



MARITIME SKILLS
COMMISSION

MARITIME SKILLS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2024



MARITIME
UK



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Foreword - Graham Baldwin, Chair of Maritime Skills Commission

This year marks the fifth annual report of the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC), a milestone that requires us to reflect on how far we've come in assisting the delivery of a skilled, diverse, and talented workforce to serve the UK's maritime sector. The maritime sector, the backbone of global trade, relies heavily on a well-prepared workforce to meet the challenges of the future. Recognising this need, the Department for Transport and Maritime UK established the Maritime Skills Commission in 2020 to ensure a continuous pipeline of skilled talent across this vital sector—from shipping and ports to leisure marine, engineering, science, and professional services.

Over the past five years, we've made significant progress in addressing the evolving challenges of the maritime industry. As Chair, I have seen the sector's resilience in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, and other global disruptions, underscoring the importance of collaboration and innovation. Our Scheme of Work has been a driving force behind our efforts to meet the sector skills needs, ensuring no part of the industry faces critical skills shortages or gaps.

One of early and notable achievements has been the successful delivery of the Cadet Training and Modernisation Programme, a transformative initiative that has reshaped how we train the next generation of maritime professionals. This programme, following the officer cadet education review, has helped introduce new training standards and technologies, ensuring that cadets are equipped not only with the technical skills but also the leadership and soft skills essential for the modern maritime industry. The MSC has also worked closely with industry stakeholders to ensure this programme aligns with the sector's broader ambitions for sustainability and innovation, ultimately making it a model for maritime training worldwide.

Beyond these core initiatives, we've actively engaged with stakeholders across the sector. From discussions at Maritime UK's Maritime Masters webinar to the launch of the UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce Report, we've informed the conversation on skills. One of our proudest moments was the release of the Ratings Report, offering essential recommendations for improving training and career pathways within the sector.

Our commitment to Green Skills has been particularly noteworthy. At COP26 in November 2021, the MSC held its first public evidence session on Green Skills, which laid the groundwork for the Green Skills Scoping Report. Building on these insights, we published the Green Skills for Jobs Report in June 2024, outlining a roadmap for developing the skills necessary for the sector's decarbonisation. This is part of a broader national effort, reflected in the creation of the Green Skills Matrix, a resource identifying key skills needed to support the industry's shift towards sustainability.

The maritime sector is not just about technology and infrastructure; it is fundamentally about people. We remain committed to building a diverse workforce and are proud to work alongside the Maritime UK Programmes to ensure clear career pathways are available for everyone, regardless of background.

As we look to the future, the challenges posed by climate change and technological advancements will only increase the demand for specialised skills. The MSC is well-positioned to take a leading role in addressing these challenges, ensuring the maritime workforce is ready for the green transition and continued innovation. This report highlights our achievements to date and sets forth a bold vision for the future of skills in the maritime sector.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed to the MSC's work over the past five years. From government support and stakeholder engagement, to the expertise of our Commissioners, our progress would not have been possible without your effort and commitment. Together, we will ensure that the UK maritime sector remains a world leader in terms of talent, innovation, and sustainability.

1. Introduction

Objectives of the Maritime Commission (as outlined in the Tasking Letter of 1 July 2020)

- Understand skills needs: Analyse the current and future skills requirements of the maritime sector, considering the impact of technological advancements.
- Prevent skills shortages: Ensure that no part of the maritime sector faces significant shortages or gaps in skills.
- Provide necessary apprenticeships and qualifications: Ensure the sector has the appropriate apprenticeships and qualifications to meet its needs.
- Ensure adequate training provision: Ensure the sector has the necessary training provision, including the use of technology to engage learners and reduce costs.
- Provide clear career information: Offer employers and individuals clear guidance on career paths and retraining options within the maritime sector.
- Facilitate recruitment: Assist employers in attracting high-quality recruits for their vacancies through effective promotion of maritime careers.
- Increase exports of maritime education and training: Promote the export of maritime education and training services.

MSC Timeline

The Maritime Skills Commission (MSC) timeline is a structured overview of the key initiatives, projects, and milestones that MSC has pursued to advance skills development across the UK maritime sector. This timeline captures MSC's efforts to address industry needs by focusing on critical areas such as enhancing soft skills, developing green and technological skills, and boosting UK maritime education exports.

The timeline also highlights MSC's responses to industry shifts, including the pandemic's impact on training and the drive for sustainability in maritime careers. From organising educational showcases and establishing partnerships with international stakeholders, to resources like the Ratings Review, the timeline reflects MSC's ongoing commitment in preparing the workforce for emerging demands and promoting UK maritime expertise on a global stage.

Timeline

January - June 2020

- Chair, Professor Graham Baldwin, announced
- Membership mapping undertaken and guidance released
- Engagement with National Council as part of Commissioner scoping exercise
- Commissioners confirmed and announced
- Labour Market Intelligence Scoping commenced

July 2020

- Tasking Letter received from the Maritime
- Minister outlining objectives, reporting and next steps
- First meeting of the Commissioner

October 2020

- Third meeting of the MSC
- First Annual Report released
- First 'Meet the Commissioners' webinar during Maritime UK Week
- Future Ports Research project endorsed to commence in winter 2020
- Digital Learning and impacts of COVID-19 project commences
- Exporting Maritime Education and Training project commences and an initial discussion held with DfT and DfIT
- Regular Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings
- Initial briefing meeting with Minister Robert Courts

July 2021

- MSC celebrates one year
- Sixth meeting of the Commission with first evidence based session on Green Skills

August - September 2021

- Commission hosts joint reception with Maritime Skills Alliance during London International Shipping Week
- Careers into Maritime Ashore presentation at MSC Educational Showcase during London International Shipping Week

October 2021

- Work commences on visible leadership/storytelling videos for People, Behaviours and Soft Skills (Human Skills & Behaviours) project in collaboration with Diversity in Maritime
- Indonesia Opportunity Webinar
- Second annual report released
- Seafarer Cadet Review moves into implementation

November 2021

- Green Skills scoping forum held at COP26
- Cadet Training and Modernisation (CT&M) Oversight Committee formed

December 2021

- MSC holds first strategy workshop to revise Scheme of Work
- Updated Scheme of Work launched on dedicated portal

June - August 2023

- MSC tasked with Human Skills research to examine the behaviours, interpersonal skills and competencies required to improve recruitment, retention and the identification of transferable skills within the maritime industry

September 2023

- MSC launched the review 'Unnecessary Barriers to Employing UK Ratings' at LISW
- MSC joint reception with MSA at LISW

November 2023

- MSC meets

January 2024

- MSC give update to the Maritime Council

November 2020

- Meet the Commissioners podcast recordings commence
- Regular Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings held with stakeholders

December 2020

- Exporting Maritime Education and Training webinar held
- Exporting Maritime Education and Training Directory launched
- Future Ports Workforce project commences with desk research
- Regular Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings held with stakeholders

January 2021

- A new 'Meet the Commissioner' podcast series released
- Fourth meeting of the Commission
- Careers in Maritime Ashore project endorsed to commence
- Regular Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings held with stakeholders

February 2021

- First MSC newsletter released
- Regular Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings held with stakeholders
- Meet the Commissioners podcasts released and will be shared regularly

February - March 2022

- MSC meets and approves Chair of the UK
- Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce to join
- Future Ports Workforce Research launched
- Cadet Training and Modernisation Programme Survey launched
- Rear Admiral Jude Terry, the Royal Navy's first female Admiral, joins the Commission

