



Manpower Update Report

Maritime Services Industry

2024



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Introduction

Background

The Maritime Services Training Board (MSTB) is responsible for ascertaining the manpower situation in the relevant industries, assessing whether the manpower supply can meet the demand, and recommending to the VTC for the development of vocational and professional education and training (VPET), and relevant facilities to meet the assessed training needs.

To reflect the dynamics of the manpower situation, the MSTB conducts one full manpower survey every four years, supplemented by two interim manpower updates with the latest manpower information collected. Following the full manpower survey in 2020, this is the second manpower update report published by the MSTB in the 4-year cycle. The previous one was published in 2023.

Same as the exercise in 2023, the 2024 Manpower Update comprises:

- (a) focus group meetings to gather views from industry experts on the latest developments in the maritime services industry, manpower situation and training needs, recruitment challenges and proposed measures to address the challenges faced by the industry; and
- (b) desk research to analyse job advertisements related to the industry.

Objectives

The objectives of the Manpower Update are:

- (i) to examine the latest developments and trends of the maritime services industry;
- (ii) to explore the changes in manpower demands for principal jobs and the factors behind them;
- (iii) to understand recruitment situations, challenges and solutions;
- (iv) to explore training needs, emerging skills/jobs; and
- (v) to recommend measures to address the manpower needs.

Methodology

Overview

With reference to the 2020 Manpower Survey and the 2023 Manpower Update, this report aims to provide qualitative descriptions of the recent development of the industry from manpower perspective through the information obtained from focus group meetings, supplemented with the findings from desk research.

Focus Group Meetings

Two focus groups were formed through engagement of industry experts from the following branches:

1. Sea-based Group
 - Ship owner/manager of sea-going vessels
 - Operators of vessels moving between Hong Kong and the ports in Pearl River Delta
 - Local vessel
 - Yacht and cruise
2. Shore-based Group
 - Shipbroker
 - Maritime law
 - Maritime insurance
 - Ship finance
 - Ship repairing
 - Ship surveying and classification society
 - Marine technology

Meetings of the shore-based and sea-based focus groups were conducted on 25 and 29 January 2024 respectively.

Members had in-depth discussions on topics selected by the Working Party on Manpower Survey of the MSTB.

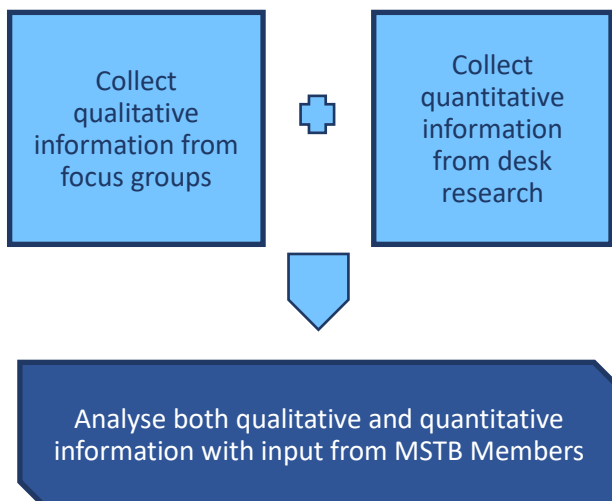
Separate telephone interviews/online meeting were conducted on 19 February, 23 February and 7 March 2024 to collect views from focus group members who were unable to attend the meetings.

Desk Research

The desk research was conducted between February 2023 and January 2024 to collect job advertisements from major online recruitment portals through an employment information system. The information collected was matched against the relevant company listings in the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification and duplicate records were removed. Eventually, a total of 1,529 job advertisements relevant to the industry were captured during the said period.

Data Analysis

The analysis consists of three steps:



Limitations

As this is not a full manpower survey, the findings and recommendations drawn from the focus group meetings are mainly qualitative in nature and the report only focuses on the analysis of manpower trends. Job advertisements were collected from major recruitment portals and the Labour Department. Other channels, such as industry referrals, recruitment through manning agents and head hunting for managerial positions were not covered. The data can only serve as reference information supplementary to the findings of focus group meetings.

