

Maritime Skills Commission

MEMBERSHIP

On the few occasions to date that I have had a chance to discuss the work of the Maritime Skills Commission I have emphasized the need for it to be truly representative, to make a real difference and to add value to work already underway. I'm sure everyone understands that creating a such a Commission is a challenge and through discussions with colleagues I have given it a lot of thought. Now in the spirit of openness I want to share the criteria I intend to use in identifying the right group of Commissioners.

Graham Baldwin

Chair
March 2020

DfT GUIDANCE

My starting point is the Department for Transport's People Route Map which offered two pieces of guidance:

- the Commission "must be kept at a manageable size so that meetings are meaningful and outcomes achievable"; and
- it should ensure that it "has representation from all parts of the sector including DfT, MCA, academia, specialists, employers, the unions and those organisations on the fringes of maritime training discussions"

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

A key consideration will be appropriate coverage of the five sectors covered by Maritime UK:

- Shipping
- Ports
- Professional services
- Marine engineering and science
- Marine leisure

I recognise that there is considerable variety within each of those sectors, so I'm looking for the right balance of knowledge of, and acceptability to, each one.

- Geographical coverage. The Commission's remit covers the whole of the UK, so again I am looking for both appropriate knowledge and acceptability
- Seniority. People who are senior enough to follow through, in their own organisation or network, and who carry colleagues' respect

- Business. I interpret “employers” to mean those who really want and need talented people to drive the success of their business, i.e. their focus is the good of their business, and they are not necessarily experts in HR or skills. I recognise that the interests of small businesses are not always the same as those which have national or international scope
- Knowledge of HR and the current skills system. Balancing that, the Commission’s recommendations must be realistic and link effectively with existing activity
- Interest in, and knowledge of, the impact of change, particularly technical change - automation, digitisation, and so on
- Ambassadors: people who are well-connected, who will help to sell the Commission’s work within their networks

In terms of how I would like the Commission to go about its work, I’m also looking for:

- ‘Big picture’ people with a good strategic sense, and the courage to ask difficult questions which challenge the status quo, so we can make more progress
- Fresh perspectives
- A mix of personal styles, so we get a rich conversation between us, and better results
- Gender balance: ideally 50:50
- People willing to put in some time and effort to make the Commission a success.