June 2022

- MSC meets for the second time and endorses Skills for Green Jobs position paper
- Skills for Green Jobs position paper launched
- DfT announce grant to support a new Green Skills Sustainability Manager post
- Maritime Minister tasks the MSC to undertake an 'Unnecessary Barriers to Employing UK Ratings' Review
- Paul Little, CEO, City of Glasgow College is announced at the Chair of UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce
- MSC presents at Port of Tyne's Innovation Week

July 2022

- MSC celebrates two years
- MSC presents to Belfast Consortium and workshops ways for Northern Ireland to be involved in the work streams
- MSC presents at Port Skills and Safety conference and discusses next steps of the Future Ports
- Workforce workstream

January 2024

- MSC give update to the Maritime Council

February 2024

- MSC publish 'The Human Skills and Behaviours Review

March 2023

- First MSC meeting of 2024

April 2024

- MSC run Ratings Review Workshop

May 2024

- MSC give update to the Maritime Council

March 2021

- Digital Learning Report released
- Digital Learning Report dissemination webinar
- Meet the Commissioners podcasts released
- Regular Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings held with stakeholders

April 2021

- Fifth meeting of the MSC
- MSC present at Department of International Trade's Delivering Sector Knowledge session
- MSC present to Maritime Masters
- Seafarer Cadet Review Working Group meetings

May 2021

- Careers in Maritime Ashore project concluded with qualification on Open Award
- Stakeholder meetings held on draft Seafarer
- Cadet Review report
- MSC and ILO high level policy exchange briefings with Indonesia Government

June 2021

- Scoping session for People, Behaviours and Soft Skills project (becomes Human Skills & Behaviours)
- Seafarer Cadet Review Report and Recommendations launched

September 2022

- People and Behaviours Tender (Human Skills & Behaviours) launched
- CT&M Programme announce additional funding for cadets and a new MIN guidance note being issued
- CT&M Programme nominated for a Civil Service Award

December 2022

- MSC announces partnership with Port Skills and Safety to deliver the first Skills Intelligence Model for the maritime sector

January 2023

- PSS and MSC collaborate with the National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) to implement the Skills Intelligence Modelling (SIM) process
- NSAR collated data from survey to port network for Future Port Workshop

March - April 2023

- Cadet Training & Modernisation Programme's Sub-Group 1.2 completed an industry consultation to review their proposed changes to the Cadetship syllabuses

May 2023

- Scoping phase for Skills for Green Jobs with data collection and regional stakeholder workshops

June 2024

- Second MSC meeting of 2024
- Green Skills Report launched online in a Question and Answer session
- Recommendation of a Skills Matrix for the whole industry

September 2024

- Third MSC meeting of 2024



Commissioners



Graham Baldwin

Chair of Maritime Skills Commission & Vice
Chancellor, University of Central Lancashire



Lucy Armstrong

Chair, Port of Tyne



Scarlett Black

Director of Operations, Maritime UK
Managing the Commission



Mark Dickinson

General Secretary, Nautilus
International



Ian Hampton
Diversity in Maritime Taskforce (Chair)



Kerry Hourihan
Head of Maritime Skills and Training,
Department for Transport



Monica Kohli Senior Lawyer, FD&D,
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Lars Lippuner
Director of UK Maritime Customer Services
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Collette McMullen
Babcock Skills Director



Colin McMurray
Vice Principal of Business and
Innovation, Forth Valley College



Kathryn Neilson
Director, Merchant Navy Training Board



Nikki Sayer
Associate Director, Casper Shipping



Paul Sheerin
Chief Executive Scottish Engineering



Rear Admiral Jude Terry
Director People and Training and
Naval Secretary, Royal Navy



David Tournay
Secretary, Maritime Skills Alliance

Thank You to Our Past Maritime Skills Commissioners

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to those who have served as Maritime Skills Commissioners and have now moved on from their roles. Each of you has brought invaluable expertise and dedication, leaving an impact on the UK's maritime workforce.

To Brian Johnson, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency; Lambros Klaoudatos, Senior Vice President at BP Shipping; Paul Little, Chair of the UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce and CEO of City of Glasgow College; Sam McBriar, Director of Maritime Strategy and Marketing at Thales UK; Linton Roberts, Director of Operations at Cammell Laird; Alison Rumsey, Chief HR Officer at Associated British Ports; Helen Sampson, Director of the Seafarers International Research Centre at Cardiff University; Katy Ware, Director of UK Maritime Services at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency; and Karen Waltham of Karen Waltham Consulting—your contributions have been instrumental in shaping the future of maritime skills.

Through your work in advancing digital and green skills, fostering export growth in maritime training, and tackling sector-wide recruitment and retention challenges, you have strengthened the foundation of our maritime workforce. Your work continues to help us as we move forward, committed to a skilled, diverse, and sustainable industry. Thank you for your commitment and service. You have helped set a strong foundation, and this will continue to help shape the future of the maritime sector for years to come.

Scheme of Work

The Maritime Skills Commission scheme of work focuses on enhancing the maritime workforce by addressing key skills gaps, promoting training opportunities, and supporting industry growth. The objectives include collaborating with regional clusters and educational institutions to develop tailored skills programs, ensuring alignment with industry needs and future trends. By engaging with businesses, local authorities, and policymakers, the commissioners will advocate for investment in maritime skills development, ensuring a sustainable talent pipeline. They will also monitor progress through regular reporting, assessments, and feedback to ensure that maritime skills initiatives deliver meaningful results across the sector.

Objectives	Scheme of Work/Workstreams
1 - 7	Labour Market Intelligence Scoping Report Timeline: February-August 2020 - COMPLETED
1 - 7	Seafarer Cadet Review September 2020-June 2021 REPORT LAUNCH IMPLEMENTATION July 2021 onwards
1 - 7	Cadet Training and Modernisation Programme COMMENCED September 2021 Survey Concluded March 2022 Updates throughout 2023 ONGOING PROJECT
1 - 3	Future Ports Workforce Research COMMENCED December 2020 ONGOING
7	Exporting Maritime Education and Training COMMENCED December 2020 ONGOING PROJECT
4	Digital Learning COMMENCED December 2020 REPORT DELIVERED March 2021 ONGOING PROJECT
2 - 7	Careers in Maritime Ashore February-May 2021 COMPLETED Qualification is now on Open Award and being trialled in colleges around the UK

1 - 7	Human Skills and Behaviours COMMENCED June 2021 REPORT DELIVERED February 2024 ONGOING PROJECT
1 - 7	Skills for Green Jobs COMMENCED July 2021, SCOPING FORUM November 2021 Position Paper LAUNCHED June 2022 Green Skills Sustainability Manager ANNOUNCED October 2022 REPORT DELIVERED June 2023
1 - 7	Refreshed Labour Market Intelligence Report COMMENCEMENT TBC
1 - 7	Unnecessary Barriers to Employing UK Ratings Review COMMENCING October 2022 COMPLETED September 2023



2. Workstream Outline

Seafarer Cadet Review

The Seafarer Cadet Training Review, commissioned by the Maritime Minister through the Maritime Skills Commission, addressed the declining number of UK Merchant Navy officers being trained and employed, which had been a growing concern over the past few decades. Despite the UK's strong reputation for maritime training, the system had not evolved sufficiently to keep pace with the changing needs of the maritime industry, particularly in the face of technological advancements and the shift toward decarbonisation. These developments are expected to further widen the skills gap in the next 10 to 15 years, fundamentally altering roles in shipping and the interaction between humans and machines.

The review noted that propulsion technologies being explored for deep-sea shipping would require significant advancements in safety management. Poor handling of vessels using new fuels could lead to catastrophic accidents, emphasising the need for skilled leadership and a shift toward behavioural safety in the maritime sector. This presented both a challenge and an opportunity for the UK. If seafarer officer education and training could rapidly evolve, the UK could position itself to meet the growing global demand for officers with advanced technical and leadership skills. This would, in turn, create high-paying jobs and deliver economic benefits to the UK, while ensuring the country's continued leadership in maritime services.

