



Inspiring the Future Mariner

Report of the conference held on 14th May 2018
in association with the Maritime Skills Alliance



This is a deliberately concise summary of the key things said and discussed at this conference in Trinity House by 75 people from a wide range of organisations both inside the maritime industry and beyond it. We hope that the conference was the *start* of a process and not the end of one, so please continue to work with Maritime UK (see links below for contacts), and with each other, towards our shared ambitions. Please do pass this note on.

Ideas – Recommendations – Action

1. No one dissented from **two core propositions**:
 - a. we could do with some better coordination of the many existing initiatives and programmes
 - b. Maritime UK should take the lead in that task
2. If Maritime UK published some guidance on the kind of questions someone might expect when they go into a school (perhaps presented as a 'training hour?'), it would give people more confidence in doing so. (Averil Macdonald commented that young people love hearing that things go wrong in a career and it turns out not to be the end of the world) >> [we will pick this up within Maritime UK's Careers Promotion Forum.](#)
3. As the circulated paper pointed out, there is a lot going on already; it would be helpful to have a more comprehensive list readily available. >> [the Careers Promotion Forum will pick this up too.](#)
4. Could that be done the other way, too? – ie a readily-accessible list of contacts within companies for schools keen to arrange visits. >> [that would take more organising, but is worth a look.](#)

5. Our communication will be more effective if we have more consistent messaging – eg that careers in the maritime sector do not all require time at sea. >> [another one for the Careers Promotion Forum](#)
6. “Every company should make a commitment” to releasing people, eg for half a day a year to go into a local school. >> [one for Maritime UK to explore, to see what might be possible \(and how to do it\)](#)

Points well made

A small selection of points made during the day which caught our attention:

- Do we unwittingly show people too narrow a view of the wide range of careers available in the maritime sector by concentrating too much on the initial years at sea (commonly fewer than 10)?
- Can we do more to get maritime (specifically sea-going) qualifications recognised by wider industry?
- In Carnival UK’s fleet of 11 ships (two of them captained by women), 57% of the hotel sector officers are female. > So it’s not the case that “women won’t go to sea”.
- “We’ve found companies are very cooperative”. (Michael Shakesheff, Trustee, High Tide Foundation, talking about companies’ willingness to support the Foundation’s visit programme).
- 65% of children in school today will end up in careers that don’t yet exist. (World Economic Forum).
- “We all agree that the maritime sector is big, and good, and well-paid, so if we have a problem getting the right people, it has to be a communication issue”.
- 2,600 children this year will participate in school sessions using the engineering ‘pods’ managed by the Marine Society and Sea Cadets.
- Children at school today “all want to change the world”: how do we frame our careers offer to appeal to that desire?
- Maritime careers are a lot wider than cadetships: yachts, building, engineering, lawyers, and so on.
- Maritime UK’s [Women in Maritime Task Force](#) will shortly publish a “Charter”, inviting companies to make a number of commitments about the position of women in the maritime workforce.

- Asked to score how well the sector is doing now in promoting ourselves to schools, [scale of 1 to 5, with 5 high], scores were typically 2 or 2+ - with the caveat that few sectors could claim any more.
- “We need a proper marketing programme, properly funded, to raise awareness of the industry”.

The Speeches and Presentations

Bill Walworth CBE, Elder Brother of Trinity House, Chairman of the Maritime Skills Alliance, and Conference Chairman summarised the purpose of the event: how to get school, college and university leavers to enter the maritime industry; how to promote the industry to schools, in order to gain children’s attention and to guide them with their exam choices. How, in fact, to inspire the future mariner.

David Dingle, Chairman of Maritime UK and of Carnival UK, began by contrasting the importance of the maritime industry – “we have a fantastic story to tell and by rights that should attract fantastic people” – with the difficulty often felt in getting our message across, despite a lot of effort. He stressed that the task now is to *attract talent*, not just to fill slots. And he wondered whether “we should be more joined-up”, speaking together more effectively with one voice, with a clear view about our audiences, and what we want to say to them, and how we should best put across those messages.

Prof. Averil Macdonald OBE, focused on how to get girls into engineering. Girls do study science, but “the issue is very specifically physics”: the proportion of girls studying physics at ‘A’ level has been stuck at 20% for 30 years, and without it no university will accept them for engineering. She spoke about the image of different careers (“not for people like me” – see Links below), and the language used to describe them: much the most significant influence on girls’ careers choices is their mother, who wants to know if her daughter will be happy in that career.

Cath Longhurst, Chief Executive of EBP South and the Basingstoke Consortium, spoke about the research into how children learn about careers; the “cognitive overload” they have to deal with, and the continuing truth that family remain the key influencers over career choices. Meeting people is powerful, and so is experience of the reality of work. She stressed that the maritime sector is competing against other sectors, and recommended us to

make full use of the many existing initiatives, both inside the sector and more generally: “don’t let’s invent new initiatives”.

Mona Taybi, Acting Head of School at Platanos College (Stockwell, south London) & Katy Peart, Deputy Headteacher at Winterbourne Boys’ Academy, both schools with no maritime links, stressed the value of giving children “real life experiences”, linked to realistic career options. They would be very keen to be offered ‘funded trips and experience’: “most of our pupils haven’t ever been on a boat”. Practically, they recommended maritime partners to have a central contact point, as schools do, and suggested that a good way to bring the sector to the attention of teachers was to get coverage in the TES.

In answer to a question about a small company’s inability to develop any expertise in risk assessments for workplace visits, or whether DBS¹ checks are needed, Mona said that schools would normally cover all that, and DBS checks would not be needed because pupils were always accompanied by teachers.

- www.maritimeuk.org/careers
- The [message of welcome and encouragement from Maritime Minister, Nus Ghani](#).
- The WISE Campaign’s “[People Like Me](#)” pack, including the questionnaire Averil Macdonald mentioned.
- “[Not for People Like Me](#)”: Averil Macdonald’s report for Network Rail
- “[Moments of Choice](#)” (Cath Longhurst’s recommendation). Research by the Behavioural Insights Team.
- The slides used by Averil Macdonald and Cath Longhurst are on the [MSA website](#).
- New [Level 2](#) and [Level 3](#) maritime qualifications [for use in England].
- **Maritime UK’s People and Skills Forum** is chaired by Bill Walworth, Chairman of the Maritime Skills Alliance. Contact Iain Mackinnon, MSA: iain@maritimeskills.org
- **Maritime UK’s Careers Promotion Forum** is chaired by Barry Bryant, Director-General of Seafarers UK. Contact Nick Harvey, Seafarers UK: nick.harvey@seafarers.uk

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¹ Disclosure and Barring Service – formerly known as CRB, Criminal Records Bureau, checks