

Recruitments for AMOs and ASoSs kick off

The Grade Structure Review (GSR) for tackling the manpower shortage problems of the Marine Officer (MO) and Surveyor of Ships (SoS) grades have been completed in October 2017. One of the key recommendations of the GSR is to create an assistant rank for each of the MO and SoS grades to attract younger candidates with good potential to join the Marine Department (MD). For entry into the Assistant Marine Officer (AMO) rank, as well as the Engineer & Ship stream and Nautical stream of the Assistant Surveyor of Ships (ASoS) rank, candidates should possess a professional qualification at Certificate of Competency Class 3 or above and a degree in a relevant discipline. As for the Ship stream of the ASoS rank, a degree in naval architecture or related technology is required.

The recommendations have been approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on June 15, 2018 and came into implementation on August 1. MD has advertised the positions of AMO and ASoS on August 10. (https://csboa1.csb.gov.hk/csboa/jve/JVE_001.action)

MD's colleagues are excited to learn that the Department has successfully launched the recruitment exercise for the assistant rank officers. Hong Kong Maritime News has interviewed colleagues who have played different roles in the exercise of GSR to share their views as well as their expectations of the new appointees.

Grade managers: Frank exchanges to reach consensus

Recalling the discussion and preparatory stages, the Assistant Director of Marine (Port Control), Mr Lai Chi-tung; and the Assistant Director of Marine (Shipping), Mr Cheng Yeung-ming, being the Grade Managers of the Marine Officer grade and Surveyor of Ships grade respectively, say the colleagues have expressed quite a number of concerns at the very beginning of the exercise of the GSR, such as the professionalism of the department may be weakened; people may be discouraged to become chief engineer or master mariner of ocean-going-vessels; the outcomes of the exercise cannot be predicted as there is no precedent case. After many internal discussions and sharing sessions, colleagues gradually understand more about the GSR and finally throw their support to the proposal. The proposal was supported by different advisory committees before it was tabled at related panels of the Legislative Council for discussion. The designated programme was also assessed by the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers and the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology. Mr Lai and Mr Cheng thanked the colleagues for devoting quite a lot of

efforts throughout the preparatory process. With the implementation of the new grade structure, Mr Lai and Mr Cheng look forward to recruiting young officers who are determined in developing their career in the maritime industry, thus alleviating the current shortage of professional staff and resolving the aging and succession problems in the long run. These young officers, who are expected to have dreams and goals to achieve, as well as to have good language proficiency and critical minds, are advised to work hard for achieving the professional qualifications and eventually serve both the department and the maritime industry.

The Assistant Director of Marine (Port Control), Mr Lai Chi-tung:

“Great oaks from little acorns grow. I hope that young colleagues will not fear of hardships during the training years and lay a good foundation for future development.”

The Assistant Director of Marine (Shipping), Mr Cheng Yeung-ming:

“Study hard and work hard. Strive for the maritime professional qualifications and contribute to the department and the maritime industry.”

Staff Associations: Attractive entry requirements to encourage new blood

MO grade and SoS grade have faced acute recruitment and succession problems in the past years, leading to heavy workload to serving officers. Both the Chairmen of the Marine Officers Association and the Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers’ Association welcome and show support to creating the assistant rank, and are looking forward to alleviating the shortage of manpower. The Chairman of the Marine Officers Association, Mr Law Lap-keung, points out that the assistant rank appointees are required to undergo internal trainings and assessments for requisite qualifications. As the qualifications are tailor-made for MD’s business and not applicable to the commercial sector, Mr Law believes that this can help reduce the wastage of MOs. Meanwhile, the Chairman of the Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers’ Association, Mr Shu Bong-tai, notes that members have all along been concerned about the manpower, training and resources management. He believes that the less stringent entry requirement at the assistant rank is attractive to encourage new blood to join.

Mentors: Work diligently, be passionate with good attitude

The new assistant rank officers have to complete a designated training programme in about four years to acquire the necessary professional knowledge and