The review's working group consulted widely, gathering input from universities, maritime colleges, shipping companies, current officers, and cadets. A key conclusion was that the current training model, particularly the STCW (Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping), was no longer adequate as the endpoint of officer education. The STCW is seen as a minimum standard, and UK seafaring officers will need to be trained to much higher levels to handle the anticipated changes in the industry. This would involve a broadening of the educational base, with a greater emphasis on leadership, self-management, and business awareness. Officers must be prepared not just for sea-going roles but for careers across the maritime sector, including high-level shore-based positions.

To achieve this, the review recommended attracting top STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) students into the sector and elevating their qualifications. This would involve moving many cadets toward honours degrees (Level 6 qualifications) and adapting courses to reflect the technological and operational changes that will shape the future of shipping. The review also called for the elimination of barriers that make maritime education distinct from other fields, making it a more attractive career choice for diverse and talented students. Furthermore, students should have more freedom to choose where and how they study, with training focused on competency and skill development rather than time spent in education.

A major recommendation was the expanded use of simulators as intensive learning tools. Simulators can expose cadets to a wide range of scenarios, including extreme conditions, providing invaluable experience that may not be gained during actual sea time. The review advocated for a swift resolution on substituting a portion of sea time with simulator-based training, recognizing its value in preparing cadets for real-world challenges.

Additionally, accelerated learning courses should be developed for students with prior STEM qualifications, enabling them to fast-track their training. This was also picked up in the digital learning workstream and will further develop in the technological skills workstream, ensuring that these innovations continue to shape a responsive and skilled maritime workforce

The review also addressed the funding challenges within the cadet training system. It recommended a restructuring of the complex funding mechanisms, with government funds directed to the party responsible for incurring the costs, such as living expenses paid directly to students and tuition fees to educational institutions. It is also recommended that the government should fully fund initial seafarer officer training to stimulate the necessary changes and recognize the value that seafarers bring to the UK economy. Additionally, reducing the financial contributions required from shipping companies could incentivize more businesses to join the UK's tonnage tax scheme, which is tied to the provision of cadet training and sea experience.

For shipping companies benefitting from tonnage tax, the review called for stricter enforcement of their obligations to provide quality training and sea experience for cadets. Colleges and universities should also take a more active role in supporting cadets during their sea experience, ensuring continued development through mentoring. The review emphasised that both colleges and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) need to overhaul their student assessment methods, moving away from the outdated reliance on time spent learning and focusing instead on objective, competency-based testing. This would ensure that training and assessments are aligned with the skills needed in a rapidly evolving shipping sector.

The establishment of a Seafarer Education Reform Oversight Group was proposed to monitor the implementation of recommendations. This group would meet quarterly over a two-year period to ensure that the necessary changes are happening at the required pace. It would report directly to the Maritime Minister and play a key role in holding stakeholders accountable for delivering the reforms needed to modernise seafarer training in the UK.

Overall, the review made a strong case for urgent and transformative change in the UK's seafarer cadet training system. By raising educational standards, increasing the use of advanced training technologies, and reforming funding structures, the UK could position itself to meet future demands and maintain its leadership in the global maritime industry. This would not only create well-paid employment opportunities for UK officers but also enhance the country's economic growth and competitiveness as the shipping industry undergoes substantial technological changes over the coming decades.

Cadet Training and Modernisation Programme (CT&M)

The Cadet Training and Modernisation Programme (CT&M) officially launched to implement the recommendations from the Seafarer Cadet Review, which was initiated in June 2021. A programme structure and governance framework was established, with the Oversight Committee and consultation groups formed by late 2021. The CT&M programme has made great progress, with 47 individuals from 30 different organisations dedicating their time and expertise to deliver the 23 recommendations outlined in the Seafarer Cadet Review Report. This collaborative effort highlights the maritime industry's commitment to modernising cadet training and exemplifies a successful transformation model.

The programme is overseen by an Oversight Committee, which first convened in November 2021. The Committee is responsible for guiding the programme's strategy and delegating tasks to the Programme Board, which includes members from various organisations across the industry. The Programme Board is tasked with ensuring that the programme's goals align with the Maritime Skills Commission report and the instructions set by the Oversight Committee. Several consultation groups have been established to focus on specific areas of modernisation and funding. These groups report directly to the Programme Board, driving progress on the programme's objectives.

Consultation Group 1 focuses on reforming and modernising the syllabuses, training, and assessments for seagoing qualifications in Nautical, Engineering, and Electrical Engineering disciplines. This group has already suggested changes to nearly 50% of the syllabuses, shifting the focus from theoretical learning to a more practical, skills-based approach that reflects the technological advancements onboard vessels. Another key consultation group, Group 2, is addressing funding issues. After a detailed review of cadet funding management, significant weaknesses were identified in the current model. This has led to the creation of a strategic outline case, which is awaiting ministerial approval for further progress. The Communications Consultation Group plays a vital role in supporting the programme's outreach efforts. This group is responsible for both proactive and reactive communication strategies and collaborates with the other consultation groups to ensure cohesive messaging and engagement. Looking ahead, the CT&M programme continues to advance, with key deliverables being achieved across all groups, ensuring that the recommendations of the Seafarer Cadet Review are being implemented effectively and efficiently.

To date, several key milestones have been achieved:

- Completion of Cadet Syllabus Review and Delivery to Nautical Colleges: Throughout 2022, the CT&M Programme conducted a comprehensive review of all modules in the UK cadet syllabus, covering the Nautical, Engineering, and Electro-Technical disciplines. These updates are designed to reflect the latest practices and technology used on board vessels, ensuring that cadets are equipped with the necessary skills to operate safely and effectively at sea. The revised syllabuses have now been delivered to nautical colleges for future use.
- Modernisation of Assessment Strategies: From December 2023 until May 2024, the CT&M Programme focused on reviewing and modernising the assessment methods used in cadet training. This effort aims to enhance the practical, hands-on skills cadets require, aligning assessments with the technological advancements that are becoming standard in the industry.

The updated syllabuses and modernised assessment strategies are set to be implemented in training programmes beginning in September 2025. These changes mark a significant step towards ensuring that future cadets are well-prepared to meet the challenges of a modern maritime environment. Additionally, the CT&M Programme was nominated in the Productive Partnerships Award - Ambitious category of the 2022 Civil Service Awards, recognising its collaborative efforts and ambitious vision for the future of cadet training.

Finally, consistent with the conclusions of the Seafarer Cadet Review, specifically those relating to improving the training and sea-time experience of cadets, the CT&M Oversight Committee has considered a proposal prepared by consultants Augmentus to establish a National Maritime Training Organisation to take direct responsibility for cadet training and ensuring that sponsoring companies, under the tonnage tax, fulfilled their obligations to the cadets. The fully costed proposal, first discussed in 2022, envisaged the MCA undertaking the role and in combination with the recommendation that the government fully fund training costs, would have complemented, and completed, the suite of recommendations made in the Seafarer Cadet Review Report. So far, the government has not acted upon these "funding" proposals although the CT&M Oversight Committee continues to highlight the necessity of doing so.

