



**Exploring requirements for
National Occupational Standards
and qualifications for
particular occupations**

Report

Prepared for the **Merchant Navy Training Board**
and **Port Skills and Safety Limited**
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Introduction and objectives

This report follows discussions with selected representatives from key organisations within the maritime sector, exploring whether there is a demand for standards and qualifications across particular specialist shore-based occupations. It builds upon the interim report of 21 March, and describes the principal findings and conclusions arising from completion of two phases of discussions. The support of all those who have kindly contributed is acknowledged with particular thanks, and their names are included in Appendix A.

Setting the scene

A recent mapping exercise undertaken by The Maritime Skills Alliance reviewed many of the occupational roles within the maritime sector, and referenced them to relevant National Occupational Standards, 'NOS', and National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications, 'N/SVQs'. This exercise identified several maritime shore-based occupations for which further NOS and N/SVQs may be required. These occupational areas include:

- 1) Shore-based ship management, which includes personnel involved in :
 - engineering operations, within which typical job roles include engineering superintendents and technical superintendents,
 - fleet operations, with job roles including fleet directors and commercial directors,
 - logistics coordination and training, with job roles of personnel managers and human resource managers,
 - marine operations, with job roles of marine superintendents and marine technical assistants,
- 2) Hydrographic surveyors within port operations.

Objectives

The overall aim of this work is to identify whether there is a demand for NOS and N/SVQs which might address some or all of these occupational areas. The outcomes from feedback arising from the mapping exercise, together with discussions involving representatives of the sector, has suggested that the current lack of appropriate NOS is hindering the development of relevant training and qualifications, as well as preventing access to funding which could support such initiatives.

Methodology

The programme of work was comprised of two principal steps:

- 1) Research the interest in possible new NOS and qualifications,
- 2) Prepare and agree the report.

In progressing step 1 twenty interviews were conducted, with a further fourteen completed in the second phase. Of the thirty four interviews, ten focused upon the role of hydrographers, twenty three reviewed shore-based ship management, with the remaining interview being with a representative of Scottish Enterprise exploring a new qualification relating to ship management. The analysis within this report is therefore largely focused upon the feedback from the thirty-three interviews with representatives of the operating organisations.

Key actions have therefore included:

- agreeing the scope of the work, confirming the range of occupational roles to be addressed,
- agreeing the information required and the areas of questioning to be explored. A semi-structured questionnaire was prepared to prompt discussions, whilst still allowing flexibility for respondents to discuss relevant and particular aspects. This is set out in Appendix B,
- contacting by e-mail individuals identified by the Merchant Navy Training Board, 'MNTB', and Port Skills and Safety Ltd, 'PSSL'. This email introduced the project and its aims, and the information sought,
- exploring the views of key individuals upon, and their interest in, potential standards and associated qualifications for the relevant occupational areas, through a programme of telephone interviews.

Amongst the respondents, some one in six work within a human resource function, such as training, and the rest are in operational roles. Many of the respondents were generous with their time for this research and several of the interviews were of up to an hour's duration. As a consequence of this support, it is considered that greater detail was obtained than would have been available from a written questionnaire.

Structure of this report

This report is set out under the following headings:

- Profile of the occupational areas being addressed,
 - key areas of responsibility,
 - estimate of the numbers in these occupations,
- Awareness of National Occupational Standards and associated qualifications,
 - occupational areas where NOS have/are being used, and their value,
 - levels of interest in NOS for the target roles,
 - building upon and promoting the interest in NOS
- Issues being addressed of relevance to future National Occupational Standards,
 - recruitment,
 - training and development,
 - addressing the need for change.

Profile of the occupational areas being addressed

Key areas of responsibility

The survey explored the key areas of responsibility for each of the occupations being addressed, focusing upon aspects particular to marine and port activities. It is recognised that, as many of the discussions were with those not directly expert in each of the occupational areas being explored, the descriptors of the responsibilities as are listed below might be indicative only. These would be expanded in any future work should NOS be developed. The key areas of responsibility are identified for each of the following occupations:

- 1) Engineering operations,
- 2) Fleet operations,
- 3) Hydrographers,
- 4) Logistics/training,
- 5) Marine operations.