Findings

Latest Developments and Trends in the Maritime Services Industry

Global Landscapes

Ocean freight overcapacity

After about two years of booming profits, the ocean freight market has experienced a slowdown since the second half of 2022 due to overcapacity resulting from the excessive launch of mega ships amid global economic downturn. The Russo-Ukrainian War, the Red Sea Crisis and fluctuation in fuel costs have increased the risks and operational complexities, adding uncertainty to the outlook of the ocean freight market.

While shipowners and shipping companies have accelerated efforts to combat overcapacity (e.g. by scrapping more old vessels, slowing down ship speed, idling some ships or cancelling certain routes/call ports), it takes time for them to regulate the supply side to restore profitable freight rates.

Escalating pressure on decarbonisation

Another pressing challenge facing the maritime industry today is decarbonisation. In July 2023, the International Maritime Organization (IMO)

adopted the “2023 IMO Strategy on Reduction of Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions from Ships” in which a more aggressive goal was set – “net-zero” GHG emission to be achieved by or around 2050¹. The European Union (EU) also plans to extend its Emission Trading System (ETS) to shipping in 2024, which means shipping companies will need to pay for the carbon dioxide emitted from their ships entering EU ports².

Shipowners need to step up decarbonisation efforts and increase their investments in alternative fuels, new technologies and adjust their operations as well.

Advancements in digitalisation

The deployment of IoT sensors, data analytical tools and enhanced network connectivity enable remote monitoring of vessel systems and equipment, thereby reducing the need for physical inspections, and enhancing vessel efficiency, reliability and maintenance planning. However, addressing challenges related to workforce adaptation, cybersecurity, and regulatory frameworks is essential for unleashing the full potential of these technological advancements.

Recovery of the cruise market

The cruise market is rebounding faster than expected. The Cruise Lines

International Association recorded a passenger volume of 31.7 million people in 2023, representing an increase of 7% from the pre-pandemic level in 2019³. Global cruise lines are particularly optimistic about the growth of the Asian market and are increasing the number of Asian routes.

Hong Kong’s situation

Keen global competition

The maritime industry is characterised by intense global competition, with many countries/cities competing for market share. While Hong Kong has maintained its position as one of the top ten ports in the world, its throughput volume has gradually declined over the past ten years due to increasing competition from other ports in the region.

Although the Government has put in a lot of efforts to develop high value-added maritime services with a view to uplifting Hong Kong’s status as an international maritime centre (IMC), the Xinhua- Baltic International Shipping Centre Development (ISCD) Index, on which Hong Kong was ranked the fourth in 2023, revealed that the competition among leading IMCs is also very intense. The dominant positions of the top three IMCs (i.e. Singapore, London and Shanghai)

¹ 2023 IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships
<https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Environment/Pages/2023-IMO-Strategy-on-Reduction-of-GHG-Emissions-from-Ships.aspx>

² European Commission website:
<https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu->

[action/transport/reducing-emissions-shipping-sector_en](https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Environment/Pages/2023-IMO-Strategy-on-Reduction-of-GHG-Emissions-from-Ships.aspx)

³ 2024 State of the Cruise Industry Report (The Cruise Lines International Association):
<https://cruising.org/en/News-and-Research/Research/2024/April/2024-State-of-the-Cruise-Industry-Report>

are hard to challenge, and some countries such as Dubai are rising rapidly. Dubai's strategic location between the east and west, as well as its business-friendly measures have fast-tracked the country to an appealing location for maritime business. Strategic support from the Government is essential to maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness.

Varied performance across different sectors in Hong Kong

Since sea freight is the backbone of the global supply chain, seagoing companies based in Hong Kong are optimistic about the prospects of the industry in the long run and keep recruiting staff amid the temporary uncertain environment.

As for the river trade sector, since the resumption of ferry services between Hong Kong and Macau in January 2023, the number of ferry passengers has been on a rise. The impact of the opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge on cross-boundary ferry services seems to be smaller than expected. However, owing to insufficient manpower, ferry operators are unable to expand their fleets to cope with the increased service demand.