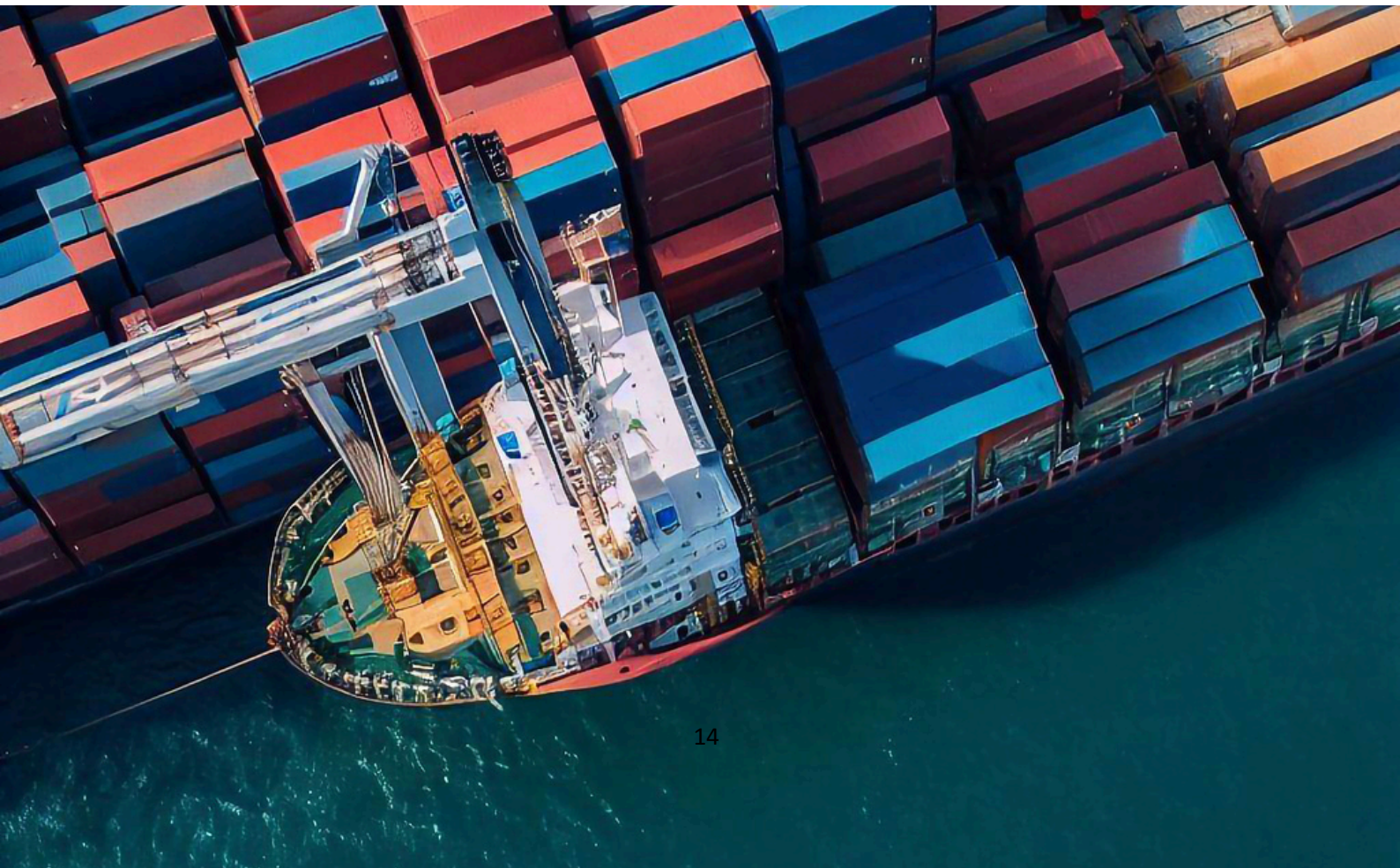
Future Ports Workforce Research Report

The collaborative research by major UK ports aimed to address a critical question: "What will the future workforce of ports look like, and how can the sector transition from its current state?" As the port industry faces rapid changes due to globalisation, automation, digitization, and sustainability imperatives, understanding and preparing for this transformation is essential. The research explored three interlinked key dimensions of change, the relationships between them, and potential solutions to address these challenges. These solutions were expected to be relevant at both a sector-wide and individual company level and may also have implications for government policy.

An initial report was published but, due to insufficient data, it did not provide comprehensive results. This limitation highlighted the need for further engagement and data collection to better represent the sector's diverse challenges and opportunities. To address this, additional outreach to ports is now underway, aiming to encourage wider participation in the survey. This renewed effort seeks to capture a more complete picture, enabling more thorough data analysis and, ultimately, more robust recommendations for the sector.

The modern port has evolved significantly from its historical counterpart, shaped by forces such as the globalisation of supply chains, automation, and digitization. Sustainability pressures are also increasingly influencing operations, and a clearer understanding of these trends' impacts on the workforce is critical.

As engagement efforts continue, the goal remains to better understand the future workforce's dimensions and ensure that the ports sector can transition effectively and responsibly to the new roles and requirements that lie ahead.



Exporting Maritime Education and Training Report

The Maritime Skills Commission has been actively involved in encouraging and supporting the exporting of maritime education and training, particularly in response to the challenges posed by Covid-19. The pandemic forced training providers to adapt quickly, with many embracing digital technology to maintain continuity in learning. This shift has accelerated the acceptance of digital methods in education, and the Commission saw this as an opportunity to consolidate the lessons learned. By capturing what worked, identifying remaining barriers, and understanding when traditional methods are still necessary, the Commission aimed to share these insights with all maritime training providers.

In late 2020, the Commission initiated a project focused on enhancing maritime education and training exports. This project, developed under the Scheme of Work and endorsed by Commissioners, sought to deepen the understanding of the UK's capabilities in maritime education exports. It explored opportunities for greater collaboration between providers and with the Department for International Trade (DIT), while identifying barriers to effectiveness and considering ways to overcome them. As part of this initiative, a well-attended online event was held in December 2020, where the Commission launched a directory aimed at fostering connections between UK training providers, supporting them in building partnerships for overseas opportunities. This directory, now in its seventh edition, includes a wide range of organisations, from colleges and universities to private companies and professional bodies.



In 2021, the Commission further raised awareness of the UK's maritime education and training capabilities through an online briefing for diplomats overseas. Organised by the DIT's maritime team, this briefing was part of a series of "Developing Sector Knowledge" sessions and was instrumental in building international awareness of UK expertise. The growing international interest led to further collaborations, notably with Indonesia. The Skills for Prosperity team in Indonesia invited the Commission's Chair, to present to ministers and senior officials as part of their efforts to establish a Maritime Sector Skills Council. This collaboration exemplified the crossovers between different Commission projects, including the Seafarer Cadet Report, which was presented to improve employability outcomes for cadets and their employers.

The Commission's efforts continued with a webinar in October 2021 focused on "The Indonesia Opportunity," highlighting the scale of maritime opportunities in Indonesia and featuring a case study from the City of Glasgow College. Additionally, the Commission worked with the British Embassy in Jakarta to facilitate presentations by DIT colleagues and the Indonesian Ministry of Transport, underscoring the growing partnership between the two countries. The Commission's work extended beyond Indonesia, with presentations to key maritime stakeholders in China, including the China Association of The National Shipbuilding Industry (CANSI) and Ningbo University. Through these efforts, the Maritime Skills Commission continues to position the UK as a leader in maritime education and training, fostering international collaboration and expanding the sector's global footprint.

Work develops across multiple fronts and is focused on deepening these international relationships by exploring new avenues for cooperation, including potential joint training programmes and exchange opportunities. Efforts are also being made to strengthen ties with other emerging maritime nations to facilitate dialogue and knowledge sharing. These initiatives reflect the Commission's commitment to adapting to the evolving needs of the global maritime workforce, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the UK's leadership in maritime education and ensuring the sector remains at the forefront of global best practices.