1) *Engineering operations*

Key requirements are to:

- Understand dry docks,
- Oversee the building of vessels,
- Monitor vessel maintenance,
- Monitor equipment maintenance,
- Ensure that appropriate certification is prepared,
- Plan the movement of officers to and from ships,
- Monitor the competency of personnel for each voyage, and ensure that it meets requirements,
- Monitor the performance of personnel,
- Maintain communication between officers,
- Check documentation and keep accurate records.

2) *Fleet operations*

Key requirements are to:

- Plan for the continuous maintenance of the fleet,
- Monitor cargo loading and unloading,
- Oversee vetting and inspection control procedures,
- Understand the commercial market, and apply relevant requirements,
- Understand and apply employment law, taking into account international considerations where this applies to crews,
- Execute shore-based and marine cross-overs of personnel.

3) Hydrographers

Key requirements are to:

- Survey and map marine environments,
- Monitor the depths of navigation channels,
- Produce charts and data analysis, relevant to preparing marine charts,
- Relay data to various sources,
- Review and select the most appropriate computer software packages to meet the specific needs of the local environment,
- Monitor and ensure safety in the navigation of marine installations.

4) Logistics coordinators and training

Key requirements are to:

- Undertake manpower planning and recruit crews,
- Organise crew rosters,
- Coordinate long- term shift patterns,
- Organise travel arrangements for crew to and from the sea,
- Manage and deliver the training and development of personnel,
- Manage the progression of qualifications.

5) Marine operations

Key requirements are to:

- Monitor and address the commercial performance of each ship,
- Monitor and address the technical performance of each ship,
- Manage technical purchasing,
- Understand and apply international marine employment legislation.

Estimating the numbers in these occupations

Exploring numbers within shore-based ship management

The survey sought information regarding the numbers employed within shore-based ship management within the respondents' organisations. Where respondents were able to provide estimates, many tended to consider shore-based ship management as a whole. The total numbers employed within four of the larger organisations approached in this survey identified that approximately 655 are employed as shore-based ship management employees.

Amongst the respondents, those from ten organisations provided a breakdown of the numbers employed within their organisations across each of the four occupational areas. These tended to be amongst the smaller organisations in terms of employing shore-based ship managers. The table below sets out the total numbers identified as being employed in the areas across these ten organisations.

Numbers employed across ten sample organisations

Occupational areas (offered from 10 organisations)	Numbers within these areas	
	Number (approx)	Increasing/ decreasing +/-
Engineering operations	260	+
Fleet operations	27	+
Logistics coordinators/training	89	+
Marine operations	65	+

The total numbers employed in shore-based management across these ten organisations is therefore approximately 440, which is in addition to the 655 identified above. However, as this is a small sample, no attempt has been made to extrapolate this figure to take in the whole of the industry. In all cases, respondents indicated that the numbers were increasing.

One respondent offered an estimate of the total number of marine superintendents in the UK as approximately 100.

Feedback from amongst the training organisations involved in this survey suggested that the numbers within personnel departments across the UK shipping industry amounted to approximately 2000.

Several respondents commented that numbers were also increasing significantly at administrative level.

Exploring numbers within hydrographic operations

Amongst the respondents, the Chair of the UK Hydrographic Society identified that the membership of the Society numbers approximately 1000, with just over half of this number being hydrographic surveyors. As respondents indicated that as surveyors are highly likely to be members of the Society, this is considered to be a good reflection of those involved in hydrographic operations.

Awareness of National Occupational Standards and associated qualifications

This section explores respondents' awareness and views regarding NOS and their associated qualifications. It is set out under the following principal headings:

- 1) Occupational areas where NOS have/are being used, and their value,
- 2) Levels of interest in NOS for the target roles,
- 3) Building upon and promoting the interest in NOS.

Occupational areas where NOS have/are being used, and their value

There are significant differences in understanding regarding NOS and their role across the sector. Training organisations and training personnel appear to have a strong appreciation of the value of NOS and are often clear as to the applications of NOS. However, many in operational roles can be unsure as to the purpose of NOS, often considering that they are used for qualifications only, and can also be uncertain as to whether their organisations use NOS.

