MSc Shipping Operations, Warsash Maritime Academy, for her professional research work and commitment to the project – and to the INTERTANKO Secretariat for the compilation and production of the Guide.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTERTANKO ran a broad-ranging survey of cadets and maritime stakeholders in order to gain the best possible insight into cadet recruitment and retention. The findings of this survey underpin this guide. The main findings are as follows:

Survey data
• 1,179 cadets took part in the survey
• Broad range of responses from shipping companies and the wider maritime industry
• Focus group run with industry partner stakeholders.

Survey demographics
• Cadets drawn from all over the world
• Traditional labour supply areas still dominate
• 35% of responses were from Europe and 36% from Asia…
• … while 25% of responses came from the Americas
• Overall 93% were male and 7% female
• 14% of the cadets in Western Europe were female, only 1% from India
• Cadets served on all ship types, but 45% reported as sailing on tankers
• Only 8% of cadets were over 26 years old.

Recruitment
• Companies remained committed to recruiting for future crewing needs and not just to meet tonnage tax requirements
• 70% of companies recruited, or planned to recruit, female cadets
• Career information considered adequate for all regions except Western Europe and the Americas
• Cadets perceived shipping as having a very poor image, particularly for cadets from Asia
• Poor image of shipping, though, not considered a major negative factor
• Criminalisation and piracy seen as affecting retention rather than recruitment.

Welfare on board
• 21% of cadets surveyed felt they did not have enough information about clothing and equipment prior to joining their first ship
• Cadets from Western Europe and the Americas were the least prepared
• Mentoring onboard was insufficient for 22%. Least amount of mentoring reported was from those cadets in Europe and the Americas
• A lack of a structured training scheme is of concern
• Modern communications are essential and should not be considered a luxury.

Training and policy
• Concern was expressed over the adequacy of the training establishments by owners and industry
• Cadets believed that the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) training was adequate
• 55% of Western European cadets believed the sea time was adequate, much higher percentage elsewhere
• Wider industry was satisfied that with good, structured training the sea time was adequate
• 77% of shipping companies report a retention rate of above 80%
• It is critical for recruitment to have a structured career path in place.

Cadets’ views on their career
• Cadets were negative about danger, risk, piracy and lack of communications
• Cadets were positive about having a good career, high salary and the ability to travel.
BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR COMPANIES

Recruiting
Any company recruiting new cadets should do so for the right reasons. The correct reasons for recruitment revolve around the future employment needs of the company, which should take account of the recruitment and retention rates of the current officers and build in any fleet changes that can be envisaged which would affect the current requirements. In this, it should be remembered that training will take over three years and so the recruitment of new cadets is never a short-term measure. Both the company and the trainee are in this for the long haul.

The recruitment of cadets should never be viewed as merely a process by which the ship can comply with tonnage tax rules. When the decision is made to invest in a trainee it should be remembered that this is a person who is about to embark on a very interesting and varied career and as such their needs should be borne in mind. Therefore, it should be clearly explained to them at the very earliest stages that the career is a demanding one, it should be outlined what training will take place, the structure of the training and how their career progression could be envisaged. Such information should be communicated at the earliest stage and a very good way in which early communication can be achieved is through working with schools and colleges. If the quality of a career at sea can be transmitted to those at an early stage, then the foundations are laid for the recruitment of keen and able people. In selecting the right people, half the population should not be ignored simply through the exclusion of women. Therefore, an equal opportunities programme should be in place to take advantage of the all of high-quality applicants that a company will receive.

Placement on board
Prior to joining a ship for the first time, the cadet should be thoroughly familiar with what to expect. An induction day at the company office can help in reducing their concerns and anxiety about what will be one of the most exciting, but stressful events in their careers. During any pre-joining briefings, the cadet should have a clear understanding of what clothing, equipment and study material that they should take on board the ship. A checklist approach can be adopted in order to allow them to see what they are taking is in conformance with what is required.

A person embarking on a career which may take them away from home for any extended period for the first time in their lives, should be able to talk and confide in someone who understands where they are coming from. This is very challenging to achieve if for example, a national is placed on board a ship without any nationals from their country of origin. Therefore, in allocating a berth to the cadet, consideration should be made regarding a cadet's ethnicity, language skills and gender. It is good practice, particularly on their first trip, to let cadets from the same class or intake sail together. The cadets should share a language and background and it is best if female cadets can sail together.

Welfare on board
Regulations are of course in place to ensure a safe environment at work. However, the best companies always look to exceed the regulatory minimums. This is especially important with regards to the welfare of cadets who may well be both young and vulnerable. The pleasant environment should be one where work and training can be achieved, free from harassment and bullying. An onboard mentor or training officer will assist in ensuring the right environment in which to train and learn. This on board mentor should be backed up with the equivalent person ashore. The mentor ashore should be separate from the chain of command so they can sit as an independent person who can assist the cadet in the successful fulfilment of their training. The shoreside mentor should also monitor the well-being of the cadet and investigate any allegations of harassment and bullying.
Communications are a key element for any person brought up in the digital age. Some senior officers and personnel ashore may not fully grasp the necessity of modern communications, as they were not available when they were cadets, however, they are an absolute essential and should not be considered a ‘nice to have’. Without private e-mail and internet access the cadet will be cut off from the world that they have left behind, are deprived of the communication means that they are used to and will have a harder job readjusting when back among friends. The provision of internet access should also be there to allow the college work to be undertaken – a vital part of this is the company ensuring that there is enough bandwidth to send bulk coursework back to the college.

Training
We all know that a cadet is not just on board as an extra pair of hands – everyone knows that they are there to train to become future officers. Therefore, it is a significant loss when cadets are not trained but used just as another AB. Further, it is a significant waste of time, money and resources simply to work a cadet. Therefore a proper structured training scheme must be in place. This scheme will be monitored to ensure that the cadet is being trained and progress made.

A close working relationship for the company with the college will be an advantage. The college should not just be chosen because it is the one that has always be used, instead it is better to look at the training needs of the company and then meet with the college management to see how those training requirements can be achieved. This training may also be tailored to the cargo or trading patterns of the particular ship. The content of the training program me should be monitored and if necessary topped up so that the cadet can qualify as the officer that you need them to be. In this regard, additional cargo training for those on chemical tankers may be required. Similarly for Dynamic Positioning (DP) vessels, DP time will have been critical when the cadet qualifies.

Retention
People want to belong to organisations, companies and associations. Sometimes a career at sea or one with the training company is not right for the cadet – when this happens barriers should not be put in the way of anyone who wishes to leave. However, it is best practice to conduct an exit interview to find out what went wrong in order to put it right. But for those cadets who have committed their time and energy, then their commitment should be rewarded with a contract.

At the forefront of any decision to employ an individual who has been trained by the company, should be the fact that the cadet had been recruited in the first instance to fulfil the future employment needs of the company. Therefore, unless the company has significantly reduced its tonnage, the cadet should be needed by that company to fill a crewing recruitment. Additionally, a considerable amount of time and resources has been put into training a cadet which will not just be lost if that cadet is not recruited. This is because a competitor company who recruits them will be taking advantage of the investment made by the company that trained them. Retention is a measure of good employment relations. Consideration should be given to making a stronger commitment at the start of the cadetship through the use of long-term contracts which extend beyond the end of the cadetships. A cadet who feels secure about their future will be more likely to put in the extra that is needed of them to make a success of the career that they have embarked upon.

Safety
It is sometimes hard to understand any link between safety and employment relations. However, it is an established finding that there is a direct link between having a good employer and a safe working environment. Employees who are happier have less accidents and are more productive. The welfare of cadets is key in this. Therefore, a good working place will assist in making the ship a safer working place.
BEST PRACTICE CHECKLIST FOR COMPANIES

Recruiting
• Recruit for the right reasons
• Recruit to fulfil your company’s training needs
• Recruit for the future
• Do not recruit purely for tax reasons
• Plan a career path for the cadets and be open with them about it
• Do not exclude women from your recruitment plans
• Work with local schools and government to highlight shipping as a career.