Digital Learning

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, followed by national lockdowns, created an unprecedented challenge for maritime education and training providers. With no option for face-to-face teaching, institutions were forced to rapidly adopt alternative delivery methods. Within the first month, many providers had successfully shifted their teaching and assessment online, demonstrating resilience and adaptability. As regional restrictions continued throughout the year, providers further enhanced their digital capabilities, implementing changes that might have taken years under normal circumstances.

This rapid transition mirrored changes seen across other sectors, such as healthcare and education, with digital learning becoming a critical solution. However, the move from traditional face-to-face interaction to primarily digital platforms posed unique challenges and opportunities in maritime education. The Maritime Skills Commission recognized the importance of reflecting on these developments. The purpose of this report was to review the past nine months of digital learning, capture key lessons, and ensure that the challenges of the pandemic can be transformed into long-term benefits for both learners and providers.

Digital learning, while largely embraced by learners, requires a more profound transformation to be fully effective in the maritime sector. It is not sufficient to merely replicate classroom courses online. The redesign of courses demands upskilling staff, integrating new digital tools, and focusing on the distinct learning approaches required for effective digital learning. Providers must investigate live online lessons and flexible learning models, including shorter, recorded lessons, and explore learner-centred strategies, such as the "flipped classroom" to enhance student engagement.

Moreover, certain subjects, such as chart work, marine engineering, and other practical competencies, are less suited to complete digital transition. The reduction of peer interaction in digital settings also presents significant challenges, as peer-to-peer learning and collaboration are key elements of effective education. Furthermore, the lack of physical contact may exacerbate mental health issues among students and staff, making it more difficult to monitor well-being in a virtual environment. The report concludes that while digital learning offers significant opportunities for the maritime industry, further investment in course redesign, mental health support, and collaborative tools is essential for it to become an integral part of maritime education.

To fully realise these advantages, the cooperation of both educational providers and Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) is crucial. Providers must invest in the development of their digital capabilities, while PSRBs should offer flexible frameworks that reflect the unique needs of online learning. By incorporating these lessons, the maritime sector can modernise its training provision, ultimately creating a more inclusive, diverse, and resilient workforce for the future.

In line with this, Southampton Solent University's report outlined a series of recommendations aimed at maximising the benefits of online learning for both learners and lecturers. The authors also highlighted changes that PSRBs should consider to eliminate barriers to effective online education.

As part of the Commission's role in stimulating discussion and reflection, this report served as a foundation for a broader dialogue during the launch event in March 2021. The event featured insights from international experts such as Virsec and the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, along with assessment expertise from the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and innovative regulatory approaches from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. Importantly, the event also highlighted the growing role of digital learning in maritime education, marking a pivotal first step in equipping the sector with essential technological skills. This emphasis on digital methods paves the way for the development of advanced capabilities, such as automation, AI, and other key technologies critical for the sector's future growth.

Careers into Maritime Ashore

The Careers into Maritime Ashore project has developed a new qualification aimed at preparing adult retrainers and school and college leavers for shore-based maritime roles. This qualification serves as a vital stepping stone, equipping individuals with a foundational understanding of the various career opportunities available in the maritime industry and assisting them in making informed choices about their future paths.

The project was established to align with objectives 2-7 of the Maritime Skills Commission, with the primary aim of raising awareness of maritime careers within schools and colleges. It introduced a listed qualification for post-16 education providers, making shore careers in the maritime sector more visible and accessible. Additionally, the project sought to establish a pool of trained candidates for employers and to ensure a high level of excellence in shore-based maritime roles. In doing so, it aimed to elevate the level of skilled personnel in the UK, in line with the priorities set out in Maritime 2050.

This new qualification prepares learners for a variety of shore-based roles within the maritime industry, including port operations, commercial roles such as shipbroking and chartering, and operational positions that involve crewing and surveying. It also covers legal roles in P&I, loss adjustment, and marine insurance, as well as regulatory positions such as marine surveyors and UK Border Force agents. Careers in shipbuilding, including roles for naval architects and boatbuilders, are also part of this qualification.

The **Level 3 Certificate in Maritime Studies** (Open Awards) encompasses a minimum of 18 credits, requiring a total learning time of 300 hours. This qualification is eligible for ESFA funding (subject to eligibility) at a weighted amount of £1,645 and has been approved as a 'first Level 3 Offer,' listed as a DfE high-value qualification. Learners can earn 24 UCAS points, equivalent to one A Level, with available progression from Levels 1 and 2. Assessment is conducted through non-exam-based evaluation, and the qualification receives full support from the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers.

The structure of the qualification includes five units, consisting of two core units and three optional units. The core units cover roles in maritime and vessel types and design. The optional units, designed for shore-based applications, include port services and operations, commercial shipping operations, maritime trade, managing a marine business, and vessel construction and engineering.

The project has successfully concluded, and the new qualification from Open Awards, focused on shore-based roles in the maritime industry, is now available. Traditionally, maritime training and qualifications have targeted sea cadets and those wishing to pursue careers at sea. This Level 3 Certificate, however, is specifically designed for 16- to 18-year-old students, as well as adult retrainers who are interested in the shipping sector and eager to learn more about available careers and the basic understanding of the industry.

The course was successfully delivered at Hugh Baird College in Liverpool in collaboration with Marine Society College and is now also available at the North East School of Shipping, based at Stockton Riverside College. With thousands of people employed in shore-side roles within the shipping industry, this qualification represents the perfect "first step" into a career that urgently requires new, dynamic, and diverse individuals to address the existing skills gap. The course is now live with Open Awards, allowing any existing centre to register learners and participate in this initiative. However, more work is needed to raise awareness and actively promote the programme to reach a wider audience and maximise its impact.

Human Skills and Behaviours Review

'Across various sectors, people skills—such as communication, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution—are increasingly recognized as essential but often neglected. Many organisations are facing a growing skills gap, where technical competencies may be prioritised over soft skills. Research highlights that only 7% of HR leaders are actively investing in programs to develop these softer yet critical skills, despite the widespread acknowledgment that these are key to workforce adaptability and performance.'¹

This research represented an initial effort undertaken on behalf of the Maritime Skills Commission to understand the application of non-technical, human skills and behaviours across various sectors of the maritime industry, focusing particularly on their influence on recruitment and retention. The report presented findings on essential human and transferable skills, such as those needed for transitioning from sea to shore, leadership skills, and how training and technology can help integrate these skills into maritime education. A strong emphasis is also placed on promoting diversity and inclusion.

The maritime industry can be broadly divided into shore-based and seagoing operations, education, support services, and owners/charterers. This report is presented in two parts: a collective analysis of human skills across these sectors and sector-specific findings. While each sector has its own unique challenges, the research highlighted that the core human skills required for success are remarkably similar across the board. Effective communication and good listening skills were identified as fundamental, alongside other skills critical to improving performance, retention, and building a robust talent pool.

In terms of leadership, the research stressed a shift from autocratic methods toward more empathetic and inclusive leadership approaches, both onshore and at sea. The ability to build trust and understanding through communication is vital for fostering strong, effective teams. This approach is seen as more motivational and sustainable, aligning with the evolving landscape of the maritime sector.

The report identified numerous transferable skills gained from seafaring, including responsibility, resilience, teamwork, and a solid work ethic. It also highlighted the additional skills required for a successful transition ashore, such as time management, organisational agility, and managing diversity. Diversity and inclusion are considered critical to widening the talent pool. Although the seafaring industry is inherently culturally diverse, greater efforts are needed to attract individuals from diverse gender, age, socio-economic, and neurodiverse backgrounds.

Immediate action is required to improve recruitment and retention and ensure the maritime industry remains resilient in the future. Embracing change and innovation is essential. Human skills must be considered equally important alongside technical skills, forming a central part of recruitment and retention strategies.

