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DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BENEFIT FROM IMO INPUT

SINCE the adoption of the International Maritime Organization's International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) 1978, a worldwide effort has been launched to re-model, expand and update training courses at colleges and academies in many of the developing shipping countries.

THE main thrust of the international training effort has been directed by the IMO under its technical co-operation schemes. These activities, funded by the United Nations Development Programme, other funding agencies and "donor countries", comprise a series of projects principally concerned with the training of seafarers, shore personnel and the staff of maritime academies.

Technical co-operation has no rigid definition. It may involve the sending of experts to countries requiring assistance, the training of nationals at overseas institutions, or the organisation of short courses/seminars dealing with a particular training requirement.

African training

Demand for training on the African continent still far exceeds places available at the maritime training institutions. In the case of advanced level training, specialised courses in many disciplines are in short supply.

IMO has provided extensive assistance to the African shipping nations. For over 10 years, a permanent adviser has been available offering direct help in setting up basic training courses and aiding Governments working towards compliance with international conventions on pollution control and safety. His

brief ranges from organising seminars and conferences to advising on the preparation of new dangerous goods regulations.

Looking at the African training institutions, the Accra Maritime Academy, Ghana, acts as a regional facility. Its student intake is made up of nationals from many West and Central African English-speaking countries.

The Accra Academy has received wide support from many sources, chiefly the UNDP, Norway and Egypt. The Norwegians have made a large financial contribution to a 10-year scheme to create a regional college for seafarers, plus shore staff and ports personnel.

Now in its mature phase, this scheme is being progressed by Egyptian specialists from the Alexandria Maritime Transport Academy. The training programmes available at Accra are being expanded and more African teachers are being trained. IMO has supplied personnel qualified in navigation, radio communications and other specialised subjects, to update courses to meet the standards of the 1978 STCW Convention.

The development of the existing Nautical College at Accra resulted from decisions taken by the Conference of West and Central African States on Maritime Transport (MINCONMAR). This body also elected to develop the Abidjan maritime training college in the Ivory Coast, as a regional academy for maritime science and technology. Once again, this 10-year scheme was handled by the IMO, under a multi-million-dollar budget funded by UNDP. The intention was to provide a high quality training facility for the French-speaking West and Central African countries.

Training programmes for Abidjan

have been prepared to meet 1978 STCW Convention standards. The students will have access to modern training equipment and facilities, when the academy's buildings are scheduled for completion this year. Some 15 countries are expected to send students to this training complex. More specialised training needs will be catered for in the years ahead. A regional training school is planned for navigational aids. This scheme is now being evaluated.

International agencies are also helping to train port officials in Sierra Leone. Under an assistance scheme spread over about five years, the port workers are receiving training in shipbuilding, ship repair and other related subjects. Improvements are also to be made to the port authority's vessels and equipment.

Nigeria is also benefiting directly from an agreement with IMO which calls for the revision and updating of the country's maritime laws. Nigerian nationals are also receiving training overseas.

Sharjah improved

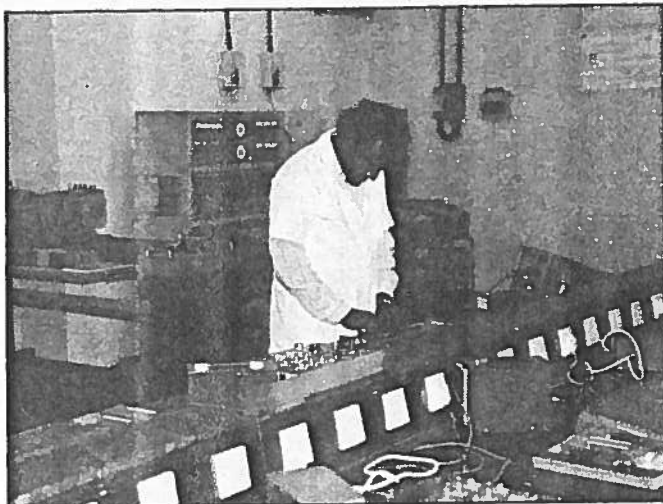
In the late 1970s, it was decided to form a regional centre for seafarer training in the Arabian Gulf. The site selected was Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates. The project was progressed with substantial funding from the UNDP and technical help from the IMO. A programme for construction of the training academy was prepared — from layout and design to selection of around \$1M worth of training equipment. The latter includes a Norcontrol radar simulator, electronics and navigational systems and telecommunications for the training of masters, officers and radio personnel. Study programmes, which meet STCW requirements, for students at Sharjah have been prepared and further equipment has been acquired.

