

FACTORS INFLUENCING ON THE QUALITY OF MARITIME PROFESSIONALS TRAINING

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The author examines the key factors that have a major impact on the quality of training of the merchant fleet officers in Adm. Nevelskoy Maritime State University.

Keywords: quality of training, command level marine specialists and managers, marine fleet, STCW, marine education and training, Federal educational standard, seafarers training..

The educational activity of Admiral Nevelskoy Maritime State University was checked by the authorized commission of the Ministry of Transport for the conformity to the standards of Regulations on Sea Vessels Crew Certification and Convention on STCW according to the RF Minister of Transport order. After this checking up, Admiral Nevelskoy Maritime State University was acquainted by the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation as a university which can train sea vessels crew on July 25, 2012. The University became the first discipline-specific higher institute to have been checked. The University got the right to realize the educational activity on the training and retraining the specialists of shipboard personnel of all the levels. This permit is valid for 4 years and certifies the ability of the university to train the well-qualified personnel for the maritime field.

Despite on all the positive aspects of the educational activity in the University there is one main problem in the training of maritime profession specialists. It has been challenging for many years, and shipping companies is a basic appraiser of the graduates training quality.

The providing of specialists of sea fleet officers training quality is a multiple process, which includes: the level of prospective students training and the motivating to enter the maritime majors; content of education and its conformity to the International Convention and STCW Code; teaching staff; material support of the educational activity; information and methodological support of the educational activity; new educational technologies; strategic partnership with shipping business; system of training and retraining.

These factors have already been discussed at the conferences and different meetings. That's why it's necessary to pay more attention to the points which nowadays influence mostly on the sea specialists training quality.

Teaching staff is included in the Golden Fund of the University. The age and work experience of the majority of teaching staff, especially at graduating departments are worth respecting. But respectful professors have to find the additional salary to survive in our difficult time. It means that there is less time to communicate with the cadets. But the "respectful age" has another side. It becomes more difficult to send the teachers to ship out for the practical training on modern vessels and as leaders of group practical training. The health of the majority of teachers doesn't allow them to be medically examined, and in this case they are prohibited to ship out. As a result the leaders of the practical training are people who can ship out, but it is not a good substitution.

The ageing of the teaching staff is a negative process, which can decrease the quality of the educational process and even finish it. For example there is the following situation in the graduating departments of navigation faculty and marine engineering faculty: according to the staff schedule of the Ship handling and navigating departments there are 33 positions. Twenty five employees work for these positions, and the left 8 are occupied by the internal and external part-time workers (0.25 – 0.5 position per each). The marine engineering faculty has more interesting situation. According to the schedule of all departments 33.75 positions should be occupied, but in fact only 22 teachers work there, the left deficit is for part-time workers and adjuncts. If to take into account that the majority of teachers is of respectful age near 70

years (about 70%), it's easy to understand why we worry about the educational process.

It is necessary to attract young people to teach. But unfortunately graduates from navigating majors who want to enter post-graduate courses in the MSU and begin teaching are absent. The main reason is low salary of a teacher.

The shipping business was also asked this question and its answer was the same. If to speak about the strategic partnership between the MSU and shipping companies it is possible to increase the salary of the teaching staff at major departments by paying the additional educational services if they develop and teach additional courses according to the Manila Amendments and if they also find young specialists going to work in a shipping company. But these services are to be offered and ordered.

The Nautical Board affiliated to the government of the Russian federation recommended to the Ministry of transport to work out the system of stimulating measures for field specialists who start teaching in the departmental higher institutions. This decision is in the protocol of the nautical Board meeting (Vladivostok September 28, 2012) and is signed by Dmitriy Rogozin, chair person of the Nautical Board and vice-chairman of the government. But there are many questions about these measures. The first one, when will these measures be worked out? Will they be connected with all the teaching staff or just with newcomers who don't have degrees and teaching experience? What will be the level of support?

The second important factor in the specialists training quality is material and technical support. Many shipping and crew companies consider young specialists to be incapable for watch keeping due to low competence. There are some reasons for this situation: low hand-on experience which they get on simulators and old equipment, low competence of the teaching staff; absence of experience of work with modern equipment, set on the companies' vessels.

Unfortunately that is it. Simulating equipment in the university lags from the modernization. Its morals and physical runout doesn't allow organizing the educational process in a proper way. It is necessary to change totally the equipment of specialized laboratories and to renew

the software of simulators. Nowadays if the shipping business doesn't help the university the total modernization will be impossible. But the government must also pay a great attention to the renewing of material and technical basis of the university.

The specialists training is realized according to the Federal State Educational Standard (FSES) which regulates the educational system, and includes the demands of the International Convention and STCW Code. These standards are worked out on the basis of the credit-unit system. The shipping companies took an active role in the working out of the competence-based demands. Basic educational programs, being worked out on the basis of the FSES, partly take into account the amendments made in the International Convention and STCW Code by the Manila Conference of 2010.

But new curriculums are to be corrected. The set FSES for 5 year education with 12 months of navigating practical training and keeping the engineering constituent makes the educational programs very difficult, especially if we speak about ship engineers. And it also leads to the decreasing of the subjects. By the way, shipping companies require real guarantees of a specialist training quality in accordance with their demands but not only the demands of FSES. These demands often get in line with the Manila Amendments to the STCW Code and must be included in the educational program in any case. And if we change the schedule, the realization of educational program will be prolonged for 5 – 6 months.

If we don't prolong the period of studying the ideal solution would be their accordance with the simulative courses of IMD. But it will lead to the decreasing of the FSES federal component volume and to the total reviewing of the standards.

The Nautical Board affiliated to the government held in September, 2012 offered "to keep 5 year education for engineering and technical majors for shipping specialists training. And they must have shipping qualification not less then 12 months for the period of education" It means that the FSES will not be reviewed in the nearest future and we should use the period of time to train the specialists.

Of course it is very necessary to have the quota of prospective students, motivated to get the maritime education. Our University has a very difficult task to attract the youth in light of the deficit of

school graduates especially in the Russian Far East, their low school background and absence of motivations to work hard in the sea. But the improvement of the enrolment quality for last 2 years allows hoping for the successful solution of the problem.

These are the main aspects, which influence on the specialists for maritime sphere training quality. Positive changes allows increasing the graduates training quality.

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