

Questions and Answers for Review on Maritime Training

Q Why was a review carried out?

A To review the continuing requirement for Government support for training and skills development in the maritime sector and how best to spend any continuing Government funding.

Q Who led the review?

A An independent panel, comprised of five specialists from the maritime industries with a sixth member from the skills and training sector, presented their recommendations to the Shipping Minister after consideration of an independent report completed by consultants from Deloitte and Oxford Economics.

Q What were the recommendations of the review?

A Both the independent panel's recommendations and the consultants' report can be found on DfT's website.

Q What is the final outcome of the review?

A A budget of £12million a year for the remainder of this Parliament will be made available to support maritime training for cadets training for their first Certificate of Competency and for ratings training and ratings to officer conversion training.

Q Why will funding be limited to supporting just cadets training for their first Certificate of Competency and rating training?

A The report identified that it is important to maximise the number of trained UK seafarers and develop the next generation of UK officers and ratings.

Government funding will be focussed on getting people into the sector, helping to address the forecast skills gap.

Under current circumstances, it is more appropriate that the cost of any additional training beyond the first Certificate of Competency be met in full by employers.

Q Why is there no commitment to funding beyond 2014/15?

A Spending for each Government Department is fixed up to 2014/15.

Q As SMarT is being kept, wasn't a review a waste of time and money?

A No. The SMarT programme was introduced in 1998 and it was correct to evaluate the programme and assess its value for money.

Q What are the changes to funding and how will this affect those cadets already receiving SMarT support?

A The revised payment schedule for training providers sponsoring cadets training to the first Certificate of Competency will be applied as follows:

From 1 August 2012:

- The first 50 weeks is funded at **£80** per week,
- The next 100 weeks is funded at **£110** per week; and
- There is a final payment of **£2,950**, made after the cadet has obtained his/her Certificate of Competency.

From 1 August 2013 onwards

- The first 50 weeks is funded at **£80** per week,
- The next 100 weeks is funded at **£100** per week; and
- There is a final payment of **£2,950**, made after the cadet has obtained his/her Certificate of Competency.

These rates will apply to all new and existing cadets. We believe the new rates will allow for up to 925 new cadets each year.

Q Why have the funds per cadet been reduced?

A The review findings showed that it is important to maximise the number of cadets who can receive support within the available budget. We believe that this is preferable to imposing a cap on the number of SMarT new cadets.

In line with other Government initiatives a more significant part of funding will be delivered by way of 'outcome' payments. This is where a higher proportion of the funding is retained until such time as there is documentary evidence showing the training course has been fully completed i.e. obtaining the first Certificate of Competency.

Q What about ratings?

A In line with arrangements over the past few years, a sum of £100,000 will be made available per year under the SMarT scheme for ratings training and ratings to officer conversion training.

Q What other changes will be made to the scheme?

A We will look further at how the data is compiled and how each trainee's progression through their training is recorded. We want to ensure that rigorous accountability structures are in place.

Q When will the changes come into effect?

A The revised framework will come into effect on 1 August 2012.

Q What longer term options are being considered?

A In line with the Government's wider skills framework, during the remainder of this Parliament we will consider whether cadet training can be

delivered through an apprenticeship programme or whether funding could mirror existing arrangements for other further education training courses.

Q The independent panel assessed that there was a case for increasing the SMarT budget, so why is it being kept at £12million per year?

A The budget of £12million has been assessed as affordable in the current economic climate.

Q Will the Maritime Guidance Notice (“MGN”) be reviewed?

A Following the announcement, the current SMarT MGN 431 will be withdrawn. Further guidance will be issued by April 2012.

Q Can any new Training Providers join the scheme?

A No. There is no provision to allow new Training Providers to join the SMarT scheme in their own right or as part of an existing consortium.

Q Who should I contact if I need more information?

A All enquiries should be emailed to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency at smart@mcga.gov.uk