Regarding the local vessel sector, the business of local ferries and various kinds of workboats is, in general, stable and not much affected by external environment changes. The local vessel sector also sees a growing trend on the adoption of eco-friendly vessels. The Government has launched the Vessel Subsidy Scheme (VSS) to subsidise ferry operators to replace their fleets by a total of 47 greener vessels. The first batch of new vessels is

expected to service in the first half of 2024. Companies operating local workboats also see a potential opportunity arising from marine construction projects in the pipeline. Once mega projects like the Lantau Tomorrow Vision are kick-started, these companies will need more manpower to support the marine construction work.

As regards high value-added maritime services, due to intense competition from other IMCs and the lack of new shipowners/ship management companies in Hong Kong, many maritime services providers, including ship insurance companies, classification societies and maritime lawyers, consider it challenging to expand their businesses.

Compared with other fields of maritime services, ship finance professionals, ship sales and purchase brokers as well as marine engine manufacturers seem to be more optimistic towards their future development. Focus group member from the field of ship finance observes that some shipowners and leasing houses have set up new branches in Hong Kong or expanded their existing Hong Kong offices, partially attributed to the tax concessions introduced by the HKSAR Government on ship finance businesses. Focus group member engaging in ship sales and purchases also shares that 2023 was a very rewarding year and expects the business to grow moderately in the next few years. Attributed to shipowners' increased investments in decarbonisation solutions, focus group member working in a marine engine manufacturer also noticed a steady

business growth.

While the above observations/sharing may only reflect the situation of individual industry players and may not be over-generalised, all focus group members share the same view that it is of paramount importance for the Government to take a more proactive role in attracting shipping commercial principals to set up their operations in Hong Kong, thereby driving the demand for associated maritime services.

Commitment of HKSAR Government

The HKSAR Government is committed to reinforcing Hong Kong's position as an IMC and enhancing its strengths in high

value-added maritime services. Multi-faceted measures in support of the industry have been implemented in the past few years, e.g. implementation of various tax concessions to attract maritime enterprises to establish their presence in Hong Kong, the launch of a new data sharing platform to improve port efficiency, and the enhancements of incentive schemes under the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund (MATF) for talent development.

The Government also promulgated the Action Plan on Maritime and Port Development Strategy in 2023 to formulate clear strategies and concrete action measures to support the sustainable development needs of the maritime and port industry, so as to enhance its long-term competitiveness.

Manpower Demand

Focus Groups

The industry continues to struggle with the difficulties in attracting young talents. Trends of manpower demand observed by the focus groups across sectors are highlighted below:

1. Ocean Going Sector

As predicted by BIMCO in 2021, there would be a global shortage of nearly 90,000 sea-going officers by 2026⁴. In spite of the uncertainty of the ocean freight market, the industry still considers

that sea-going officers will continue to be in high demand. While shipping companies recruit seafarers from all over the world, a number of Hong Kong-based companies are willing to employ more local cadets provided that there is a considerable and stable supply of new blood.

According to the figures on the Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme (SGTIS) (Annex 1), a total of 433 university/higher diploma graduates who graduated between 2013 and 2023 have joined the industry as sea-going cadets, among

⁴ BIMCO – News “New BIMCO/ICS Seafarer Workforce Report Warns of Serious Potential Officer Shortage”

<https://www.bimco.org/news/priority-news/20210728---bimco-ics-seafarer-workforce-report>

which 349 are deck cadets and the remaining 84 are engineering cadets. The number of new entrants, particularly engineering cadets, is relatively small. Additional promotional efforts and incentives are considered necessary to improve the situation.

For recruitment of crew members on cruise ships, cruise lines usually rely on international agents. It is very common for a cruise ship to have more than 1,000 crew members from dozens of nationalities. While cruise lines are expanding their Asian routes, there will be a growing demand for servicing staff who are proficient in English and at least one Asian language say Putonghua. With language advantage, local workers have a better chance to get a job on board cruise ships.

