

Grade Structure Review for Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships Grades

The Marine Department (MD) is pleased to note that the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service (Standing Commission) has submitted its report on the Grade Structure Review for the Marine Officer (MO) and the Surveyor of Ships (SoS) grades of the MD to the Chief Executive on 31 October 2017. The Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, expressed gratitude to the Standing Commission for carrying out a comprehensive review of the grade structures of the two professional grades.

As the two core professional grades in the MD, MOs and SoSs are responsible for discharging the statutory functions relating to all navigational matters in the waters of Hong Kong and safety standards of all classes and types of vessels. They are also the two feeder grades for the senior directorate ranks in the department.

At present, entry into the two grades normally requires a professional qualification at Certificate of Competency Class 1 (Deck Officer or Marine Engineer Officer) and certain years of work experience at designated positions on ocean-going vessels. For the post related to naval architectural work, the applicants have to accumulate at least four years of relevant work experience after obtaining a corporate membership from a relevant engineering institution. Due to the stringent entry requirements, the two grades have been facing recruitment difficulties over the years.

One of the key recommendations of the report is to create an assistant rank for each of the MO and SoS grades in order to tackle the recruitment difficulties and manpower shortage problem from the root.

Upon joining the MD, the assistant rank officers will, through learning from the designated training programme and from actual work experience, acquire professional knowledge and knowledge on the work of the department. Upon successful completion of the designated training programme, obtaining the professional recognition and meeting the requirements on character, performance and potential, etc., the assistant rank officers will be considered for promotion to the MO rank or SoS rank.

It is recommended that the assistant rank should form a combined establishment of “AMO/MO” and “ASoS/SoS”, which will provide flexibility for the MD to recruit talents at the assistant rank as well as the MO/SoS rank to form its professional

teams. This arrangement will strengthen the professional profile of the two grades and be conducive to their long-term development.

The report also contains a number of other recommendations, including the introduction of a relevant degree as academic requirement for the MO rank and the adjustment of the starting pay of the rank from MPS Point 29 to Point 32. The report is available on the webpage of the Joint Secretariat for the Advisory Bodies on Civil Service and Judicial Salaries and Conditions of Service (<http://www.jsscs.gov.hk>).

“I am grateful that the Standing Commission has conducted in-depth analysis of the situation and put forward pragmatic proposals. I hope the recommendations can be implemented as soon as possible to help alleviate manpower shortage and resolve the succession issues of the two grades fundamentally,” Ms Cheng said.

The Marine Officer Association and the Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers’ Association welcome the recommendations in the report.

On the next steps, the Civil Service Bureau will examine the recommendations in detail. The recommendations require the endorsement of the Executive Council and Legislative Council before they can be put into implementation.

“I shall work closely with the Civil Service Bureau to examine the report recommendations and look forward to implementing the recommendations at the soonest to further enhance the efficiency and quality of our services to the public,” Ms Cheng added.

Maritime and Aviation Internship Scheme enters its fourth year

Officiating at the Maritime and Aviation Internship Scheme Cocktail Reception on July 27, the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, has said that Hong Kong is an international maritime and aviation centre as well as logistics hub and that the Government is working closely with the industries to reinforce Hong Kong's sustainable development in this area.

The Government launched the \$100 million Maritime and Aviation Training Fund in 2014 to attract young people to join the maritime and aviation industries, as well as to nurture more talents for the two sectors through various scholarships and

award schemes. Now in its fourth year, the number of participating companies and intern places increase to about 70 companies in the maritime and aviation sectors offering nearly 630 intern places, in order to let young people gain first-hand experience in various types of work in these industries. Mr Chan said he hoped that students would actively consider joining the trade after taking part in the internship scheme.

In addition, Mr Chan pointed out that manpower is the most valuable asset for Hong Kong, and nurturing talents in the maritime and aviation industries is highly regarded by the Government. The Hong Kong Maritime and Port Board set up in April last year has been working closely with the trade, and formulating appropriate strategies and measures to build up a pool of competent professionals and technical personnel through its Manpower Development Committee.

Collaboration between Hong Kong and Shanghai to enhance the maritime development

On behalf of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, signed an agreement with the representatives of the University of Hong Kong and Shanghai Maritime University on August 14 regarding the University of Hong Kong - Shanghai Maritime University Academic Collaboration Scheme. Commencing in the 2017/18 academic year, selected graduates of the School of Law of SMU will be awarded scholarships, to undertake the one-year Master of Common Law programme at HKU. They will be required to work in the maritime industry in Hong Kong for at least one year upon completion of the programme.

On the same occasion, Mr Chan also witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Hong Kong Shipowners Association and the Shanghai International Shipping Institute for the establishment of the Shanghai-Hong Kong International Maritime Research Centre, which aims at promoting collaboration in maritime-related research and exchange, so as to enhance the maritime development of both places.

In addition, representatives of the Shanghai Maritime University visited the Marine Department (MD) on August 15. The Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, led MD officers to meet with the delegation led by the President of the University, Mr

Huang Youfang.

IMO Secretary-General visits Hong Kong

The Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Mr Kitack Lim, visited Hong Kong during September 3 to 6. On September 4, he met with the Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, and other MD officers to learn more about the department's work and challenges. Following the meeting, Mr Lim visited the Vessel Traffic Centre and Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre, where he was briefed by the MD's officers on the daily operations of the two centres. He also toured the port facilities to see for himself the marine infrastructures and port development of Hong Kong.