attain the required level of competency. The programme will comprise on-the-job training with different postings to MD's division, and industry attachment, etc. The Department will also make arrangement for appointing existing MOs and SoSs with rich maritime experience to serve as mentors and guide the juniors to master the relevant professional knowledge and understand the operation of the Department. Mentors are of the view that new comers should possess the following qualities: to work with zeal and commitment; to serve the public with their best; to take mentors' advice; and to think independently. Being the mentors of the ASoS, the Senior Surveyors of Ships Mr Kuang Zhi-jian, Mr Huang Zi-hai and Mr Ni Zhao share their encouraging words with us. Mr Kuang says that new comers can achieve their goals so long as they have self-confidence. Mr Huang hopes that they will take the training programme seriously and grasp the opportunities. Mr Ni emphasizes that it is important to create a good learning atmosphere for the mentees to improve and upgrade themselves because they will be the core members of the MO and SoS grades in the future. As for the mentors of AMO, Senior Marine Officers Ms Carmen Chan and Mr Huang Ji-he shares the same view that the new comers shall taste different job natures and challenges of different posts in the Department while being posted to individual divisions, and thus build up their confidence. Ms Chan stresses that team spirit is very important and will share her own experience with the new comers to help them adapt to the working environment swiftly. On the other hand, Mr Huang encourages them with a proverb "no pain, no gain".

Young generations: Will grasp the opportunities

The editor has also interviewed some of the summer interns who are now attached to various MD's divisions. They are well aware of the creation of the assistant ranks and think that it is now much easier for them to be qualified for application to join the MO and SoS grades. They also hope that they can join the maritime industry after graduation and eventually work with the department to develop their career.

For details of the introduction of AMOs and ASoSs, please visit www.mardep.gov.hk/theme/maritime_industry/en/introduction_and_vacancies.html.

Hong Kong Nautical and Maritime Scholarship Scheme **Encourage youngsters to pursue a career in maritime industry**

The Maritime and Aviation Training Fund has collaborated with the Hong Kong

Polytechnic University to implement the Hong Kong Nautical and Maritime Scholarship Scheme (the Scheme) in the 2017/18 academic year. The Scheme, with a target group of students of the Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) in the International Shipping and Transport Logistics Programme of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, is comprised of two parts namely (1) Seafaring Scholarship; and (2) Maritime Scholarship. The objective of the Seafaring Scholarship is to encourage youngsters to receive seafaring training and pursue a seafaring career in order to supply new blood; while the Maritime Scholarship is to encourage students with excellent academic results to study the relevant degree programme in order to nurture talents for the maritime industry. For details of the Scheme, please visit www.hkmpb.gov.hk/en/manpower/hknmss-seafaring.html and www.hkmpb.gov.hk/en/manpower/hknmss-maritime.html.

Departmental News

A total of 14 students have joined the MD under the 2018 Post-Secondary Student Summer Internship Programme. The training programme for this year is very rich. Apart from attaching to various units, the interns have joined the tea gathering where they met with the senior management and colleagues in the Department. They have also attended the Maritime and Aviation Internship Scheme Cocktail Reception 2018 to learn more about the development of the maritime industry. An intern said he has long been interested in seafaring and, through this internship opportunity, he wishes to know more about the operations of the MD, the port of Hong Kong as well as the maritime industry. Another intern who is posted to a frontline unit said it is challenging and eye-opening to handle public complaints and ad-hoc cases. He is grateful to the colleagues for their guidance. Interns will also visit the container terminal, where they will learn more about the shipping industry. The next issue will cover more activities that interns will join and their views on working in the MD.

In addition to the daily work of collecting and scavenging floating refuse, the MD conducted a Special Clean-up Operation at Chai Wan Cargo Basin and adjacent foreshore areas on July 6 to step up in keeping the sea clean. Promotional leaflets were also distributed by MD's officers at the Chai Wan Cargo Basin to remind the public to keep the harbour clean.

Furthermore, a joint departmental operation was held in late July (July 28 and 29) to conduct clean-up and enforcement actions at Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter and its vicinity to address the marine refuse problem. During the operation, a total of 14.5 tonnes of marine refuse was collected and one fixed penalty notice against littering

was issued by the MD.

The MD and the Marine Police conducted a joint operation at Sai Kung waters consecutively (July 28 and 29) to combat the use of vessels for illegal passengers and speeding conditions. MD officers measured the speed of vessels by a laser gun. Leaflets were also distributed at Sai Kung Pier to further enhance public awareness during water sports activities.

The regular meeting between the MD and Guangdong Maritime Safety Administration (GDMSA) was held in Hong Kong on June 27. The Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng, led MD officers to meet with the Director of the GDMSA, Mr Chen Biwu, and his delegation, to exchange views on projects involving both the MD and the GDMSA and to strengthen cooperation between Guangdong and Hong Kong on maritime issues.

The Consul General of the Netherlands, Ms Annemieke Ruigrok visited the MD on August 3 and met with the Director of Marine, Ms Maisie Cheng.