2. River Trade Sector

With the increased number of passengers, ferry companies in the river trade sector see a need to recruit more crew members. However, they find it difficult to recruit experienced staff as many of their previously redundant staff have changed to other sectors/industries or even left Hong Kong for other opportunities. It is also hard for them to recruit new entrants without any prior experience as their remuneration packages for entry ranks (e.g. sailor, cabin assistant and cadet) are not competitive enough. Cross-boundary ferry companies hope that the Government could provide monthly subsidy to their junior staff during early stage of employment (like those incentive schemes launched for the ocean-going

and local vessel sectors).

3. Local Vessel Sector

The local vessel sector has an ageing workforce, of which many coxswains are over 60 or even 65. An ageing workforce poses concern on passenger safety as a coxswain usually needs to perform frequent docking duties which require a high level of attention and good physical fitness. In the meantime, to support the development of green shipping, more electric vessels will be put into operation. Older crew members generally have lower education levels and are not tech-savvy, making it difficult for them to grasp the skills required to operate these new ships. Therefore, the sector is in urgent need for new blood. Crew members including coxswains, engine operators and sailors will continue to be in high demand.

Regarding the field of yacht, due to economic uncertainty, some shipowners have sold their yachts or reduced the number of crew members to control costs. As such, yacht chartering/management companies do not see a pressing need for new blood.

4. Shore Based Sector

A range of shore-based companies such as shipyards, marine engine providers and classification societies are in great demand of engineering talents. All these companies find it extremely difficult to recruit engineering staff as many industries are competing for the same type of talents.

Talents with seafaring experience are also in demand. Shipping companies, training institutes and Government departments require these ex-seafarers to take up various job roles, e.g. port captain, technical superintendent, ship surveyor, trainers and professional grades of the Marine Department. As there are few local people possessing seafaring experience, employers usually resort to employing non-local talents or leave the posts unfilled.

The manpower situation of the Marine Department sheds light on the deficiency of local talents with seafaring experience. As one of the most competitive employers in the industry, the Department continues to suffer from an under-strength of 20% for posts requiring ocean-going experience (details given in Annex 2), despite its efforts to relax the entry requirements by introducing junior ranks to certain professional grades.

For high value-added maritime services

providers (e.g. maritime law, ship insurance, ship chartering and ship finance) which only require a small pool of talents, they generally encounter a talent gap that the mid-level personnel are missing. Some companies express that they only have senior staff who are approaching retirement age and junior staff who only have a couple years of experience. Their biggest concern is not the difficulties in attracting new entrants, but the challenges in retaining young professionals, securing their long-term commitment to the companies and succession planning.

One focus group member in the field of ship finance observes that some peers from Mainland China are attracted by the education system in Hong Kong and have relocated to Hong Kong through the Top Talent Pass Scheme. This new source of manpower may help bridge the talent gap of high valued-added maritime services in the long run.

Findings of Desk Research

Between February 2023 and January 2024, a total of 1,529 maritime-related job advertisements were collected through major online recruitment portals. Owing to the limited number of job advertisements collected for the ocean going and river trade sectors, analysis of principal jobs in high demand here is confined to the local vessel and shore based sectors only. Below are the top three jobs for the two sectors with reference to the findings of the 2023 Manpower Update Report.

Local Vessel Sector

Top Three Principal Jobs with the most job advertisements		
<i>No. in () indicates % of the total advertisements</i>		
	2023-2024 Desk Research	2022-2023 Desk Research
1	Coxswain/Assistant Coxswain (41.8%)	Sailor (48.5%)
2	Sailor (34.9%)	Coxswain/Assistant Coxswain (20.1%)
3	Engine Operator/Assistant Engine Operator (17.0%)	Engine Operator/Assistant Engine Operator (17.8%)

Shore Based Sector

Top Three Principal Jobs with the most job advertisements		
No. in () indicates % of the total advertisements		
	2023-2024 Desk Research	2022-2023 Desk Research
1	Technician; Technical Officer; Service Engineer (19.6%)	Technician; Technical Officer; Service Engineer (13.1%)
2	Pier Attendant; Pier Assistant (9.3%)	Cargo Planner; Cargo Officer (11.2%)
3	Cargo Planner; Cargo Officer (5.9%)	Stevedore (7.5%)

As shown in the above tables, high-demand jobs identified last year continue to be the jobs with most recruitment advertisements. In line with the views of focus groups, engineering staff including shipboard Engine Operator and shore-based Technician are in great demand.