Amongst some of the respondents whose organisations use separate companies to deliver their training, the use and management of NOS lay outside the immediate workplace, being managed entirely by the third party. Nevertheless, amongst the organisations contacted several are using NOS for a range of applications, including performance management and appraisals.

One respondent was concerned that NOS were unlikely to be updated in line with fast moving technology and associated legislative change, or indeed new technologies and their associated changes. In this organisation, cadets following the cadet training scheme have experienced the same issues, where new developments in industry are not always captured in a timely manner. For these reasons, this respondent expressed concern regarding the value of NOS, emphasising the need for such standards to maintain their currency.

Feedback from training personnel

Amongst the respondents, everyone involved in training and development felt that NOS are essential in providing clear criteria as to industry requirements. Many identified that there is a need to benchmark exactly what is to be covered in their training programmes across the above occupational areas, thereby ensuring that their future training best meet the needs of these areas. Training respondents indicated that the most useful applications for NOS included:

- Informing training and development programmes and requirements,
- Gaining accreditation for in-house training programmes and awards through mapping these to NOS,
- Informing assessments on-the-job, and therefore testing knowledge and skills,
- Raising the profile and attractiveness of the profession, and thereby promoting recruitment.

Respondents indicated that NOS have been, or are being used, for roles which include:

- Cadets,
- Engineering officers,
- Ships officers,
- Seafarers,
- Harbour masters.

Levels of interest in NOS for the target roles

The questioning explored respondents' interest, both within their organisations for NOS applying to the target roles, and also in the application of NOS for the target roles across a range of potential uses. Where necessary, explanation was provided as to how NOS might be used for particular applications.

The following tables summarise the responses, combining those for respondents in operational roles with those in human resource/training roles. The tables separate the responses relating to hydrographers from the rest of the areas, in recognition that this occupation is of particular interest to PSSL. In addition, respondents addressing the shore-based ship management occupations tended to consider these as a whole.

Level of interest in NOS for the occupations

Respondents were asked to rate the level of potential interest within their organisation in NOS for the target roles. The rating was on a five-point scale:

- 1 = very interested
- 2 = interested
- 3 = neither interested/uninterested
- 4 = uninterested
- 5 = no interest at all

The table below illustrates the levels of interest indicated.

Levels of interest in NOS

Occupational areas	Numbers for each level				
	1	2	3	4	5
Engineering/fleet/logistics and training/marine	11	10	2	-	-
Hydrographers	3	6	1	-	-

There is, therefore, strong support for the introduction of NOS across the identified occupational areas.

Interest in the potential applications of NOS

Respondents were also asked to rate the levels of interest in potential applications of NOS for the target roles, again using the same five-point scale. The tables below illustrate the interest indicated.

Interest relevant to engineering/fleet/logistics and training/marine

Application	Numbers for each level				
	1	2	3	4	5
Inform training and development	13	9	1	-	-
Inform performance management/appraisals	4	8	10	1	-
Route for qualifications	12	9	-	2	-
Allow access for funding of training	13	7	1	2	-

There is, therefore, strong support in particular for three of the above applications when considering the use of NOS for those in engineering/fleet/logistics and training/marine operations.

Interest relevant to hydrographers

Application	Numbers for each level				
	1	2	3	4	5
Inform training and development	1	9	-	-	-
Inform performance management/appraisals	2	5	3	-	-
Route for qualifications	2	7	1	-	-
Allow access for funding of training	3	4	2	-	1

Again, there is therefore good support for the identified applications when considering the use of NOS for those involved in hydrography.

Several respondents, covering all of the occupational areas, also highlighted the need to raise both the profile of these areas, and to offer career opportunities necessary to attract new recruits to the occupations. As the age profile within these occupations tends to be older, there is an urgent and increasing requirement to attract newcomers. In addition, within hydrographers, the need to raise the ‘professionalism and status’ of hydrographic surveyors was emphasised. Whilst there are several qualifications available, The Hydrographic Society UK is seeking a qualification that will be recognised universally across the UK, and which reflects the requirements of current and emerging best practice.

Building upon and promoting the interest in NOS

The direct and personal approach of the telephone interview was effective in both exploring and also building respondents’ awareness and understanding of NOS and their applications.