In the afternoon, Mr Lim met with the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, to learn about the development of the maritime, port and shipping industries in Hong Kong. He also learnt the updates on maritime pollution and sustainable development in Hong Kong from the Secretary for Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing. During his stay, Mr Lim also visited Hong Kong Observatory, the Maritime Services Training Institute of Vocational Training Council and the Hong Kong International Terminals.

Students join MD as summer interns

The MD launched the 2017 Post- Secondary Student Summer Internship Programme from June to August. A total of 26 students joined and worked in various offices in the MD.

In addition to working in their assigned offices, they also met with the senior management and colleagues in the MD to learn about the work of the department and the career development in the maritime industry. The MD arranged visits for them to see for themselves the Vessel Traffic Centre, the Government Dockyard, and various port facilities. They also gained hands-on experience in steering a vessel in the harbour by using a ship simulator, managing vessel traffic through a communication system and checking the speed of vessels with a laser gun.

In a sharing session marking the end of the programme, the student interns

shared about their feelings, and expressed that the programme allowed them to contribute to MD's work with their own expertise and therefore enrich their personal experience.

Hong Kong Maritime Week to be held in November

The second edition of the Hong Kong Maritime Week will be held from 19 to 26 November to "Propel Hong Kong" as a renowned international maritime centre. Through an intensive week of multifarious maritime activities, international and local industry practitioners will come together for different activities ranging from industry briefings, seminars and conferences, corporate functions, networking events to maritime-themed sports, school workshops and family fun days.

Oilex and HNS Exercise test marine pollution responses

The MD and relevant government departments held two annual marine pollution response joint exercises, codenamed Oilex 2017 and the Maritime Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) Exercise 2017, simultaneously in the morning on October 27 off Lamma Island to test marine pollution responses of government departments in the event of pollution caused by oil spillage and the spread of HNS in Hong Kong waters.

In the test scenario, an oil tanker collided with a container vessel. The fuel oil carried by the tanker was found leaking and four containers loaded with aminoethylethanolamine solution (98 per cent concentration) were fallen from the container vessel into the sea. During the joint exercises, a response group was tasked to contain and clean up the spilled oil and chemicals, which might pose threats to the nearby environment and facilities.

In the wake of the simulated oil spill, the tanker anchored at Ha Mei Wan of Lamma Island, a salvage team transferred the fuel oil from the damaged tank and patched up the leakage so as to stop further oil spillage at source. An oil combat team deployed floating barrier booms to encircle the tanker and to set up barrier booms near the tanker to prevent the spill from spreading. The exercise also demonstrated a simulation of spraying of oil dispersant with sea water from pollution control vessels and a Government Flying Service (GFS) helicopter onto oil on the sea surface, as well

as the use of oil skimmers and other equipment. Simultaneously, a shoreline cleansing team conducted a shoreline oil clean-up drill at the Tit Sha Long Beach of Lamma Island.

In combating the simulated HNS spill, the response group lifted the damaged containers out from the sea as soon as possible and sprayed seawater on the sea surface to simulate expediting the dilution of aminoethylethanolamine solution.

The exercises provided hands-on experience for relevant departments to adopt an emergency response strategy to prevent pollution according to the properties and the scale of the substances spilled.

Promotion enhanced to urge passengers on high-speed craft to fasten seat belts

The MD further promotes the message that passengers on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau should have their seat belts fastened for a safer sea journey.

The MD has set up a large backdrop of Hong Kong scenery decorated with genuine cabin seats at the waiting lounge of the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan. Passengers of high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau are encouraged to try the seats with their seat belts fastened to enjoy the Hong Kong scenery as if they are on board a high-speed craft. Promotional leaflets and souvenirs are distributed to passengers at the waiting lounge by Marine inspectors and they also appeal to passengers to fasten their seat belts at the appropriate time to ensure a safe journey.

The Department will continue to distribute promotional leaflets to passengers, while other promotional materials such as posters have been displayed prominently at the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan, the China Ferry Terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui and the Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal to enhance passenger awareness of fastening seat belts on high-speed craft plying between Hong Kong and Macau.

Marine traffic control and safety measures for the National Day Fireworks Display

The MD implemented marine traffic control and strengthened the inspection of spectator vessels for the 2017 National Day Fireworks Display held on October 1 to ensure that safety requirements are met.

On the event day, the MD established a Closed Area in the waters off the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai, where barges for the fireworks display were anchored, and a restricted area in the Central Harbour. Besides, to enhance marine safety, the MD officers also strengthened inspections of spectator vessels for ensuring sufficient life-saving appliances are provided on board, children wear a lifejacket at all times and coxswains keep a passenger and crew list on board.

“Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Certificate Examination Guidebook” published

The MD has published "Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Certificate Examination Guidebook", which introduces the criteria for the Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 2 Certificate Examination, the examination format and the syllabus, and provides sample questions for reference. The Guidebook facilitates public understanding on the examination requirements and the deck and engineering knowledge required for the professional qualification for maritime-related jobs, thereby promoting industry development.

Chinese version of the guidebook has been uploaded to the MD's website www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/exam.html. Preparation of the English version of the Guidebook is under way and it will be uploaded to the website soon.

Director of Marine commends brave acts at sea

The Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, presented commendations on October 24, 2017 to 38 officers who risked their lives to rescue others in the Hong Kong waters.