Training Needs

International Code of Safety for Ships Using Gases or Other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code)

Mandatory requirements for the training of personnel on ships subject to the IGF Code were enforced in 2017, following the amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978⁵. The requirements apply to Masters, officers, ratings and other personnel working on board ships using gases or other low-flashpoint fuels (i.e. mainly liquefied natural gas (LNG) ships at the moment). Depending on the level of responsibility, seafarers have to complete either basic or advanced training before they are assigned shipboard duties on relevant ships.

As LNG is one of the most mature

solutions for decarbonisation for the time being, the number of LNG ships is growing very fast, and so do the associated training needs on IGF Code. In view that relevant local training is not available due to the lack of expertise, local training providers may consider working with Mainland/overseas institutes to launch relevant joint programmes in Hong Kong.

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) for Maritime Industry

ESG has increasingly influenced the industry in recent years. There have been growing concerns over sustainable shipping and responsible business practices within the industry. Investors, customers and insurers are also integrating ESG risk factors in their decision-making processes. Maritime

⁵ International Maritime Organisation. Latest News (<https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/PressBriefings/Pages/01-IGF.aspx>)

executives should be equipped with ESG concepts including ESG-related regulations, key ESG indicators applicable to the industry, ESG reporting frameworks and standards, as well as the practical steps for integrating ESG principles into a company/organisation's operation.

Hospitality and Customer Services targeting Top-end Cruise/Yacht Customers

Both cruise and superyacht sectors target

the top-end customers who treasure the finest and most exclusive services. Not only frontline servicing staff should be equipped with all-round hospitality skills, but middle to top management staff of cruise lines and yacht management/chartering companies should also receive proper training on customer relationship management and customer journey mapping which focuses on High-Net-Worth Individual (HNWI) and Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individual (UHNWI), so as to increase client satisfaction and stay competitive in the market.

Recruitment Challenges

The focus groups consider that recruitment is generally challenging for most sectors of the industry. In addition to common recruitment channels, some companies have resorted to internal referrals, social media platforms, etc. to recruit talents, but the results have not been satisfactory. Major reasons shared by focus groups are given below:

Lack of Awareness

Despite the Government's continual efforts to promote high value-added maritime business and bolster Hong Kong's status as an IMC, it seems the general public have limited awareness of the career choices available in the maritime services industry. Many people still have outdated perceptions on maritime careers. They do not realise that the industry covers a wide range of shore-based careers, nor do they know that even traditional seafaring jobs have evolved significantly with much

better working environment. Actually, a career in the maritime services industry can be quite rewarding in terms of monetary return and worth more attention from the public (Salary of Hong Kong Seafarers is presented in Annex 3 for general reference).

Challenging Working Environment

Working at sea may not be perceived as an attractive career choice owing to the challenging working environment. For jobs on local workboats, people may find it hard to work on a small boat without any proper place for resting. For ocean-going posts, people may have safety concerns and may not be able to tolerate the long periods away from home. Some shore-based jobs like those in the shipyards are also considered physically demanding and monotonous by many people.

Long Journey to Obtain Seafaring Qualifications

Although there are structured career paths for seafaring careers, the stringent certification mechanism⁶, which involves both sea time requirements and examinations, has made it a relatively long process for young practitioners to obtain the certificates required for progression to senior positions. Young people may not be willing to invest time to go through the process since many career choices are available in other industries.

Talent Shortage

There is a scarce supply of local talents with high level ocean-going qualifications (i.e. Certificate of Competency Class 1),

particularly for the stream of marine engineering (details given in Annex 4), making it difficult for employers to recruit sufficient personnel to take up senior roles requiring these types of qualifications.