Placement on board
• Ensure that cadets are fully briefed on clothing and equipment requirements in good time
• Consider the language routinely used on board
• Consider the ethnicity of the cadet and how that will fit with those on board
• Try to ensure that female cadets sail together.

Welfare on board
• Ensure a safe and pleasant environment
• A mentor should be assigned to the cadets
• Cadets should also have access to a mentor ashore
• Ensure open access to modern communications – private e-mail and internet access is essential
• Ensure bandwidth is broad enough for the sending of coursework back to colleges
• Monitor the welfare of the cadets.

Training
• Cadets are there to learn, they should not be considered an ‘extra pair of hands’
• Work with colleges to ensure cadets are trained to the right requirements
• Carefully consider the college you will use for their training
• Put in place a structured training regimen
• Top up cadets’ training if it appears to be lacking
• Ensure that the training on board is right for the trade of the ship and certificate of competency.

Retention
• Cadets will, in the main, want to stay with the company that has trained them
• Reward the hard work of a cadetship with an officer’s contract
• Do not throw away the assets that you have trained
• A cadet not retained is one that is recruited by a competitor
• If a cadet wants to leave, then conduct an exit interview and work on the negatives
• Consider the use of long-term contracts which go beyond the end of the cadetship.

Remember: there is a direct link with a good employer and a safe working environment
INTRODUCTION

INTERTANKO surveyed cadets and their employers to ascertain how best to recruit and employ cadets as well as to how to provide them with the best working environment. The intended outcome was a best practice guide which would be used by the industry to recruit, employ and retain the cadets that they spend so much time and effort recruiting and training.

INTERTANKO is uniquely placed to undertake an assessment of the recruitment and employment practices of cadets on board tankers – to this end, INTERTANKO undertook an online survey. The questions were developed by INTERTANKO’s Human Element in Shipping Committee (HEiSC) and three separate questionnaires were developed, aimed at:

- Cadets
- Shipping companies
- Maritime industry stakeholders.

In addition to the survey, a focus group was also run in order to explore and verify the answers provided by the respondents, especially for the maritime industry. By using this approach, INTERTANKO has been able to gain enough information to explore the issue and produce reliable results.

The results are at times unexpected, while at other times simply reinforce widely held views. Geographical differences in approach are both present and sometimes surprisingly absent. For example, while there are differences between Europe and Asia regarding recruitment, in many respects that which divides the groups is much less important than that which unites them.

All in all, the common issues and differences shown by this survey can be used to ensure that cadets are recruited and trained well, which will produce a much more content corps of cadets who will reward the investment put into them by the companies undertaking the training.

Participation in the Study

Cadets
The survey of cadets looked at a wide variety of areas and was disseminated among INTERTANKO Member companies. It should be noted that this meant that the study was not merely restricted to cadets serving on tankers, but also covered the broad spectrum of the industry as many Members own or operate other ship types. Further, the questionnaires could be accessed by anyone and so responses also came from cadets not associated with INTERTANKO, some even serving on board passenger ships. It can be seen, therefore, that the cadets participating covered the entire spectrum of the shipping industry. While the response rate is not possible to quantify, having responses from 1,179 cadets covering all ship types and regions of the world does mean that this can be viewed as a representative sample of the global cadet population.

Shipping companies
These are one of the key stakeholders in this issue as they recruit, spend money on training and provide berths for cadets. This is undertaken as a means to ensure that their ships are adequately crewed by well-trained and motivated personnel. Therefore, their views are of key importance for
they are the ones who have a vested interest in ensuring that the money they put into training actually provides the personnel required to man their ships safely.

The questionnaire that was sent to shipping companies contained 18 questions. In the context of the survey, shipping companies cover both owners as well as third-party managers and 42 completed replies were returned. At the time of the survey, INTERTANKO had a Membership base of 219 full Members consisting of owners and managers and so this represents a response rate of approximately 19%. However, it should be noted that as this survey was open to anyone, a specific response rate cannot be calculated as it could include input from non-INTERTANKO companies. That said, this is not too likely as the survey was only promoted to Members via a Members-only newsletter. What can be taken from this is that the survey responses are representative of the global tanker industry.

Responses from ship owners and managers should be considered together as the issues to do with recruitment of cadets will be very similar, especially as most owners and managers do not directly employ cadets. Of the shipping companies, 67% were located in Europe and 19% in SE Asia as shown in Figure 1. The rest were from one or two companies spread around the world.

**Figure 1: Geographical location of shipping companies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE Asia</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Sub-Continent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East/Asia</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total responses 42

**Maritime industry**

In addition to the cadets and their employers, INTERTANKO wished to collect the views of the wider shipping industry. These included employers’ associations, class societies and maritime colleges – all very important components with a vital role to play within the whole shipping industry. Training colleges are, of course, important stakeholders in this and their views are important, however, class societies and P&I clubs are recruiters of trained seafarers and so their views should also inform the survey.
Participation in the survey
Some 16 organisations submitted responses, with Figure 2 showing the sectors they came from. As can be seen, there is a wide spread and caution will be needed in the interpretation of the results due to the small number of returns for individual sectors. The results should be seen as indicative, not representative, of those sectors.

Figure 2: Section of the maritime industry you operate in

The responses were drawn from across the world with responses from SE Asia, Indian sub-continent, Europe and the Americas. For the colleges, responses came from SE Asia, Indian sub-continent, Europe and North America.

Due to the small number of returns from the wider industry, this sector was supplemented by a focus group discussion with international organisations representing ship masters, oil majors and owners. This focus group was run using the same format of questions as used for the maritime industry and the outcome of the focus group was used to verify the responses from the maritime industry.

Participation overview
The data from the survey can be relied upon as a representative sample of cadets and the views expressed by the shipowners and wider maritime industry are taken to be indicative of the views of the wider industry. This means that the survey has at its heart a reliable base and the conclusions drawn can be seen as representative of the shipping industry.
**DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE SURVEY**

*The cadets*
Some 1,179 responses were recorded for cadets. The gender distribution was as expected with a 93% to 7% male/female ratio. This massive imbalance is representative of the wider industry and illustrates that there is a large area of untapped potential within the female population. Ages of cadets were mainly under 26; 28% were under 21; 62% between 21 and 25 and only 8% between 26 and 30. Just over 1% (10 cadets) were over 30. This clearly shows that the traditional recruitment of young people continues.

**Figure 3: Age of respondents (cadets)**

Table 1 shows the geographical distribution of the cadets. As can be seen, the traditional seafarer-supplying areas of Europe and Asia are well represented, with 35% coming from both Eastern and Western Europe and 33% from India and the Philippines. Such a distribution does not surprise, however the results do provide some new insights.

**Table 1: Geographical distribution of cadets/respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% of all respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of World</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, areas such as the Americas are shown to be emerging suppliers of cadets. Some 25% of respondents came from North and Central America. Several INTERTANKO Members use quite a few cadets from this region for ships trading into Latin America. One reported advantage is that of language skills for an area where English is not as widely spoken as in other areas. Interestingly, Africa is often cited as an area of untapped potential for seafarers and yet less than .5 of one percent of responses came from there. Some caution should be exercised as to the ability to extrapolate findings from this one survey to shape future seafarer recruitment patterns, but these are responses from cadets currently in training who will be officers entering into the international fleet over the next few years.
Table 2: Geographical distribution by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Male</th>
<th>% Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of World</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female cadets make up only 1% or 2% of the responses from India and the Philippines. Again this highlights an area where the potential of half the population is untapped. Further, this illustrates that although the lack of recruitment of women is a global issue, India and the Philippines are areas where action should be concentrated.