Our findings suggest an overall lack of awareness regarding the application of NOS for both performance management and also towards informing training and development, particularly amongst those within operational roles, suggesting that the sector needs more information. Indeed, when responding to explanations offered as part of the questioning, several of the respondents considered that using the standards to assist in performance management and appraisals would be most helpful, but indicated that this was an area which they had not explored previously. It is therefore recommended that the potential applications of NOS be promoted within the maritime sector.

Many of those within training functions promoted strongly the value of NOS in benchmarking the needs of the industry, so that training programmes could be developed to match these requirements. They also commented upon the importance of using standards in the mapping of programmes in order to gain accreditation. The current absence of national standards for these occupational areas is thereby considered to be hindering the benchmarking of good practice and the associated applications.

The majority of respondents commented that, in the past, the need for standards for the identified roles had not been particularly relevant, as a very high proportion of their staff in these occupational areas had previously been recruited with established experience in seafaring. Moreover, many of these staff are long-serving, some with more than twenty years service, and there has been little, if any, progression planning. Given the ageing profile of the existing workforce and current difficulties in recruitment, several respondents highlighted the need for standards to train and educate new personnel in these roles.

Several respondents expressed concern that sea-based training and experience tends not to develop the skills necessary to equip officer personnel moving subsequently to shore-based roles. As a consequence, respondents identified the need to address a related and particular lack of knowledge amongst such personnel regarding production engineering, procurement, administration and financial management. One respondent particularly commented that shore-based training at the port-interface with ships was particularly needed, and that the development of NOS could help to deliver the content of this training.

One organisation, which has developed its own in-house competence framework covering expertise in the areas of mastery, knowledge and command, is using this to inform training and development, as well as to inform performance management and appraisals. This organisation is enthusiastic, in principle, about NOS, but expressed concern that the generic nature of NOS may not be sufficiently specific to meet the specialised needs of their company. Notably, they are very interested in being included within a working group, should NOS be developed, and are likely to be of particular value as they already have a relevant competency framework.

Significantly, as above, the findings demonstrate considerable enthusiasm for NOS. Thirty of the thirty three people interviewed from the operating organisations are very supportive of the development and future usage of NOS for the target roles in their organisations.

Current issues of relevance to future NOS

This section identifies and explores particular issues that respondents identified as current, and which future NOS for the identified occupational areas would help in addressing. This is set out under the following principal headings:

- 1) Recruitment,
- 2) Training and development,
- 3) Addressing the need for change.

Recruitment

The large majority of respondents indicated that they were experiencing considerable difficulties with recruitment in these roles. Previously, recruits were often ex-mariners with established experience offshore. Moreover, many of these personnel have remained in post for long periods of time, with a consequent ageing of the workforce profile. As the number of experienced ex-mariners has dropped significantly, this is causing a major problem for recruitment, which in turn is resulting in a significant skills shortage for the sector.

Currently, many organisations are often recruiting from such sources as:

- 1) Overseas,
- 2) Services personnel, including former army personnel,
- 3) Graduates, with degrees in such as engineering, business management or naval architecture,
- 4) School leavers, progressing NVQs through the Vessel Traffic Services route.

The lack of recruits with established experience is therefore of growing concern, and many expressed particular interest in NOS which would develop the competency levels necessary for these roles.

Training and development

Several respondents identified the need for up to date training programmes relevant to the identified occupational areas. Currently, for example, respondents suggested that there is no training course available appropriate for a shore-based maritime studies qualification. Respondents also indicated a need to create standards which would allow experienced offshore personnel to develop the skills appropriate for moving to these onshore roles.

In addition, new legislation has also introduced requirements for a designated person ashore, 'DPA', which several respondents identified should be supported by producing relevant standards. This legislation arose from the investigation into the loss of life following the Herald of Free Enterprise disaster, which identified the need for a DPA to liaise between a vessel and shore-based personnel. Indeed, Strathclyde University is currently carrying out a current research project for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to establish how the sector can comply with this legislation.

Respondents also identified the need for qualifications which address the maritime-specific nature of the roles undertaken by those in occupations which might be considered to be generic, for example training managers and personnel officers. However, further work should explore the true extent of the relevance of existing qualifications for such personnel.