The research makes five key recommendations:

- Clarifying and promoting the importance of human skills in the maritime industry. It is suggested that the term "human skills" should replace "soft skills" to highlight their equal importance alongside technical skills.
- Embedding human skills into the maritime curriculum through practical opportunities for students, such as simulations and apprenticeships, which include behavioural training. It is essential these skills are taught by those with a deep understanding of their workplace value, possibly facilitators with leadership and management expertise.

- Developing an industry-wide maritime skills passport to record human skills, technical qualifications, and continual professional development. This would assist individuals transitioning across different sectors or from sea to shore.
- Expanding the scope of the research, focusing on human skills development in other industries, such as aviation, to learn from established practices in incorporating human factors into training.
- Convening a focus group to review the report's findings and recommendations, involving the Maritime Skills Commission, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and other relevant specialists to prioritise and action key issues.

Sector-specific recommendations were also made, including those for ports, where technological advancements should be showcased to attract a younger, more diverse workforce. The apprenticeship levy was suggested to be more flexible, allowing funds to be used for shorter courses focused on human skills development. There was strong support for implementing a skills passport across the port sector.

For commercial seafarers, the report recommended the provision of mental health first aiders on board and called for research into cadet attrition rates. Cadet training should involve an introduction to life at sea before embarking on their first phase to better manage expectations. National training vessels, like those proposed by Britannia Maritime Aid, were highlighted as a possible solution.

For cruise seafarers, the report recommended revised funding to support cadets who transition to shoreside roles after their first sea phase. An alternative watchkeeping system was proposed to reduce fatigue and improve overall well-being.

The superyacht sector was encouraged to raise mental health awareness through onboard training and to implement more regular leave for junior crew to reduce turnover. Management companies and captains should advocate for better rest periods.

Training and development recommendations included more focused education around transitioning ashore and support for seafarers to develop human skills while still on board. Shoreside personnel should learn from other maritime authorities to integrate human skills effectively into maritime programmes.

Finally, the report emphasised the need for greater collaboration across the maritime industry to promote career opportunities, particularly in science, technology, and engineering. The establishment of a skills passport and enhanced funding for education and apprenticeships were highlighted as key drivers for the future of the maritime workforce

Skills for Green Jobs

The UK maritime sector faces significant challenges as it transitions to a net-zero economy. One of the most pressing issues is understanding the skills required to support this transition and ensuring that the workforce can adapt and transfer from areas of declining employment. According to the "Greening the Giants" report², the UK could create 1.7 million new green jobs by 2030, with at least 900,000 relating to energy efficiency and low-carbon heating. Many existing roles will also need to evolve to become greener, requiring the workforce to develop transferable skills that can support sustainability efforts.

In response to this challenge, the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC) has taken a proactive approach. In July 2021, the Commission held its first evidence-gathering session, with presentations from the Cornwall Marine Network and Green Jobs Taskforce, highlighting the importance of green skills in the maritime sector. This was woven into the Commission's updated Scheme of Work for 2022, where they aimed to understand what is currently working in the industry, the challenges that lie ahead, and the varying definitions of 'green skills' across the sector.

A key step in this process was the scoping forum held during COP26 in November 2021. This forum gathered industry insights on the need to reskill and retrain the maritime workforce for a net-zero future. The findings from this session were incorporated into a recommendation paper, which was launched in 2022. As part of this work, the MSC published their 'Skills for Green Jobs' Position Paper in June 2022, defining green skills as those that support a sustainable and resource-efficient maritime sector. This definition encompasses roles directly related to environmental conservation, jobs with a green purpose like wind farm installation, and supporting skills such as communication and community engagement on green issues. Following the Green Jobs Position Paper, the Skills for Green Jobs Report was launched in June 2024.

The Report has identified several actions to support the transition to green jobs. These include taking ownership of the green skills agenda for the maritime sector, advocating for a Green Skills tax credit, fostering collaboration with government, research institutions, and industry stakeholders, and supporting the promotion of diversity within green maritime jobs. The Commission committed to developing a comprehensive Green Skills Matrix, which would map existing and future green skills in the maritime sector. Maritime UK has officially taken over the development of the Green Skills Matrix, previously initiated by the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC). This comprehensive tool is designed to map both current and future green skills within the maritime sector, providing a vital resource for guiding the workforce in acquiring the skills necessary to meet the demands of a sustainable future.

As part of the initial efforts, the MSC conducted surveys and workshops to gather critical data on green skills needs and gaps. Commissioners and National Council members played a pivotal role in designing these initiatives, ensuring that key industry stakeholders were represented. Despite some workshops being postponed due to limited engagement from the sector, the focus remains on understanding the evolving green skills landscape through continuous collaboration with stakeholders.

Looking ahead, the Green Skills Matrix will serve as a powerful tool to foster collaboration between industry and training providers across the UK. By helping to identify market gaps, it will support the modernisation of training provision, ensuring it is both adaptable and accessible. Additionally, the matrix will help address the growing demand for technological skills, such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and computer-aided manufacturing, which are crucial for driving the sector's green transition.

Ultimately, the Green Skills Matrix will become a key national resource for guiding workforce development and maritime education. With Maritime UK overseeing its management, the matrix will be regularly updated, ensuring it provides valuable insights to government departments, industry leaders, and stakeholders, helping shape the future of maritime skills and training in support of a sustainable, green economy.

Unnecessary Barriers to Progressing UK Ratings Review

In June 2022, former Maritime Minister Robert Courts MP tasked the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC) with a comprehensive review of rating training. The aim was to understand the barriers and opportunities in ratings training and identify potential growth areas for UK Ratings. Kovia Consulting won the contract to conduct the review, and the final report, *Barriers to Progressing UK Ratings*, was published in September 2023. The Review found that access to a low-cost and suitably qualified international workforce has led many companies to fill Rating positions with non-EEA nationals, particularly in the deep-sea market.

However, potential growth areas may exist for UK Ratings in near-coastal industries and offshore wind. The Review also identified that changes driven by automation and decarbonisation are raising the skill level requirements of seafarers, which could give UK Ratings a technological edge. The Review made 16 recommendations across the areas of data, careers & training promotion, qualifications & training, employment & tonnage tax, and future skills. The findings of the Ratings Review were submitted to the Maritime Minister, Baroness Vere of Norbiton, and unveiled during London International Shipping Week in September 2023. The joint reception, hosted by the MSC and the Maritime Skills Alliance (MSA), highlighted the importance of investing in Ratings training to ensure the UK maritime sector remains competitive. Although UK Ratings numbers have remained stable at around 10,000 over the past decade, the proportion of UK nationals employed as Ratings by UK Chamber of Shipping members has dropped from 18% to 11% due to competition from international seafarers.

However, factors such as Brexit and global events like the war in Ukraine and the Covid-19 pandemic have prompted employers to seek specialist seafarers domestically. With the government's ambition to create 2 million green jobs by 2030, especially in offshore wind, the demand for UK Ratings is expected to grow.

Despite these opportunities, barriers persist. The MSC's report highlighted the need to modernise training pathways and improve data collection to better assess the UK Ratings workforce. It recommended updating the skills matrix for Ratings across onboard departments to reduce training costs and improve skill portability. The report also called for reforms to the tonnage tax regime and better coordination between funding mechanisms, such as Apprenticeships, SMarT, and Slater Scholarships, to support UK Ratings training.