Table 3: Does your organisation recruit both Female and Male cadets?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, we believe in equality onboard and ashore</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes but vast majority of recruitment are males</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No only male but would like to start recruiting both female and male cadets</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, our belief is that only male cadets should be included in our company cadet program</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though the shipping industry has traditionally been a male-dominated profession, cadet recruitment and training is a leading indicator of how this will change. Key to equality in recruitment are the views of those doing the recruiting. Of course that does mean that 70% of companies either do recruit or would wish to recruit equally. When geographical location is taken into account, 22% of European-based companies and 25% of SE Asian companies do not recruit female cadets. Non-equal recruitment is particularly high among owners, with 38% stating that they only recruit males. This compares with 18% for managers.

It is disappointing to see that the concept of recruiting women is still anathema for so many companies – gender should never be a barrier to recruitment and INTERTANKO should assist in the breaking down of barriers. Focus group members were not shocked, but disappointed, by this finding. For them, an integrated campaign should be undertaken to ensure equal opportunities for careers at sea.

The cadets were then asked what stage they were in their cadetship. Some 80% had been to sea, but 20% had not. This number should be borne in mind when questions related to sea time and training on board are analysed. Figure 4, overleaf, shows stages the cadetship of participants.
The next question related to the ship type that the cadet had sailed on. It will be recalled that the responses were not limited to INTERTANKO companies as it was cadets from the various colleges that answered the questions. Therefore, it is unsurprising to see that other ship types are present. However, the largest cohort is from tankers with some 45% of the respondents stating that they had sailed on them. The full list is shown in Table 4.

### Table 4: % of cadets sailing on ship types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship Type</th>
<th>% of cadets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tankers</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Containers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Cargo</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offshore</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All cadets who have reported that they have not been to sea have been excluded from this table.

**Demographics conclusion**

The demographics of the cadets illustrates that they are from a wide variety of regions, sail on different ship types, are drawn from each phase of the cadet training and have a gender distribution reflective of the wider industry. This shows us that the responses to the survey are reflective of the wider industry.

Cadets in general are under 26 and predominantly male. The predominance of male cadets should be noted, particularly the almost non-existence of women from India and the Philippines. Only in Western Europe and North and Central America where there more than the average number of female cadets. This is an area which will be returned to when analysing the recruitment processes of shipping companies.
RECRUITMENT
A raft of questions were asked of all three groups and the focus group, and these will be drawn upon in this section.

The first common question related to the provision of career information prior to going to sea. Table 5 illustrates the answers to the question: Is there sufficient career information and advice available to school leavers to make an informed decision to go to sea?

Table 5: ‘Is there sufficient career information and advice available to school leavers to make an informed decision to go to sea?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cadets</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping Companies</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime Industry</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cadets believed that there was enough information, however, for the other groups it was a mix. The focus group certainly did not believe that there was enough information. Geographical location also had an effect on the answers. Figure 5 shows the responses for the main groups of cadets.

What is very evident is that the lack of knowledge about careers was limited to Western Europe, where only 39% stated that there was sufficient information. This compares to all of the other regions where they had the reverse position. The nearest result to Western Europe was that of India where 26% stated that there was insufficient information.

From this we can see that the problem of lack of information about careers at sea is largely confined to Western Europe and is not a worldwide phenomena.

Figure 5: Geographical distribution on provision of career information

Q7. Is there sufficient career information and advice available to you as a school leaver to make an informed decision to go to sea?

Total responses 1141
In order to determine whether the on-board experience differed significantly among cadets on different types of vessels, a Binomial Logistic Regression Analysis was conducted to look at responses on a series of questions to determine whether or not the response patterns predict the type of ship the cadet has sailed on. Again, cadets with no vessel experience were excluded from the analyses.

Responses were recorded as 2=Yes and 1=No. The higher the point on the graph, the more cadets were indicating a ‘Yes’ response. The nearer the point on the graph is to the horizontal axis, the more the cadets were indicating on average a ‘No’ response. Where the average is greater than 1, more cadets were indicating ‘Yes’ than ‘No’. This allows comparison across ship types, and therefore by implication, the type of company they have been employed by / placed with. From this analysis it can be seen in Figure 6, that those sailing on tankers had more information than those on other ship types.

**Figure 6: Analysis of career information.**

Shipping companies’ responses to this question were split in that 37% believed that there was enough information, whereas 63% did not. This fits in with the normal narrative on recruitment and has fed into the opinion of those who have lobbied governments to raise the profile of the industry. However, when the responses are analysed taking into account the geographical locations of the companies a different pattern emerges which is one in line with the findings for cadets. For those companies based in Europe, 37% believe that there is enough information compared with 29% who do not. Whereas for those based in SE Asia the proportions are that 71% believe there is enough information compared with 29% who do not.

The importance of this is that for companies recruiting in Western Europe there does remain a problem in a lack of information being made available, or general awareness of careers at sea. Therefore, those recruiting in Europe may wish to allocate more resources for the raising of the career profile. However, in SE Asia resources could be allocated into different areas.

Although the maritime industry responses were limited, it is worth noting that there was almost an even split in whether there was enough information, with 56% saying there was, compared to 44% reporting negatively. For colleges the split was 71% to 29% in favour of there being enough information.

The cadets were then asked as to whether there was enough information available for them to make an informed choice about which company they should join. Overall, 62% said that they did
have enough information, while 38% did not. However, when broken down geographically, a similar pattern to the question on the overall amount of information appears. In this those from Western Europe know the least about the companies compared to those from the rest of the world. Table 6 illustrates this point.

**Table 6: Geographical distribution: Was there sufficient information and guidance to allow you to make a considered decision about which shipping company to select?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this it can be seen that taking this question and the last into account, there is a particular issue with Western Europe and the amount of information available for cadets. The rest of the world appears to be well informed, whereas Western European cadets are not.

When cadets on different types of vessels were analysed using a Binomial Logistic Regression Analysis the following was found as represented in Figure 7.

As can be seen to the left, cadets on board tankers had a much greater knowledge base of the companies than for other ship types.

The next question was related in that it asked whether a cadet had been rejected by a company prior to securing a cadetship. Some 31% reported that they had been rejected while 69% had not. However, when looking at the geographical distribution, it becomes clear that there are again regional differences, as illustrated by Figure 8 (overleaf).

Firstly, an applicant in Western Europe and the Americas is more likely to be rejected than one from India and China. Of those who had been rejected, 38% had been turned down by one company; 18% by two, 16% by three and 8% by four companies. Some 19% of cadets showed the most stamina and determination in that they were rejected by five or more companies.
Figure 8: Geographical distribution for rejections

When cadets on different types of vessels were analysed using a Binomial Logistic Regression Analysis the following was found as illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Analysis of rejection by ship type

From this it can be seen that cadets on tankers were least likely to be rejected.

The next recruitment-related question looks at the image of shipping and how it is viewed by those being recruited, as well as the recruiters, the question being: Does the image of the shipping industry regarding safety, security and criminalisation of seafarers negatively affect the attractiveness of this profession?
Concern has been raised in the past that accidents, piracy and criminalisation will greatly reduce the attractiveness of a career at sea for young people. For cadets, 47% thought that it did, 42% did not and 11% did not know. In this it is interesting that even though 47% thought that it did make it less attractive, they still chose to go to sea. Furthermore, we can never know how many potential cadets were put off by the image of shipping from embarking on such a career. When geographical location is taken into account a slightly different pattern emerges. Table 7 shows the breakdown by region.

Table 7: Geographical spread: Does the image of the shipping industry regarding safety, security and criminalisation of seafarers negatively affect the attractiveness of this profession?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
<th>% unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here it can be seen that those who view the issue in a less negative light are from Europe, India and the Philippines and those that see it more negatively are those in the Americas and China. This survey was undertaken shortly after the Deepwater Horizon incident in the Gulf of Mexico and so this could have had a negative effect upon those in that region. However, the response from China is surprising as it goes against the flow of the other regions.