Some sectors of the industry also witnessed a talent wastage caused by emigration tides. As observed by the focus groups, a number of officer rank staff of the river trade sector, mostly the younger ones, and some practitioners of high value-added maritime services have left the city for opportunities abroad.

The overall shrinking Hong Kong labour force (i.e. from 3,918,500 in 2020 on average to 3,799,700 in November 2023 to January 2024⁷) also makes it harder for the industry to recruit sufficient new entrants to fill the manpower gap left by emigration and retirement waves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen Hong Kong's status as an IMC, it is important to ensuring a constant supply of skilled professionals. To achieve this, concerted efforts of the Government, industry and training providers on the following areas are recommended:

Awareness Building

To attract new blood, it is important to enhance young people's awareness of the industry. The Government, industry and training providers should join hands to

introduce to young people the career opportunities of the entire industry – from navigation to high value-added maritime sectors.

The Government may consider riding on its annual flagship event “Hong Kong

⁶ Details of the promotion paths and certification requirements are available on Marine Department website:
https://www.mardep.gov.hk/theme/maritime_industry/en/index.html

⁷ Census and Statistics Department. Table 210-06101: Statistics on labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment. Retrieved 28 March 2024, from:
https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web_table.html?id=210-06101

Maritime Week (HKMW)” for publicity of the industry. In addition to showcasing the international status of Hong Kong’s maritime industry, HKMW could serve as a key platform to promote the industry and improve industry image among the general public, say by highlighting success stories, illustrating modern seafaring life and introducing incentive schemes for industry practitioners.

In the meantime, the industry and training providers should step up promotion efforts to secondary schools, e.g. by participating in the Business-School Partnership Programme of the Education Bureau to provide career exploratory activities to students, or by organising more visits/career talks to secondary students so that they could visualise the real working environment and career paths of different job roles in the industry.

Nowadays, young people tend to spend a lot of time on the internet and social media, the Government, industry and training providers may also consider deploying social media channels and online communities to reach out to young people so as to generate their interests in the industry.

Monetary Incentives

While it takes time to raise public awareness of the industry, offering monetary incentives could be an effective immediate strategy to attract talents.

⁸ Singapore has a Tripartite Maritime Scholarship which provides not only subsidy on tuition fees and bonuses for attainment of seafaring qualifications but also a monthly allowance to

Actually, the recent enhancements of several incentive schemes under the Maritime and Training Fund (MATF) were well-received by the industry. Measures like enhanced fiscal support under the Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme (SGTIS) and the Ship Repair Training Incentive Scheme (SRTIS) were considered helpful in retaining serving staff, though they may not be appealing enough to attract new entrants. To secure a stable supply of new blood, the Government may make reference to the experiences of other leading IMCs⁸ and join hands with industry companies and unions to provide financial incentives (e.g. monthly allowance) to students undertaking designated maritime programmes.

Employers should also review the remuneration packages of their employees from time to time to ensure that they are competitive enough in the market. Considering that it is particularly difficult to recruit and retain junior staff say deckhand/sailor as their starting salaries tend to be relatively low, employers may consider providing extra incentives to these staff such as performance bonus and attendance allowance.

Good Practices Sharing

As shared by focus groups, some companies have been doing well in recruiting and retaining talents and are worth referencing by their counterparts.

students undertaking designated maritime programmes (<https://www.mpa.gov.sg/events-careers/maritime-scholarships/tripartite-maritime-scholarship>)

For instance, a leading shipping company has been successful in recruiting local seafarers, including females by offering short trips to potential candidates. These trial trips enable aspiring candidates to experience working on board ocean-going vessels and help them to determine whether the job is suitable for them. A shipyard is able to improve the retention rate by providing structured career paths to their mechanics – well-performed mechanics are provided on-the-job training for progression to supervisory level step by step, say from technical assistant to assistant engineer, engineer and then project-in-charge. Some local vessel companies also successfully retain young talents by creating a supportive environment with mentorship and providing contract-bound training subsidy.