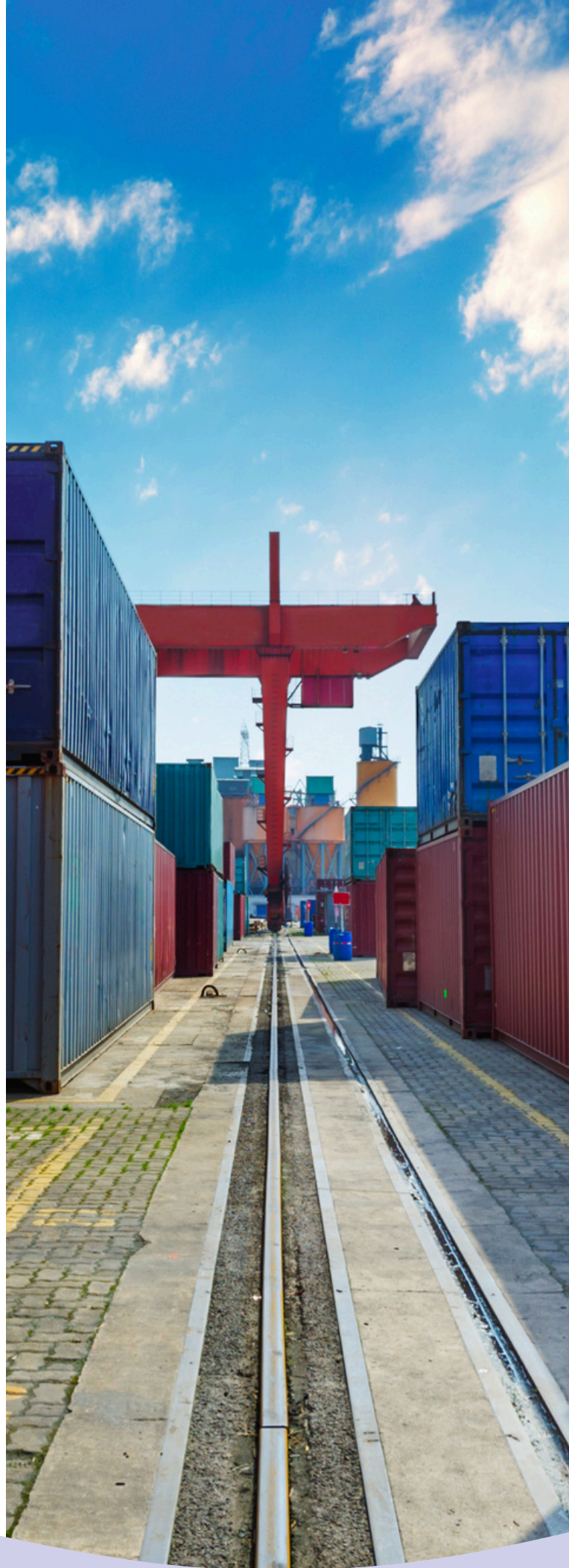
Apprenticeship uptake remains a concern. The MSA, in collaboration with trailblazer groups, was advised to promote the available suite of apprenticeships across the maritime sector and to research barriers to their uptake. Additionally, the MSA should explore partnerships with flexi-jobs apprenticeship agencies to create a shared apprenticeship model, offering young people exposure to various maritime industries and enhancing employability across multiple sectors.

Further recommendations included reforms to the tonnage tax Minimum Training Obligation and enhanced funding for Ratings' training, with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) urged to make opportunities for Ratings more visible. The MCA was also advised to include Ratings in their ongoing career mapping exercises for ex-seafarers transitioning to shore-based roles, providing greater clarity for career progression.

The MSC also advised expanding the scope of the UK Seafarers Statistics to include smaller vessels, workboats, and the yacht/superyacht industry. These sectors, currently underrepresented, hold significant growth potential for UK Ratings.

The recommendations are being delivered through a Ratings Review Oversight Committee, established in April 2024, chaired by Lars Lippuner from the MCA. This committee includes recommendation holders such as the Secretary from the MSA and Director from the Merchant Navy Training Board, alongside officials from the Department for Transport (DfT) including maritime economists and the Head of Maritime Skills. Subgroups within the committee are engaging stakeholders to ensure the implementation of these recommendations, with quarterly meetings planned to report on progress.

The review concluded by emphasising the importance of improving career information and ensuring that UK Ratings have access to quality opportunities, especially in rapidly growing sectors like offshore wind. This coordinated effort between government, industry, and training providers is vital to securing the future of UK Ratings in the maritime workforce.



Going Forward

The Maritime Skills Commission (MSC) remains at the forefront of shaping the future of the maritime workforce, advising, guiding, recommending and helping to ensure that a steady flow of talented individuals is available to meet the evolving needs of the sector. As the maritime industry undergoes rapid transformation—driven by sustainability goals, technological advances, and shifting global dynamics—the MSC's focus is on equipping the workforce with the right mix of skills to remain competitive. Below is a detailed overview of key initiatives that the MSC is set to deliver in the near future, reflecting the Commission's commitment to addressing both current and emerging challenges.

Skills Platform Launch - This is being fed into the Maritime UK Skills Matrix to support the sector's transition to a more sustainable future. This matrix will be designed to help maritime professionals navigate the increasing demands for new competencies, particularly in green jobs and decarbonisation efforts. A significant innovation in this platform is the inclusion of an AI chatbot feature. This tool will provide intelligent, personalised content recommendations, making the platform not only a knowledge hub but also a highly accessible resource for users across various levels of expertise. The skills matrix is intended to streamline workforce planning, helping employers and employees alike to pinpoint essential skills and training opportunities as they align with broader industry needs.

MSC Report – Refreshed Labour Market Intelligence – In order to stay ahead of the curve, the MSC will undertake a refreshed Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) report. This deeper analysis will provide a detailed assessment of the sector's progress since the last LMI review and offer critical insights into the trends, opportunities, and challenges shaping maritime employment. The findings of this report will guide workforce development strategies, ensuring that training programs, funding models, and industry policies are aligned with the sector's future growth prospects. It will be a vital tool for both government and industry to address skills gaps and ensure the sector remains agile in the face of global changes.

Technological Skills Workshop – Recognizing the growing importance of technology in the maritime sector, the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC) is launching a new workstream focused on advancing technological skills. This initiative will explore the implications of emerging technologies such as AI, automation, and simulation for maritime operations, as well as how these innovations are reshaping the skills required across the industry.

The MSC has expressed strong support for a proposed workshop on technological skills, viewing it as a critical area of focus, especially given the advancements in autonomous vessels and simulation technologies. The maritime sector stands to benefit from learning from other industries, such as aerospace and healthcare, where simulation is key to training. A dedicated workshop is intended to serve as a catalyst for action, similar to the success of the Green Skills report following the MSC's participation in COP26. This workshop aims to bring in external experts to present evidence that will help shape the commission's recommendations, ensuring maritime workers are equipped with the necessary skills to leverage these technologies.



There is an emphasis on holding the session in person to allow for in-depth presentations and meaningful discussions. Additionally, the commission acknowledges that "technological skills" encompasses a broad range of topics, from electronic bills of lading to process digitisation. As such, it is important to prioritise specific areas to focus on within this wide field.

To move forward, the commission has proposed a separate meeting to define the scope of technological skills. The results of this meeting will be shared with the broader commission to ensure alignment on priorities and next steps. Alongside the workshop, the Technological Skills Workstream will offer a platform for industry professionals to lead discussions on these advancements and their impact on workforce development. The goal is to develop a forward-looking strategy that prepares maritime workers to fully utilise these technologies while addressing the challenges they present.

Reflecting on the Past Years of the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC)

Since its inception, the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC), working with the support of Maritime UK, has been focused on ensuring a steady supply of skilled professionals within the UK maritime sector.

The Commission has tackled significant challenges posed by an evolving maritime industry, focusing on equipping the workforce with the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing environment. Over the years, the MSC has worked to provide insightful reports, industry recommendations, and strategic guidance for long-term workforce development, ensuring that the maritime sector remains competitive and sustainable.