The cadet responses are very interesting as these are the responses from those at the sharp end who are still at sea and so it is illuminating to see the spread of views. Further it is interesting to note that such a large proportion are willing to join an industry with such a relatively bad image.

With regards to shipping companies, 75% believed that a poor image did affect the attractiveness of the profession. This belief was particularly marked for those from SE Asia, where 100% believed that it had a negative effect compared with 67% in Europe. In all instances this high negative rating is worrying, particularly within Asia. Similarly for the maritime industry, 63% believed that it did have an impact, 31% did not, with one respondent being unsure. For the colleges alone, four said that it did and three said that it did not. Interestingly the one insurer who took part, and an organisation that is on the frontline in relation to casualties and criminalisation, did state that image had a negative effect.

In the focus group, the discussion revolved around this issue being related to retention and not recruitment. For the experts in that group, it was seen as unsurprising that companies would view everything so negatively as they were staffed by ex-seafarers. For the focus group, cadets at the start of their seagoing careers would be unlikely to see the negative aspects of their chosen career.

In summary, the image of shipping is of concern to those choosing to enter the profession. And yet, despite the poor image, the cadets still joined the industry. As was stated, it is unknown how many people were put off by the image of shipping, but there must be some other aspects which outweigh the concerns and still encouraged cadets to apply.

Similarly to all other professions, when a person knows someone in that profession, they are more likely to enter it themselves. It is well known that sons and daughters of lawyers also enter law, and the pattern is replicated in many disciplines – therefore, it could be assumed that this was the case for seafarers. To test this, the cadets were asked if they knew someone at sea before going to sea.
Overall 74% did and 26% did not. Taking into account the main geographical areas, it is clear that for most cadets, they did know someone who was at sea beforehand.

Table 8: Geographical distribution: Did you already know someone at sea when you were looking for a sea-going career?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This previous knowledge must in some part have assisted in overcoming any negative aspects. Further, these figures are in line with what is known about the effect of knowing someone in the profession prior to joining it. Everyone in the focus group, for example, knew someone at sea prior to them doing the same. This they saw as a critical aspect in assisting recruitment.

However, additional factors must also exist to overcome the negative image in addition to knowing someone at sea. To this end the cadets were asked about the working and leave schedules and whether they made the industry more attractive. Some 80% stated that it did make it more attractive.

When this was looked at within the focus group, the industry experts believed that this was a function of knowing someone in the profession as well as their own experiences when at sea. One aspect that the focus group raised was salary. For the focus group, earning a good wage compared with the area from which the seafarer came was a prime reason for being attracted to the sea as a profession.

A series of questions were also asked of the shipping companies and the wider maritime industry related specifically to how they undertake recruitment. Within the demographics section, the responses to recruitment based upon the gender issue were addressed. However, the survey also wished to explore geographical sourcing. In this the shipping companies were asked: From which country/areas do you source cadets?

The answers were fairly predictable. The main supplying areas are the Indian sub-continent and the Philippines though other areas in Asia were reported as supplying seafarers. Europe and Western Europe in particular was still used as a source of seafarers, with companies based in Europe still sourcing many of their seafarers from these traditional States.

One area that was missing was the Americas and, taking into account the number of responses from cadets in the Americas, it was interesting to see that they did not appear in the responses.

Nothing in this question can show the intent of companies to switch to other seafarer supplying States. What this does show is that the historic main labour supplying States are still to the fore. Further, as we will see later on, there are concerns over the provision of training in these established countries so branching out into any new area may well present some major challenges.

The sourcing of cadets is an interesting aspect as it may be believed that the traditional sourcing process of in-house recruitment is often stated as being redundant when a company can rely upon
crewing agencies to take that role. The question was a very simple one on how cadets were sourced: By which means does your organisation source cadets?

The traditional direct recruitment method through an in-house organisation remained popular, with 69% of all companies still doing this and that figure was the same for both owners and managers.

Table 9: By which means does your organisation source cadets?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly through in-house shore organisation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit directly to own training school</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ through a joint venture structure</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ through a Flag State Programme</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ through a usage of union Programme</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the above</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The willingness to recruit directly must be seen as a welcome initiative as it makes that link with the company at a very early stage and this has been seen to be very useful for retention of cadets. Additionally the link works in both directions, as the company gains a stake in a cadet’s welfare and career development. For the focus group, this link was of primary importance, as they felt that ensuring a proper career path will assist in the retention of the cadet as well as helping to instil a proper safety culture within the cadet.

One industry expert stated that what companies need to ensure is that there is a full career path which embraces not only that experience found at sea, but also in the office as well. The focus group also thought that the idea of having contracts of employment that extended beyond the end of the cadetship would be a good idea. This should not be viewed as some way of tying the cadet into the employment, but more that the cadet would be able to see that life, and employment, did exist after their cadetship.

**Recruitment summary**

Many of the findings could have been predicted in that cadets are sourced from the main labour supplying areas of Asia and Europe, however there were some very surprising aspects. The first being that cadets did not view the industry as negatively as those ashore.

A cynic might say that that is simply a function of where they are in their career paths, while a more positive view could be that the cadets are entering into a very different industry from that which their seniors did. Casualties are much reduced, safety standards are more rigorously enforced and ships are more automated so giving the impression of being more advanced.

Possibly, there is also an acceptance that criminalisation is not such a problem in that those who cause accidents should face criminal proceedings. However, this we do not know, what we do know is that despite the poor image of shipping, cadets are still attracted to it. Knowing someone in the industry beforehand is a common theme among all professionals and this profession is no different. The leave and salary aspects make the industry very attractive to those entering it.

Knowledge of the industry does throw up some inconsistencies – those applying from Western Europe have a much reduced knowledge of the industry than their counterparts in Asia and even Eastern Europe. This is an area which the industry located within that part of the world will need to address. However, it was refreshing to see that many did enter the industry well-informed about the industry as well as the companies that they would be joining. Recruitment is a complicated
process particularly when trying to ascertain why people are attracted to a particular industry. However, the shipping profession does appear to be able to recruit young people. How we train them and retain them is the subject of the next chapters.

WELFARE ONBOARD
The process of joining a ship for the first time is a daunting prospect for any person. Therefore, it is essential that cadets get the best advice and guidance on practical issues before joining a ship. With this in mind, the next question: Was sufficient information provided regarding clothes and equipment required to take with you when joining your first ship? was of particular interest. It was welcome to see that overall 79% were given enough information – this, though, means that one in five cadets were not. When geographical location was factored in, cadets from India and the Philippines were the best prepared and those from the Americas and Europe the least. Table 10 illustrates this point.

Table 10: Geographical breakdown for question: Was sufficient information provided regarding clothes and equipment required to take with you when joining your first ship?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22% did not. In one sense, it is encouraging that the majority of cadets were given enough encouragement and mentoring. However, as with the previous question, roughly one in five did not. Notwithstanding this, when only tanker sailing cadets are considered, the satisfaction rate jumps to 85% overall. When this is all broken down by region, as with the previous question, those cadets from Western Europe and the Americas reported that they did not have sufficient encouragement while those from the Philippines and India did.

Figure 10: Geographical distribution for mentoring and support

Here we see 63% of cadets from Western Europe were happy with their mentoring compared to 90% from the Philippines. It could be argued that these are subjective responses and that Western European cadets have higher expectations, however, this merely means that their expectations need to
be met, otherwise the quality of their learning experience will be jeopardised, with a knock-on effect to the retention rate. It would always be best to meet or exceed expectations in this regard.

When this is further broken down by geographical location for cadets on board tankers only, the cadets from Western Europe did increase their satisfaction number, however, it fell for Eastern Europe and North America. Table 11 illustrates this.

