

## **COUNTRY REPORT FROM CHINA**

### **A. The current situation of China's maritime training and education**

There are about 500,000 seafarers in China, of which two thirds are serving in coastal or inland waterway fleets. 162,000 seafarers are serving in deep-sea fleets (62,000 are Officers) of which some 42,000 are serving on foreign-owned vessels. China has abundant ability and capacity for maritime training and education. Currently, there are 7 maritime universities/colleges, including Dalian Maritime University, Shanghai Maritime University, Jimei University, etc. China also has 18 high and middle level vocational maritime training institutes, such as Qingdao Ocean Shipping Mariners College, Zhoushan Navigation School, etc. In addition, there are also other 43 seafarers' maritime technical schools. The total number of lecturers amounts to 4,000, among which 1,000 are professors and associate professors, 1,200 are lecturers. Most of the lecturers have sea experiences and hold valid officer's competency certificates. With the implementation of STCW95, great amount of capital have been invested to the maritime training and education institutions for training equipments such as ship-maneuvering simulators, engine room simulators, cargo handling simulators etc. All of the maritime Universities/colleges are equipped with large-scale ship maneuvering simulators. The financing of the maritime training and education institutions comes from several channels: some of them are financed by the central government, as in the case of Dalian Maritime University; some of them are financed by major shipping companies, for example, the Qingdao Ocean Shipping Mariners College is sponsored by China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO). Others are financed by the various local governments. For the reason that maritime training and education involves huge investment, there is still no private owned maritime training institutions for the time being. The total output capacity of the major 25 maritime universities/colleges is about 5,000 per year; these graduates will become operational level seafarers referred to in the STCW Convention. Before they can get the certificates of third-mate or second-engineer (as the case maybe), they have to pass examinations organized by the Maritime Safety Administrations, in addition to one year on board experiences.

The scale of Chinese maritime training and education system basically ensured the balance between the demand and supply side of Chinese Seafarers. The White Paper on the Development of Maritime Shipping in China shows that, the total number of vessels flying Chinese flag is 2,525 which need to be manned by 60,000 seafarers approximately. At the same time, About 40,000 Chinese seafarers now are working on board foreign flag ships. Taking into account the reserve factors, the 160,000 Chinese seafarers more or less match the current demand. According to a survey conducted by a major shipping company in China, the natural reduction and career leaving rate is about 5 per cent, thus about 5,000 new seafarers are needed to join in the seafarer profession each year, which equals to the number of graduates from the major maritime education and training institutions.

### **B. Roles played by the China MSA in maritime training and education**

The China Maritime Safety Administration (China MSA) is the competent authority in China for the implementation of STCW Convention, it is responsible for the administration of seafarers training, examination, assessment and certification under national legislation. In November 1997, China submitted the documentation for the implementation of the STCW Convention as required by the convention to the International Maritime Organization

(IMO), and has been accepted on to the IMO's first "White List". This signifies that the competency certificate issued to seafarers by China MSA complies with the requirements of STCW Convention. In China, the maritime training and education institutions are only responsible for the vocational training and education of the students, all the certificates related to the STCW Convention, such as the Certificate of Competency, Certificate of Professional training, Certificates of Special Training all fall into the responsibilities of China MSA. In order to satisfy the requirements of STCW Convention, China MSA has formulated and promulgated a series of regulations, which stipulate that any person pursuing a seafarer profession must have completed a formal maritime education with adequate sea-going experience, passed the examination and assessment, and gone through onboard training. All the institutions involved in seafarers training and education must have in place a quality assurance system in accordance with the provisions of STCW convention, which need to be reviewed from time to time and approved by the China MSA.

Although the requirements for joining in the seafarer career is very strict in China, there are still some shortcomings related to Chinese seafarers in general. For instance, the English communication skill of Chinese seafarers is usually not as good as those of other seafarers from some other seafarer supplying countries, it is sometimes found this can create a big difficulty when a multinational crew working onboard a ship where Chinese seafarers forming part of it. Besides, if they are going to work for European shipowners, it is not easy for them to meet themselves into the management culture of the western style. All these disadvantages have greatly impeded the Chinese seafarers going further into the international ship-manning market.

As the competent authority, China MSA has taken many steps to overcome these disadvantages. We've already recognized that, in order to improve the English proficiency of the students, high quality maritime English teachers are indispensable. Last year, we organized a training of trainers' workshop on maritime English in Shanghai with the help of International Maritime Organization. Furthermore, the China MSA has always been promoting the co-operation between Chinese maritime training institutions with foreign shipping companies or foreign maritime training institutions and providing supports for this kind of co-operation, because the China MSA believes that these co-operation programs will greatly enhance the improvement of Chinese maritime training and education system, we hope that the experience gained in such co-operation be implanted into other maritime training and educational institutions.

### **C. The future of the Chinese maritime training and education**

As mentioned earlier, the output of Chinese maritime training and education institutions can only satisfy the current demand. Therefore, it is our belief that China's maritime training and education has a great potential to be explored, since China is rich of young people with good education background who are willing to pursue a seafaring career, and the maritime institutions still have the extra capacity to enlarge their admittance number. Dalian Maritime University has already taken a step forward in this respect. The number of students admitted to the university has already expanded to 1,100 from 358 of the level of year 1998. Secondly, the maritime training and education institutions need to be reformed, and the contents and methodology of teaching and instruction need to be improved. Lastly, we need to strengthen our co-operation with the international maritime community to make Chinese seafarers fit better to the need of international shipping.

In summary, I wish to point out that, firstly, Chinese Seafarers are trained and educated in accordance with the STCW convention and applicable national requirement, therefore are of good quality in general. Secondly, China is rich of human resources, and we are quite willing to co-operate with other countries in this region to constantly improve of the quality of seafarers, increase the number of qualified seafarers, and to provide the international shipping with more and better quality seafarers.