The MSC's achievements are spread across several workstreams, each aimed at addressing specific skills challenges within the sector. These efforts, aligned with Maritime UK's broader goals, have laid the foundation for a modern, skilled maritime workforce capable of responding to future demands such as decarbonisation, automation, and the green economy. Below is a reflection of key recommendations and accomplishments across its various workstreams.

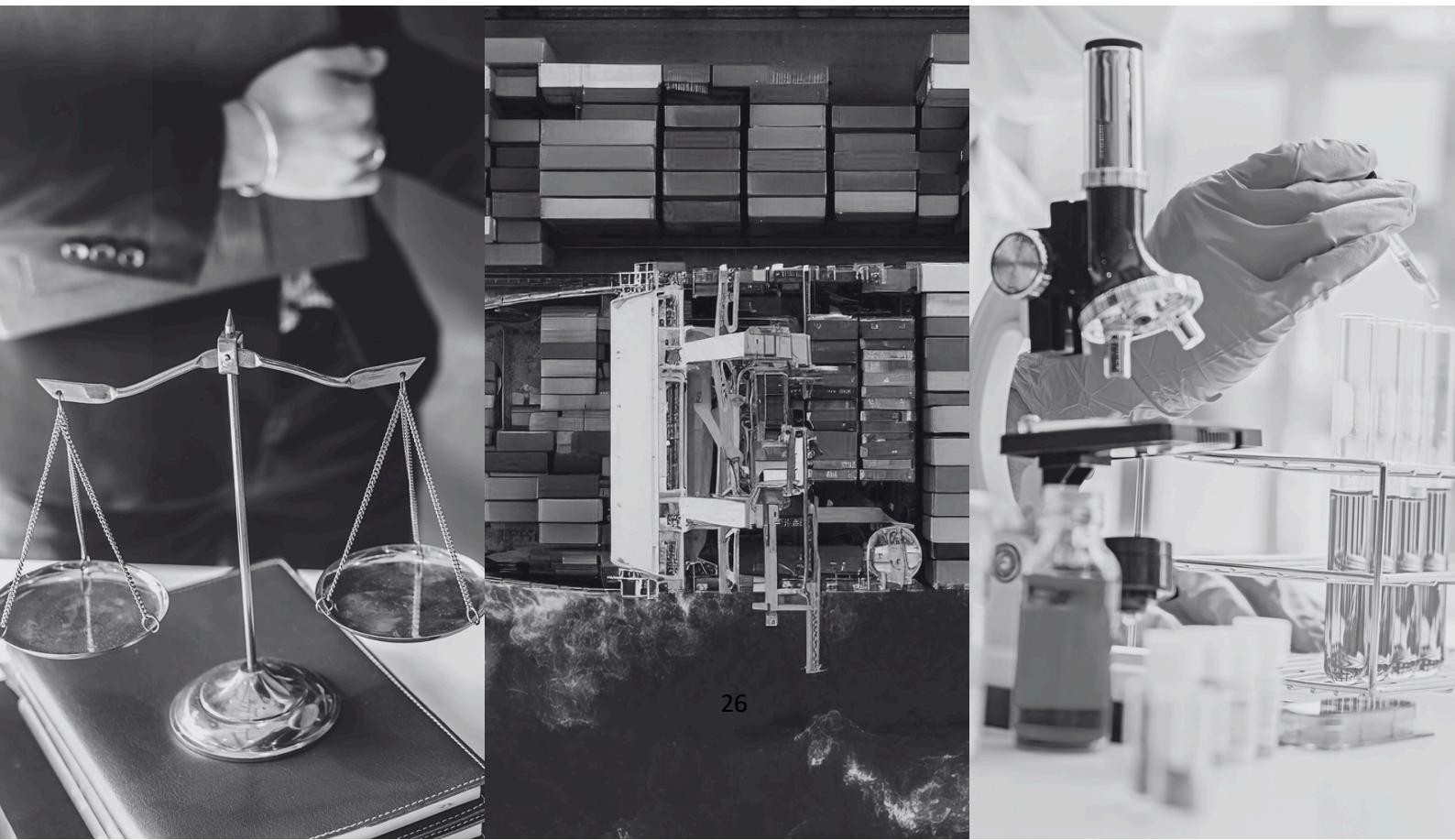
Key Recommendations from MSC Workstreams

1. Skills Platform

- Is feeding into Maritime UK's skills matrix

2. Labour Market Intelligence

- Conduct a refreshed Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) report to assess the progress of the sector since the previous LMI review.
- Develop a more in-depth analysis to inform workforce development and skills planning.



3. Human Skills and Leadership Behaviours

- Evaluate, assess and review the human skills and behaviours report, ensuring leadership, soft skills, and behavioural competencies are central to workforce development.

4. Technological Skills

- Launch a new workstream on technological skills, focusing on AI, automation, and simulation.
- Host an industry-led workshop to shape the future of technological skills development within the maritime sector.

5. Green Jobs and Sustainability Recommendations

- The Maritime Skills Commission (MSC) supports the Government's ambition to create 2 million green jobs by 2030, particularly in key areas such as offshore wind and decarbonisation. While the MSC will not be directly delivering these jobs or training programs, it strongly recommends a focus on
- **Reskilling and Upskilling:** Preparing the maritime workforce for the green transition by providing pathways for current employees to acquire the necessary skills for green jobs. This includes both technical training and workforce development that supports sustainable maritime operations.

6. Ratings Career Pathways

- Improve career progression pathways for Ratings transitioning from seafaring to shore-based roles.
- Publish a Maritime Information Notice (MIN) listing all courses that reduce sea time for Ratings, improving access to training and development opportunities.

7. Apprenticeships and Vocational Pathways

- Work with apprenticeship trailblazer groups to promote and improve maritime apprenticeships across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
- Develop new apprenticeship standards and explore shared apprenticeship models with flexi-job apprenticeship agencies to broaden training opportunities across maritime sub-sectors.
- Conduct research to better understand low apprenticeship uptake and remove barriers to engagement.

8. Funding and Taxation for Ratings

- Review and enhance the SMarT funding rules to better support Ratings' training, including exploring fast-tracked training routes and expanding SMarT to cover more practical elements of training.
- Reform the tonnage tax regime's Minimum Training Obligation to include fixed training places for both officer cadets and Ratings per 15 officers employed, better aligning training opportunities with industry needs.

Conclusion: A Collaborative Path Forward

Over the years, the Maritime Skills Commission (MSC), has made a substantial impact on the maritime industry's approach to skills development. By addressing critical skills gaps, fostering the adoption of sustainable practices, and encouraging the embrace of new technologies, the MSC has provided a strategic framework that has helped shape workforce planning across the sector.

However, the challenges faced by the maritime industry are multifaceted and ever-evolving. The Commission recognises that tackling these challenges requires continued collaboration with industry leaders, training providers, government bodies, and other key stakeholders. The MSC's role is not to deliver these changes directly but to guide and support the sector through comprehensive research, well-informed recommendations, and targeted initiatives.

Looking ahead, the MSC’s influence will be crucial as the industry navigates the complexities of technological advancements, environmental regulations, and global workforce trends. The Commission will focus on facilitating dialogue and partnerships that enable the maritime sector to remain competitive on the global stage, while also meeting the growing demand for sustainability and innovation.

By fostering collaboration across the industry, the MSC, with the support of Maritime UK, and its industry partners, can ensure that the UK maritime industry is equipped with a talented, diverse, and adaptable workforce that can thrive in a rapidly changing landscape. The future of the maritime sector will be built on collaboration, resilience, innovation, and a shared commitment to excellence, and the MSC stands ready to continue to support this journey.

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