**Table 11: Geographical location of cadets on tankers only**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average all ships</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be borne in mind that when breaking it down to this extent, some of the numbers become quite small. However, the satisfaction levels for Eastern Europe are particularly poor. In any event, more should be done to ensure that all cadets experience the level of mentoring and encouragement that is needed to produce well-rounded, competent officers.

The focus group had a long discussion on this point. Two of the organisations who took part ran mentoring schemes. All were of the firm opinion that mentoring was a key issue and one that all companies as well as professional organisations should spend time on. It was their view that cadets who are mentored gain a broader and better insight into their profession than those who simply learn what is needed for their exams. Therefore, the opinion was that those companies which installed a mentoring process would benefit from better skilled officers.

The third related question was that of: Are most of the tasks you perform onboard interesting and challenging? Having tasks which are interesting and challenging is another important measure for how cadets view their time on board. If they are employed simply to chip and paint, then they will swiftly lose their motivation. Therefore, it was welcome to see that 89% stated that the tasks were indeed both interesting and challenging. Unfortunately, Western European cadets found the work less interesting and challenging than their counterparts in Asia, stating that 76% were positive compared to 97% in the Philippines and 94% in India. Eastern Europeans came in at 91%.

The respondents were given space to write in their comments. The main themes were that the cadets wanted to be more involved in more structured and directed training. Deck cadets, for example, wanted to spend more time on the bridge, particularly during pilotage. For the engineers, more hands-on training and understudying officers were important. What was deemed to be inappropriate was undertaking tasks such as cleaning and being used as an extra AB. Language skills and the knowledge base of the training officers also prompted comments, with many reporting that the officers were simply unable to either understand or provide answers to cadets.

What we can take from this is that in general, cadets do see the tasks on board as motivational. There does, though, appear to be an issue with Western Europeans as one quarter of them should not be ignored. This could possibly be a management of expectations issue, but it is one that should be looked into by those employing cadets from that area. Also the structure of their training should also be clearly understood by all, with those undertaking the training knowing what they are required to be teaching.
For the last welfare onboard-related question, the cadets were asked: Do you receive sufficient time and encouragement to study onboard? Again this is key as part of the training of anyone must also involve an element of studying text books. Overall, 81% responded positively. Once again, when breaking these answers down by region, 28% of the Western European cadets stated that they did not get enough study time. This compares with 9% for Eastern Europeans and 10% for Filipinos.

**Figure 11: Geographical distribution for study time**

When looking at the associated comments that the cadets made, the common theme was that they were working as ABs or motormen and not cadets. Study time on board is of particular importance and so companies should ensure that such time is provided.

Taking these four questions together, they were further analysed using a Binomial Logistic Regression methodology across the different ship types. This should then indicate whether there are any particular issues with tankers or any other ship types. The results of the analysis are shown in Figures 12, 13, and 14.
Responses to the welfare questions were compared to see if there was a pattern according to the on-board learning experience that predicted ship type. Scores on questions on induction, mentoring and types of tasks significantly predicted that cadets had experience of working on tankers. Study time did not significantly differ between cadets on tankers and other vessels. Cadets on offshore vessels were more likely to indicate ‘yes’ to the question regarding study time than cadets on tankers.

**Welfare and conditions**

For the next question, the answer for cadets to, ‘Should more be done by shipping companies to improve crew welfare conditions onboard?’ was a resounding yes. For those who have been to sea, 86% stated that more should be done and 14% said not. See Figure 14, above, for the results of when cadets on different types of vessels were analysed using Binomial Logistic Regression Analysis.

It should be noted that the lower the score the better the situation. Here we can see that tankers score better than all sectors apart from Offshore. However, this is a relative scale. When looking at the data for those cadets who have been to sea on tankers only, 85% said that more needs to be done. Therefore, Figure 14, merely shows that the tanker industry is less bad than the rest.

For shipping company respondents, both owners and managers were united in their responses in that 80% believed that more should be done and 20% did not. When the group was then broken down by region, 86% of those based in SE Asia thought that more should be done, compared with 78% from Europe.

These answers are of course subjective. We do not know if the ships operated by those in SE Asia have less well equipped accommodation than those in Europe. If one region had better ships than the other, then there would be no need to improve the facilities on board. Plus the differences between the two groups are small in actual numbers of respondents. However, what is clear is that there is a perceived need to improve conditions on board.

For the maritime industry overall, some 81% of respondents thought that conditions on board should be improved. This question though, illustrates the differences between the college responses and those from other sectors. For other sectors, excluding colleges, those believing that
the conditions should be improved were 67% compared with 33% who did not. However, for the colleges alone, the response was 100% for the improvement of conditions.

Finally, with respect to the focus group, all were in favour of increasing living standards on board and communication with home was an essential issue that needed to be addressed. As mentioned earlier, access to the internet can now no longer be considered a luxury. One leading industry expert stated that the days of sending a letter and waiting a month for a reply are long gone.

It was therefore, the opinion of the focus group that cadets must have access to the internet as it plays such a vital role in keeping them in touch with family, friends and the rest of the world. Interestingly, one industry expert stated that many cadets are unable to complete their coursework as they were unable to email it to the college due to bandwidth restrictions. As an issue going forward, INTERTANKO should explore with the marine broadband suppliers some form of education package which will allow increased bandwidth for those studying at sea.

Another issue that came out of the focus group was the provision of single cadet berths following the introduction of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). It will be recalled that seafarers are required to have private cabins on every cargo ship so where a cadet is classed as a seafarer, they must be given a single cabin. It should be noted that some Flags either do not class cadets as seafarers or have exempted them from this rule. The outcome of this is that rather ironically, cabins may well be much better on board a ship than the accommodation found in nautical colleges.

What is very clear is that companies have some work to do in improving conditions on board. In this regard, access to the internet is critical for the myriad reasons mentioned previously.

With rest hours the overall response to whether these were adequate or not was that 82% thought that it was OK and 18% thought that it was not. When broken down by region, there were no differences between Europe and Asia. Table 12, illustrates the breakdown by geographical region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average all ships</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is the first time that we have seen a pattern such as this, so although Western European cadets are more likely to report that they are not being given enough targeted training and study time, they are being given enough rest hours. The only below average area was North America. This is an issue which should be explored by those recruiting cadets from this area.

Onboard welfare: summary

Onboard welfare, in the many guises that takes, is vitally important to the wellbeing, training and overall education of cadets. Those cadets that feel like they are being looked after, are being well trained in a structured manner and are not used merely as extra cheap labour, will take in more information, will become better seafarers and will become imbued more readily with the safety ethos of the training company. It was interesting to note the lower reported satisfaction for those
cadets from Western Europe. This may well be a matter of them having higher expectations but this does not mean that they should be written off as just being spoilt children. Their expectations should also be met, and hopefully exceeded, so these standards can then be pushed across the entire fleet so that the standard can be raised for all on board.

**CADET TRAINING AND POLICY**

The policies on recruitment and the way that the cadetship was structured are important in analysing the employment of cadets. Another aspect of training is the effectiveness of the colleges’ regulations in ensuring that cadets are trained to the best standard. To this end, all three surveys contained the common question: Is the STCW training provided in shore-based training establishments suitable to the needs of the individual seafarer?

For cadets, 78% believed that the training was right for them, 11% did not and 11% did not know. When only considering those cadets who had been to sea the number who thought that it was enough remained at 78% and when considering only those in the last phase it rose to 80%. It is welcome to see that cadets have such confidence in their training, particularly as they have not yet undertaken their first watch as a qualified officer. However, such faith will at the very least give them confidence during that significant milestone.

The responses for shipping companies showed that 55% stated that the training establishments were suitable, 31% that they were not and 14% did not know. This should be interpreted with some concern as 55% is particularly low. This lack of acceptance of the standards of colleges has lead the EU to investigate training in many regions around the world, but most notably in the Philippines as well as companies taking the unilateral step of setting up their own colleges so that they can be targeted directly to their needs. This could be a solution to the issue, however, as not all companies possess the resources to undertake such a step, organisations such as INTERTANKO should try to put pressure on regulators and colleges to ensure that they are able to serve the needs of those using them.