The Government and the industry may consider bringing together those companies which have developed effective recruitment/retention strategies and provide suitable platforms for sharing of good practices. This kind of sharing not only allows companies to learn from each other, but also enable them to keep generating new ideas which may be helpful for staff recruitment and retention.

Fast Track to Obtain Seafaring Qualifications

To make the work at sea more appealing to young people, the Marine Department and training providers may explore possible means to enable new entrants to obtain seafaring qualifications (both deck and engineer streams) in a faster track.

Proposed measures worth studying include but not limited to the following:

- The Marine Department may encourage the industry to provide summer internships on board ocean-going vessels to students undertaking designated maritime programmes and recognise their shipboard service during internship as part of the sea time required to sit for the examination for Certificate of Competency (CoC) (Deck/Marine Engineer Officer) (Class 3).
- Training providers may learn from their overseas counterparts whose maritime programmes allow students to complete pre-sea training in a shorter period and revamp their maritime programmes holistically with a view to shortening the duration of study.
- Training providers may also enhance their practical training on marine engineering by improving their facilities and deploying suitable simulation technology in order to apply for more sea time remission for their engineering students.
- The Marine Department and training providers could offer more frequent schedules for various classes of CoC examinations and training respectively, so that local seafarers could be eligible for work/promotion as soon as possible.

Admission of Non-local Talents

In addition to local practitioners, non-local talents may serve as a new impetus to the

workforce of the industry. While various schemes/measures have been in place for attraction of non-local talents, to further enhance the appeal of Hong Kong to maritime-related talents, it is suggested that the Government may consider reviewing the immigration policy by counting the sea time on board ocean-going vessels in the seven consecutive years required for the application of permanent residency, provided that the sea services are under the employment of Hong Kong companies or covered by Hong Kong Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The Government could also take a more proactive role to liaise with Mainland authorities to establish a mutual recognition mechanism of academic qualifications in order to enhance cross-border talent mobility.

If these proposed measures could be materialised, it would help attract non-local students to study and work in Hong Kong, say through the newly launched Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS)⁹. Meanwhile, people from other GBA cities would be more willing to consider working in Hong Kong if their qualifications obtained from Mainland authorities are accepted in Hong Kong.

⁹ <https://www.vtc.edu.hk/hqip/vpas-landing.php>

Number of Graduates Joining the Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme (SGTIS)

Number of graduates joining the SGTIS¹ (as at 31 January 2024)

Year of Graduation	Training Providers ²								
	MSTI	IVE	HKU	HKUST	CUHK	PolyU		Others	
	Deck Cadet	Engineer Cadet	Engineer Cadet	Engineer Cadet	Engineer Cadet	Deck Cadet	Engineer Cadet	Deck Cadet	Engineer Cadet
2023	6	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
2022	17	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0
2021	25	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
2020	22	1	0	0	0	5	1	1	0
2019	26	7	1	0	0	2	2	2	1
2018	31	5	1	1	0	3	0	7	1
2017	36	5	0	1	0	2	0	4	1
2016	36	7	0	2	0	0	2	4	2
2015	24	7	2	3	1	6	0	2	0
2014	39	9	1	2	0	6	4	0	0
2013	24	7	1	1	0	10	3	2	0

(Source: Marine Department)

Note

1. The SGTIS aims at encouraging Hong Kong youngsters to take on and complete sea-going training with a view to developing their future careers in the port and maritime support industries. Eligible applicants can receive monthly subsidy in 3 phases.

(<https://www.hkmpb.gov.hk/en/manpower/sgtis.html>)

2. Full names of training providers:

MSTI - The Maritime Services Training Institute

IVE - The Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education

HKU - The University of Hong Kong

HKUST - The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

CUHK – The Chinese University of Hong Kong

PolyU - The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Others - e.g. overseas universities

Posts of the Marine Department Requiring Seafaring Experience

Establishment and strength of the posts of the Marine Department requiring seafaring experience (as at 31 January 2024)