Introduction to Ship Management

Work being undertaken in Scotland to develop a training programme and an associated qualification for ship management is likely to have relevance for aspects of the requirements

appropriate to the shore-based occupational areas being considered by this study. This work aims to provide a distance learning programme appropriate for those roles supporting such as technical superintendents. Its content may therefore inform relevant aspects of any development of related national occupational standards appropriate to these roles.

Working with Scottish Enterprise and the Glasgow College of Nautical Studies, shipping organisations in Glasgow are developing a programme comprised of five modules:

- Business of shipping,
- Crew management,
- Post fixtures / ship leasing,
- Purchasing and supply,
- Technical management.

The first of these modules is being piloted currently, and accreditation for the programme is proposed via the Lloyd's Register. It is intended that the programme will be linked to any future relevant NOS.

Addressing the need for change

As a consequence of the issues described above, many of the respondents described how the sector is undergoing major change. With the needs of the sector no longer being met from experienced ex-mariners, this is leading to changes in recruitment, which in turn are necessitating a new approach to training and development to meet the demand of those now coming into the sector. Recruiting from new areas is therefore highlighting the requirement for clear standards to be agreed for these occupational roles, setting out best practice and the associated future skills requirements.

The development of attractive career opportunities with clear pathways is also increasingly being recognised as essential, alongside a raising of the profile and status of the occupational areas. Alongside these requirements, several respondents considered that there is a growing demand for recognised programmes of continued professional development, and the associated move towards greater performance management and appraisals. The development of agreed NOS would provide the basis for these applications.

Next steps

The objectives of this work is to identify whether there is a demand for NOS and N/SVQs which might address some or all of the identified occupational areas. The findings to date, and the strong support indicated by respondents, provide a good case for the development of both NOS and also associated qualifications. Many respondents reflected on the international nature of their business and the growing need to have standards in place for the different occupational roles. However, the numbers of those within these occupations needs to be checked to confirm that these are sufficient to make the awarding of qualifications attractive for Awarding Bodies.

The development of relevant national occupational standards for these occupational areas is therefore recommended.

Wayne Marsh
Director
Benson Payne Limited

19 April 2007

List of respondents to the telephone survey

Associated British Ports, Hull	Mr Mike Abbey
Bibby Line Group	Mr Howard Woodcock
Bibby Line Group	Mr Jebb Kitchen
BP Crewing Services	Mr Philip Waring
Bristol Port Company	Captain Peter Hall
Bristol Port Company/UK Hydrographic Society	Mr William Heaps
Caledonian MacBrayne	Captain Norman Jones
Carnival UK	Mr William Smith
Clyde Marine Training	Mr Colin McMurray
Cunard Seabourn	Mr Frank Prowse
Dorchester Maritime	Mr Frank Preece [retired]
Euroship Services	Captain Frank Davies
Glasgow College of Nautical Studies	Mr Richard Speight
Graig Shipping	Captain David John
Graig Shipping	Ms Vicky Dwyer
Harwich Haven Authority	Mr Ian Webster
Hatsu Marine	Captain James Chen
Maersk Marine Services	Mr Tom Graves
Medway Ports	Mr Phil Woodgate
James Fisher	Mr Cliff Roberts
Milford Haven Port Authority	Mr Bill Hurst
Northern Marine Management/Stena	Captain Kevin Slade
PD Teesport	Mr Andrew Ridley
Peterhead Port Authority	Captain Jerry Ewart
PO Cruises	Mr Don Millar
PO Cruises	Mr Stuart Greenfield
Poole Harbour	Mr Steve Pearce
Saga Shipping Co Ltd	Mr Jim Clench
Scottish Enterprise	Mr Ian McMahan
Seacor Marine International	Ms Diane Smart
Shell Ship Management	Ms Catherine Hetherington
Shell Ship Management	Mr John Meredith
Ship Safe Training Group	Mr Ian Spreadborough
Stephenson Clarke Shipping Ltd	Mr Mike Powell

Date:

Time:

Introduction

- Working with Merchant Navy Training Board (Glenys Jackson) / Port Skills & Safety Ltd (Harry Tilley)
- Building upon earlier work by The Maritime Skills Alliance which identified that no national occupational standards, 'NOS', are available for certain occupations, which therefore:
 - hinders the development of relevant training/qualifications
 - prevents access to funding to support training
- Seeking feedback from selected representatives from key organisations
- Would value their views/answers to a short telephone survey, likely to take 10/15 minutes
- Will provide a summary report of the survey's findings to who kindly respond
- Examples of occupations being explored:
 - Engineering / marine/ technical superintendents
 - Fleet operations (directors /commercial directors)
 - Hydrographic surveyors
 - Personnel / training managers

Respondent's details

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Telephone no:

E-mail address:

Aspects to be explored***Establish existing use of NOS***

Aim is to explore the respondent's understanding of NOS and their organisation's use of NOS

- 1 Establish whether the organisation uses and/or has used NOS already

Used Has used Never used

- 2 If NOS used / has used: (If not used, go to question 3)

2.1 Which NOS are / were used?

2.2 What were the NOS used for?

(Tick all that apply)

- Inform training and development
- Inform performance management / appraisals
- Basis for qualifications (eg NVQs/SVQs)
- To access funding of training / qualifications
- Other (specify)

.....

.....

.....

2.3 How valuable were the NOS? (pls explore)

2.4 Which roles (job titles) progressed the NOS?

[Check whether these include any of the target roles, and where these are included, check which aspects of their roles were not addressed by the NOS used]

[Please go to question 4]

3 If NOS not used:

3.1 Establish why NOS not used:

(Tick all that apply)

- Lack of awareness of NOS
- Perceived lack of relevance of existing NOS
- Existing NOS not addressing the necessary functions
[If so, what needs to be covered?]
- Other (please specify)

.....

.....

.....

Identify the numbers employed within the target roles

Aim is identify the numbers (approx) of those within the target roles employed within the respondent's organisation.

- 4 Establish the following details regarding the number of those within the target roles employed by the respondent's organisation

	Nos (approx)	Increasing/ decreasing +/-	Split pt/ft	Direct / Contract
4.1 Engineering operations - Eng Superintendents / Assist Eng Sup - Technical Super / Assist tech Sup - Eng technical assistant - Others with similar responsibility (list) -----				
4.2 Fleet operations - Fleet directors - Commercial directors - Others with similar responsibility (list) -----				
4.3 Hydrographics - Hydrographic surveyors - Base surveyors - Others with similar responsibility (list) -----				
4.4 Logistics coordinators / training - Personnel managers / officers - HR managers / officers - Training managers / officers - Others with similar responsibility (list) -----				
4.5 Marine operations - Marine Superintendents/Deputy Marine Sups - Marine Technical Assts - Others with similar responsibility (list) -----				

5 Explore the key areas of responsibility (focusing upon aspects particular to marine/ ports activities) for each of the roles employed.

5.1 Engineering operations

5.2 Fleet operations

5.3 Hydrographics

5.4 Logistics coordination / training

5.5 Marine operations

Establish the respondent's interest in NOS

Aim is to explore the interest within the respondent's organisation in the development of NOS for the target roles.

6 Rate the level of potential interest within the organisation in NOS for the target roles

- 1 Very interested
- 2 Interested
- 3 Neither interested / uninterested
- 4 Uninterested
- 5 No interest at all

7 Rate the level of interest in the potential application of NOS across the target roles, using the same scale

	Very interested	—————▶	No interest		
	1	2	3	4	5
7.1 To inform training and development	1	2	3	4	5
7.2 To inform performance management/appraisals	1	2	3	4	5
7.3 As the route for qualifications	1	2	3	4	5
7.4 To allow access for funding of training	1	2	3	4	5
7.5 Other (please specify	1	2	3	4	5

- 8 Explore the particular functional areas / key activities undertaken by the target roles which new NOS should cover

Establish the respondent's interest in types of qualification

Aim is to establish the interest in particular types of qualifications that might be based upon the standards.

- 9 Please explore interest in qualifications, including those assessed:
- in the workplace (such as NVQs/SVQs)
 - through written testing (such as examination / case studies / multiple choice questioning)

Summary report

- 10 Is a summary report wanted? Yes No

Thank the respondent and close the interview.