The wider maritime industry was also asked the same question. Overall the responses were overwhelmingly in support, 81% stating that the colleges did provide the right skills. When looking at colleges alone, the support increased to 86%. When looking at the rest of the industry without colleges, the numbers remained strongly in support with 83% saying, yes the colleges were providing the right skills. It should be noted that it would be an unlikely situation to find the colleges, in particular, reporting that they were not up to the job of training...

For the focus group, concern over the quality of the training in colleges was present. They were content with training in many parts of the world but had concerns related to those which are often run along paramilitary lines. The focus group did not believe that such training properly prepared seafarers for the real world of merchant shipping. Several members of the focus group provided an insight into how individual companies felt that they had to step in and set up their own colleges or at the very least, instigate their own assessment regime.

In conclusion, there are some concerns related to the quality of the preparation that cadets are given by the colleges. The opinion was split as to whether this was a problem related to the colleges themselves or the regulations that they are working within.

The next common question across all three surveys was: Is the sea time defined in STCW sufficient to prepare a cadet to be a competent and confident Officer of the watch?

The cadets again exuded confidence in the amount of sea time they were being given. Table 13 shows the breakdown for all cadets, those that have been to sea and those in the last ¼ of their training.
It was particularly interesting to note that the closer the cadets were to becoming officers, the greater the confidence they had that they were well prepared. However, when the same numbers are broken down by region, the following was found as shown in Table 14.

### Table 14: Geographical distribution: Is the sea time defined in STCW sufficient to prepare a cadet to be a competent and confident Officer of the Watch?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
<th>% Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The striking result for the geographical distribution is the figure for Western Europe. Whereas every other region is above 70% (India and the Philippines 86% and 88% respectively), for Western Europe the number falls to only 55%. This could simply be a more realistic approach and attitude to their training.

From this, taking the numbers as a whole, cadets did believe that they were well prepared for their new role as officers. There was, though, a particular difference in those cadets from Western Europe over whether they were prepared enough. Companies should of course, take care and monitor their new entrant officers, and in this way especially close attention to those officers from the Philippines and India who may be over confident and those from Western Europe who may lack confidence.

The results from the shipping companies were also illuminating. The answers to this question, especially when compared with the answers provided by cadets, are interesting. Whereas 77% of the cadets stated that the sea time was sufficient only 43% of companies believed that it was, 50% that it was not and 7% saying that they did not know. With less than half of the companies being confident in this matter, this, when combined with the concerns over the training establishments, paints a poor picture of the training being undertaken by the cadets.

When the figures were further broken down, it was interesting to note that there were greater concerns over the amount of sea time for those companies based in SE Asia compared to European companies. The Europeans were equally split in that 50% thought that the sea time was sufficient, however 57% of those in SE Asia (with 14% unknown) thought otherwise.

There has, of course, always been a belief that one generation’s training is never as good as the next, however from this there is a considerable level of concern over the level of sea time that the STCW Convention requires.
For the maritime industry respondents, all were strongly in favour of believing that the sea time was sufficient with 88% supporting it. The support falls slightly to 83% for colleges alone, but this is still a strong figure. This should be compared with those who receive the products of the training establishments, the shipping companies, with only 50% feeling that the sea time was sufficient.

The maritime industry was asked a further inter-related question: Do you believe that the present cadet training structure ensures that cadets have the required skills upon qualification as an officer? The proportion who responded positively was 63%, with 37% stating that they did not have the requisite skills. This changed to 71% for those colleges that believe that the cadets end up with the right skills, with 29% stating that they did not.

The focus group also considered whether the sea time was enough to produce well skilled officers. For those industry experts, the answer was that if a structured and well-run cadetship was in place, then the sea time was adequate. Again they recalled the discussions over on-board working and training conditions. For the focus group, if cadets were on board just as an extra pair of hands, then the sea time would, of course, be inadequate. However, if there was a structured record book of tasks, combined with hands-on instructions backed up by a supportive structure and study time for college work, then the sea time would be more than adequate.

This then must be the conclusion, if the training on board is good, then the sea time is adequate – if the training is bad, then it is not. Therefore, all companies should ensure that the time spent at sea is undertaken in compliance with the training needs of those on board and that companies place cadets in an environment that is supportive and conducive to high-quality learning. This conclusion then leads on to how companies actually organise the training of cadets.

**Company training scheme**

The next section of the survey focused upon how shipping companies structured and run their cadet recruitment schemes.

The next question focused upon career development. Question: Do you have a company-specific cadet training development programme in place, including company specific training books, career paths and promotion criteria? The results of the question for all companies can be seen in Table 15.

### Table 15: Career paths and promotion criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes (including all)</th>
<th>Yes (but not for all our nationalities)</th>
<th>Yes (excluding company specific training books, career paths &amp; promotion criteria)</th>
<th>Yes (excluding company specific training books)</th>
<th>Yes (excluding promotion criteria)</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes (%)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was welcome to see that 79% of companies had a specific structured cadet recruitment plan, although not all covering all cadets. However 21% stated that they did not, this could mean that they used an external plan such as the UK’s Merchant Navy Training Board plan.

What was encouraging to see was that 44% of the companies had a comprehensive training scheme open to all nationalities. Such schemes open to all were more common amongst shipowners (46%) than with managers (31%) and this would be expected. However, those reporting that they did not have such a scheme were more common among the owners (25%).
than the managers (15%). For the geographical split, the numbers were very similar with 40% of companies in SE Asia having a comprehensive scheme compared with 38% in Europe.

The next question was on retention rates, which is one of the most important aspects of training. After all, why is training undertaken if not to fulfil the future crewing needs of the company?

Therefore, the shipping companies were asked: What is your retention rate for Cadets to Officers?

Taking into account the amount of time, effort and money put into training schemes, the retention of those trained is of great importance. Only one company, a ship manager, reported that they had a 100% retention rate and four companies, very surprisingly, did not measure their retention rate at all. The main result from this survey is that companies do manage to keep most of their trainees. If we take above 80% retention as being a good figure, it is gratifying that 77% of companies are achieving this, Figure 16 illustrates this.

**Figure 16: Retention rate for cadets and officers**

![Retention rate bar chart]

However, when the geographical regions are split, a very different pattern emerges. In this, as illustrated in Table 16, below, the companies based in SE Asia have a much greater ability to retain their trainees.

**Table 16: Geographical distribution: What is your retention rate for Cadets to Officers?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>90 to 100%</th>
<th>80 to 90%</th>
<th>Below 60%</th>
<th>We do not measure this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2: SE Asia</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2: Europe</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They report retention rates of over 90% in 80% of cases. This compares with 15% for the comparable retention figure for Europe. Similarly, for the below 60% retention rate, the SE Asia companies do not report having such low numbers and the European companies report a figure of
27%. Although these percentages represent relatively small respondents and so should be used with caution, the trend is clear. For some reason, European-based companies have a more difficult time in retaining cadets after training.

Retention rates are only of importance if the company actually wishes to retain the cadet after training. The cadets were asked: Does your company offer long-term employment after completion of your cadetship? They reported that 77% did have a long-term plan compared with 23% that did not. However, when the analysis was undertaken using regional groups, a different pattern emerged. Table 17 illustrates this.

Table 17: Regional distribution. Does your company offer long-term employment after completion of your cadetship?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>% No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average all ships</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this, it is clear that there is a particular issue with Western Europe and the provision of long-term employment. The funding of cadets will be reported on in a later section, but the State provision of funding for cadet placement could be a factor in the lack of a longer-term plan. If a company is employing cadets purely to gain a tax exemption, then this illustrates that they do not have a long-term plan for their employment. Companies recruiting Western Europeans should ensure that they are doing so for the right reasons and not simply trying to gain a tax concession.