Posts	As at 31 January 2024	
	Establishment	Strength ¹
Deputy Director of Marine (D3)	1	1
Assistant Director of Marine (D2)	7	2
Principal Marine Officer (D1)	4	2
Principal Surveyor of Ships (D1)	7	6
Senior Marine Officer	20	14
Marine Officer	39	32
Assistant Marine Officer ²		
Marine Controller	15	7
Assistant Marine Controller	52	54
Senior Surveyor of Ships	22	17
Surveyor of Ships	41	30
Assistant Surveyor of Ships ²		
Total	208	165

(Source: Marine Department)

Note

1. excluding officers on outposts
2. a new tier of assistant rank introduced in 2018 with relaxed entry requirements in view of manpower shortage

Monthly Salary of Hong Kong Seafarers (Ocean Going and River Trade Sectors only)

(i) Mean average gross wages of Hong Kong Seafarers employed to serve on Ocean-going Ships for the Year 2022

Rank (Officer rank only)	Monthly Salary (HKD)^	
	Cargo Ship	Tanker
<u>Navigation</u>		
Master	105,924*	---
Chief Officer	83,054*	---
Second Officer	66,518	38,610*
Third Officer (Junior Navigation Officer)	42,159	---
Fourth Officer (Junior Navigation Officer)	---	---
<u>Engineering</u>		
Chief Engineer	102,170*	---
Engineer Officer (1 st & 2 nd Engineer)	83,054*	---
Junior Engineering Officer (3 rd Engineer)	66,518*	---
Junior Engineering Officer (4 th & Junior Engineer)	31,084	---
Junior Engineering Officer (5 th & Junior Engineer)	---	---
Electrical Officer	---	---
Assistant Electrical Officer	---	---

(Extracted from the “2022 Annual Survey of Wages of Hong Kong Registered Seafarers” conducted by the Marine Department)

Note

- ^ Seafarers employed to serve on ocean-going ships are remunerated in USD. For conversion to HKD, the following exchange rate is used:
1 USD: 7.8 HKD
- * Wage information was given by only one company for employing Hong Kong seafarers serving that rank during the year 2022

(ii) Mean average gross wages of Hong Kong Seafarers employed to serve on River Trade Passenger Ships for the Year 2022

Rank	Monthly Salary (HKD)
<u>Navigation</u>	
Master	48,949
Chief Officer	35,477
Navigation Officer	24,330
Navigation Cadet	12,493*
<u>Engineering</u>	
Chief Engineer	39,048
Assistant Engineering Officer	18,579
Engineering Cadet	---
<u>Deck</u>	
G.P.	18,006
Sailor	15,014
Deck Trainee	---
<u>Engine Room</u>	
Fitter	19,749
Engine Room Trainee	---
<u>Catering</u>	
Senior Cabin Attendant	16,963
Cabin Attendant	18,228
Services Ambassador	---

(Extracted from the “2022 Annual Survey of Wages of Hong Kong Registered Seafarers” conducted by the Marine Department)

Note

- * Wage information was given by only one company for employing Hong Kong seafarers serving that rank during the year 2022

Number of Hong Kong Seafarers Obtaining Various Classes of Sea-going Certificate of Competency

Year	Deck Officer			Marine Engineer		
	Class 3	Class 2	Class 1	Class 3	Class 2	Class 1
2023	16 (2)	7 (1)	7 (3)	2	1 (1)	1
2022	15 (1)	5	7 (1)	3	2	0
2021	31 (2)	25 (5)	4 (6)	6	4	4
2020	5	12 (8)	4 (4)	5	2	1
2019	19 (1)	16 (2)	3 (5)	2	4	6
2018	22	5 (6)	2 (4)	11	2	2 (1)
2017	32 (4)	2 (1)	9 (6)	2	3	1
2016	46 (4)	1 (4)	8 (4)	8	11 (2)	5
2015	16 (1)	9 (8)	5 (3)	15 (1)	9	3 (1)
2014	12 (2)	8 (4)	3 (1)	8	5	1
2013	13	3 (3)	5 (2)	6	0	0 (1)

(Source: Marine Department)

Bracket () - CoC issued by other Administration, e.g. U.K., Australia, The PRC, Philippines, Canada