Changes to existing policies are of interest particularly as the world has experienced a period of financial uncertainty flowing from the restriction in credit for the banking industry in the summer of 2008. The shipping industry has certainly not been immune from the recession that followed and when this survey was commissioned in 2013, the shipping industry was continuing to experience significant financial insecurity. Therefore, a company’s commitment to ongoing training should be viewed in the light of a tight fiscal environment and the answers to the question: ‘Do you envisage future changes to your organization cadet intake policy?’ are important.

It was therefore, good to see that only 27% of companies plan to reduce their cadet intake. This compares with 51% who plan on keeping it the same and 19% who are actually planning on increasing their intake, see Figure 17, overleaf.
When geographical location was taken into account, a slightly different pattern emerged. In this, cost is a greater factor for Europe-based companies than those in SE Asia. Whereas, other reasons not involving cost, are the main reasons for companies in SE Asia to reduce their intake. Conversely, 40% of SE Asian companies plan on increasing their intake, compared with only 15% of European companies. However, when no changes to the intake are taken into account, 69% of European companies and 80% of SE Asian companies will not be reducing their intake. Full results can be seen in Table 18.

Table 18: Geographical breakdown: Do you envisage future changes to your organisation’s cadet intake policy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% SE Asia</th>
<th>% Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, due to cost pressure we will scale down the cadet programme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, due to other reasons than cost we will scale down the cadet programme</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, due to company ambitions we intend to scale up on the cadet programme</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, scale down due to fewer berths available onboard</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No – keeping it as it is</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What this data shows is that, unlike in previous major recessions such as those experienced by shipping companies in the 1980s, there is no across the board move to stop recruiting. This is a very welcome finding as it shows how companies have matured from the knee-jerk reaction of the 1980s in viewing training as a cost, to one of investment in the future.

Taking into account the financial environment, it could be expected that external sources of funding may well be key in ensuring that cadet training continues. Therefore, we would expect...
that companies would state that support was important when answering the following question: Is funding from Governments or Flag States important for your company investments in cadet training?

However, only for 21% was external funding key to their decision-making and if it was removed then they would have to scale down their training. Some 43% stated that it was nice to have, but would not change their commitment and 36% stated that it was not applicable for their company. For those companies based in SE Asia, not one of them stated that it was key and only 17% of those in Europe believed that it was necessary.

This is a major finding, as many States in Europe in particular, provide direct financial support in order for cadets to be trained. Therefore, it may be more useful if governmental funding were targeted at certain sectors or even used to promote gender issues, as we have seen in an earlier section that gender inequality remains a problem.

The maritime industry was asked a related question of: Should shipping companies fully fund the training of cadets? The question provided what would appear to be a surprising result, with 56% saying that shipping companies should fully fund, compared with 44% who did not. Taking account of where the responses were coming from, it could have been expected that the maritime industry would expect the shipping companies to foot the entire bill. Further, the responses purely from colleges produced exactly the same result. It is therefore welcome to see that the maritime industry does not see the solving of the recruitment and training issue purely from the perspective of one for the shipping industry itself to solve.

The focus group were of the opinion that funding from governments has proved to be critical for countries and sectors, stating that if it were removed then this would have a significant effect upon the recruitment of cadets.

The funding of cadets is a complicated issue and one that divides opinion. Companies should continue to fund the training which is required for their future crewing needs. However, governments should also play a role in assisting their nationals to be able to compete on a global basis for the limited number of cadet berths available. Additionally, the wider maritime industry also has a responsibility as many will end up recruiting seafarers to fulfil technical roles ashore. Therefore, the funding should be spread, although the primary responsibility will always lie with the shipowner.

Question: Do you think there should be a mandatory requirement for all ships to have cadet berths?

It is often stated that the lack of cadet cabins is one of the main barriers to recruiting cadets. In 2014, the issue of excluding cadet accommodation from a ship’s gross tonnage was tabled at the IMO as a means of reducing the cost of training. Therefore, the mandating of cadet accommodation should be one of major importance. Overall, the companies were split on whether it should be mandated or not – 39% said no, 36% said yes and 25% said yes but only for new ships.

The issue was more important for managers than owners, with 45% of owners stating that the decision should be left to them compared with 31% for managers. For those companies based in SE Asia, 50% said that it was essential compared with 39% for those in Europe.
From this it is clear that companies are split on whether cabins for cadets should be mandated. However, for INTERTANKO, if they were mandated, there would be a level playing field and all ships would be required to have them. Such a move would increase the availability of berths and so assist in the training of the next generation of seafarers. This was also the opinion shared by the focus group. For them, their concern revolved around many ships now being built with very small accommodation areas and without any berths available for cadets. In this regard the provisions of the MLC were reiterated where each seafarer on a cargo vessel must be provided with their own cabin.

The shipping companies were then given free space to write about what in their opinion were the three main barriers to having a cadet training programme in place. The one that came up time and again was the cost of training. The second main issue was the time and effort that it took for ships’ staff to provide training and guidance.

Respondents were then provided with free space to state what they saw as the three main benefits to having a cadet training programme. In this, the overwhelming response was that by training their own people, the company would be able to have a pool of well-trained officers which would ensure the sustainability of their fleet. The other main reasons were the creation of a sense of loyalty amongst their staff and creating the right level of safety knowledge.

Overall, it can be seen that although there is a cost involved in the training of cadets, the result is a great benefit to the company as it creates a pool of officers trained to that company’s safety and technical standards and who are loyal to that company. This then results in a good retention rate which in turn reduces crewing costs.

**Maritime industry**

The maritime industry was also provided with a number of questions which related to the sufficiency of the number of cadets entering the industry, the marketing of careers and whether cadets should be listed on the safe manning document. Although small in number, the responses do give some useful insight.

**Question: Are the numbers of cadets entering the industry sufficient to ensure we meet our future officer demands?**

In this there was a large majority of all respondents stating that there was not enough joining the industry. Overall 63% said that there was not enough, compared to 37% who said there were. Naturally, for the colleges the proportion increased to 86% saying there was not. The concern that there is not enough cadets entering the industry is highlighted by those that are often the end user and who benefit from others providing the training.

**Question: Who should take the primary responsibility for ensuring sufficient numbers of cadets enter the industry?**

In this the responses covered the whole range of organisations, but with the primary responsibility lying with shipping companies, but with Government agencies also ranking highly, see Figure 18, opposite.
One respondent stated that all should take a collaborative approach and this is probably the correct thing to do.

The focus group came to a similar conclusion. In this they stated that taking a holistic view, all had a responsibility in this regard. But they were very concerned over the numbers entering the profession. Several participants made the point that with so few entering the profession, wage inflation would cause considerable problems for the industry, especially in the gas sector.

Question: Who should take responsibility for the general marketing of seafarers careers?

The marketing question produced a very similar outcome as to the one on responsibility for having sufficient numbers. It was believed that shipping companies should have that responsibility as shown in Figure 19.

Figure 19: Responsibility for marketing careers
Following on from the one comment that this should be a collaborative effort, the whole industry should promote careers at sea, assist in ensuring training berths are available and then help those who qualify to gain employment.

*Question: Should cadets be included on Minimum Safe Manning Certificates?*

The final question opens an interesting debate. If a cadet is listed on the manning certificate, then there is a requirement to have a person fulfilling that role on board. Shipping companies would then be required to always have a cadet on board and they would be allocated a specific safety role. However, if a cadet is only there for training, then they should not have any specific safety role.

Additionally, with the MLC some States in the early stages of implementation did not include cadets within the definition of the seafarer. The justification for this was that cadets were on board for training purposes only and not to work, and consequently were not listed on the manning certificate.

Of the respondents, 63% said that cadets should be listed compared with 37% who did not. While we do not know the reasons behind the answers, it is interesting to see such a positive response.

The focus group participants were unequivocal in their opposition to the idea that cadets should be listed on the safe manning document. For them, it was quite clear that cadets were there to train and not work.

In summary, even though the responses may have been small in number from this sector, they do provide a useful insight into the wider maritime industry. Of particular importance were the answers from the colleges in which there appeared to be a belief that all appeared to be going well with regards to equipping cadets with the right knowledge, skills and experience required of a junior officer. This belief stands in stark contrast to that of the shipping industry.

For the industry there are severe shortfalls in training, knowledge and the sea time required. This is of such an extent that many companies have instigated their own training regimes. This cannot just be a matter of too high expectations for the companies, but a real gap between the skills required and those that cadets are trained in. INTERTANKO should look into trying to bridge the gap.

On the positive side, it was very good to see that the industry did not expect the shipping industry to fund the entire recruitment and training of cadets. What should be taken from this is that the whole shipping industry needs to work together to ensure that there is a significant pool of seafarers trained in the right subjects and equipped with the right skills.

This can only be achieved through a collaborative approach to the recruitment, retention and career planning for cadets and junior officers.
CADETS’ VIEWS ON WHAT IS GOOD AND BAD ABOUT THE MERCHANT NAVY AS A CAREER

‘The final section of this study should be given over to allowing the cadets the room to speak their minds on the problems that they face.’

Some 945 cadets provided their opinion on the following question: In your opinion what are the three worse things about a career in the merchant navy? The following are word clouds which indicate the importance of the issue through the size of the words. The larger the size of the word, the greater the number of times that it is used.

First reason:

Board Cadets Communication Crew Dangerous Distance Familia
Family Far from Home Homesickness Life
Long Contracts Long Period Long Time away from Home Loved Ones Months Onboard Piracy Pirates Risk
Sea Ship Shore Staying Weather Working Hours

Second reason

Ashore Bad Weather Communication Conditions Contracts Crew Dangerous Family Far Food Friends
Internet Life Long Hours Long Periods Money Onboard Piracy Pirates Poor Risks Sea Ship Shore Short Vacation Stress Working Hours
Third reason:

Recurrent themes were those related to danger, risk and piracy. The following examples are transcribed from responses. For example:

‘Piracy and related incidents. Those captured by pirates, whose responsibility is to make sure they return back home??? Company, government, IMO ???’

‘High risk at times in terms of life, freedom, wealth’

‘Quite a dangerous place to be if things go wrong. (fire and drowning being the worst two)’

‘Danger on navigation such as natural calamities, human aspects and other factors which result in harm’

However, the greatest theme was that of homesickness and lack of communication. For example:

‘Lack of communication towards family when at sea’

‘Poor communication opportunities, such as very, very slow internet’

‘Lack of cheap communication with home’

‘Lack of communication access with people back at home’
Therefore, we can see that communications with home is one of the key issues, but surprisingly so is the risk at sea. The piracy issue came up many times and yet when asked about that as part of the image of the sea, although it was raised, it did not stop people going to sea. Perhaps, as the focus group stated, it is a matter of retention and not recruitment.

For the positive issues for cadets at sea. The following word clouds can be seen.

For the primary reason:

- Adventure
- Career
- Challenging
- Countries
- Experience
- Financial
- Interesting
- Job
- Knowledge
- Meet
- Money
- Paid
- Pay
- Places
- Profession
- Safety
- Salary
- Sea
- Tax
- Travel
- Vacation
- Wages

For the second reason:

- Adventurous
- Benefits
- Career
- Challenging
- Chance
- Countries
- Cultures
- Experience
- Girls
- Job
- Knowledge
- Learning
- Life
- Meet
- Money
- New
- People
- Pay
- Places
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Safety
- Salary
- Schedule
- Sea
- Travel
- Vacation
- Wages

Third reason:

- Adventure
- Career
- Challenging
- Countries
- Cultures
- Experience
- Interesting
- Job
- Knowledge
- Learn
- Life
- Meet
- People
- Money
- Nice
- Opportunities
- Pay
- Places
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Sailing
- Salary
- Sea
- Skills
- Travel
- Vacation
- Wages
Throughout the answers the words: money, salary and pay are very frequent.

‘Fast way to make money if right steps taken. DPO, tax breaks’

‘Do not have to cook! Saving money!’

‘Easy to earn money’

‘Handsome salary’

‘Big salary to earn, especially when you are an officer’

‘A career in the merchant navy is highly attractive because of its high pay’

‘High pay without taxes’

But fortunately, there were also less mercenary views relating to careers, challenges and travel.

‘I just love my job, I think it is interesting at all career stages.’

‘You have chosen a career different from others’

‘A different and challenging career and everyday life’

‘It’s a career not just a job’

‘Travelling around the world and getting know new cultures’

‘Ability to travel internationally’

The cadets were then provided with the opportunity to say what could improve the appeal of the profession. Again the word clouds are used to illustrate the answers.
First point:

Benefits Board Cadets Career Communication Conditions Contracts Crew Family Food Improve Internet Job Money Onboard Pay Profession Safety Salary Schools Sea Ships Training Vessels Wages

Second point:


Third point:


The points raised in this section mirrored those within the problems and this could reasonably be expected.
Summary
The recruitment and retention of cadets is a complicated process and the views of all stakeholders involved in the process have been presented and analysed in this report. What is clear is that the cadets are willing to go to sea, learn and have high expectations. Similarly, companies demonstrate a clear appetite for recruitment because they see that they need seafarers to fulfil their training needs for the future. The wider industry, in their limited responses, were also committed to the training.

From this enthusiasm for training and learning we need to find the issues, both positive and negative in order to decide how best to recruit and train those willing to go to sea. Cadets brought up in an age where access to the internet is an essential of modern life are often faced with a technological shock when stepping on board a ship for the very first time. The completely alien environment, with its noises, smells and professional activity are a culture shock for the newly minted seafarers.

The role of any company must in the first instance, be to mitigate the shock factor. Therefore, it is inexcusable to send a cadet away for the first time without knowledge of the tasks that they will face and without proper guidance on simple things like the clothes to take. All those joining ships, must be given full and complete guidance so that they are prepared.

Similarly, the cadet must not be treated as an extra pair of hands – they are there to train and learn. Mentoring should be embraced and a formal training scheme incorporating mentoring will be of the utmost benefit to the cadet. The gender issue is one that is often shied away from – too many companies simply refuse to recruit cadets who are female. This aspect should be addressed and the proportion of women at sea should be increased.

Companies and colleges appear to have a bit of a disconnect between what is expected by the companies. The colleges should be encouraged to do more than just teach to the convention, but also aim to produce well-rounded and skilled individuals who will be able to fit in on board the ship.

On board welfare is of great importance. Giving the cadet the environment in which they can train, learn and gain their professional skills is vital to all involved. Simply using them as an AB or an extra motorman will not help the company in the longer term when they are investing considerable amounts of money and resources into the training of this young person and it is simply wasted effort if the training is not structured and focused.

Cadets will always be attracted to the sea by the prospects of good pay, adventure and travel. However, it should be cautioned in that if pay is their only motivator, then they are unlikely to be the kind of person who is looking for a career in the industry, they have simply found a place in which to earn a decent wage. Therefore, it was refreshing to see that many cadets wanted to have more than just a large wage packet and that they were motivated to this profession because it is exactly that – a profession.

Cadets are in the main, young, male and drawn from the traditional seafarer supplying nations. There are regional differences, probably due to differing expectations. These expectations are just one of the many issues faced by the recruiters of the next generation of seafarers. However, these challenges of recruiting from various parts of the world simply means that the recruiters are also exposed to different cultures and practices as the cadets are. It shows how much can be learnt from both sides. The focus group of marine professionals certainly saw the mentoring as a two-way street.

But the last words in all of this should go to a cadet:

‘It's a career not just a job’