A large proportion of international funding and advisory services/technical support for seafarer training is now directed towards Asia. Schemes under way include a five-year programme of assistance to ASEAN countries.

A wide range of training is being made available under this scheme. The courses cover training to STCW requirements, fire-fighting and survival at sea, instruction in safe practice in the shipbuilding/shiprepair industries and the detection of marine pollution.

In the early stages, officers from Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore completed courses at British training establishments. A further UK-based training programme concentrated on shipbuilding and repair.

Meanwhile, the Malaysians are plan-



Preparing student examinations at the Arab Maritime Transport Academy, Sharjah

ning to put into service pollution surveillance aircraft equipped with advanced radar systems. This followed a number of IMO sponsored visits.

Asian and Pacific divisions of the World Maritime University have been formed recently to organise short, specialised courses dealing with the application of new technology in shipping.

The aim is to hold short courses in the region — so saving considerably on travel costs. The areas of study include firefighting, survival at sea, vessel survey and inspection, the operation and maintenance of ships, accident investigation, maritime law, search and rescue and the use of simulators. The first of these courses will be held at Dalian College (PRC). The subject is planned maintenance and corrosion protection.

Specific problems now being addressed in training programmes include the pollution threat posed by heavy tanker traffic in the Malacca and Singapore Straits. Following talks between Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, an IMO scheme, with UNDP financial backing, has been organised to strengthen pollution counter measures in the area.

At a conference seven years ago, the countries involved agreed to develop joint capabilities to deal with oil spillage. One of the objectives was to establish a strategically positioned stockpile of anti-pollution equipment along the main VLCC route.

The centre for pollution counter measures in the area is now the Philippines National Centre for Oil Pollution. The IMO scheme included training of the Centre's staff and the acquisition and maintenance of anti-pollution equipment — including booms, skimmers and dispersant sprays. Further training activities included a workshop for "on-scene co-ordinators" in Manila and practical oil spill training and instruction in contingency planning, held in Australia.

Bangladesh programmes

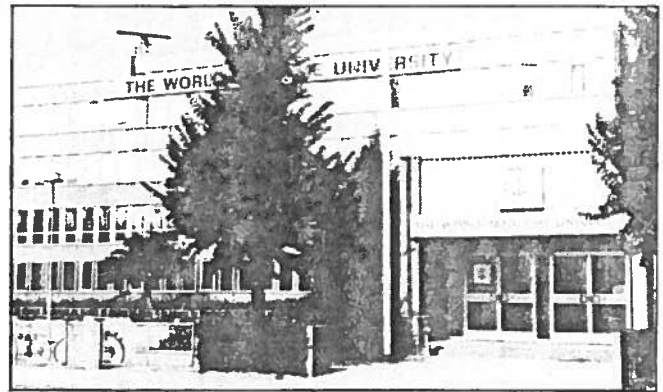
Much of the impetus behind international programmes in developing countries has been directed at the training of staff for newly-formed nautical colleges and academies.

One beneficiary is the Chittagong Marine Academy, Bangladesh, which has become a major training institution over the past 10 years. The IMO scheme to develop this academy has been funded by UNDP and the Government of Bangladesh, with considerable input from the UK.

A programme of pre-sea and post-sea courses was devised and the intake of nationals increased. The aim is to accelerate the replacement of expatriate personnel. During the early 1980s, the Academy linked with South Shields Marine College in the UK. Under this scheme, Bangladesh engineering cadets studied at South Shields.

Progress in enhancing the courses

The World Maritime University in Malmö



available at Chittagong, together with the training facilities, has been monitored. During this lengthy assistance project, Bangladesh lecturers obtained UK Department of Trade Certificates of Competency, while others joined the World Maritime University, at Malmö. As they graduated, these individuals took up positions at the Chittagong Academy.

Training assistance to Bangladesh has also addressed the need to improve safety of navigation. Under a project funded jointly by the Government and International sources, work is under way to improve hydrographic survey capabilities and Decca Navigator services.

Survey work

One priority was to assist in the production of new hydrographic surveys, charts and tidal data. A person familiar with the Decca Navigator system helped in the modernisation and repair of the existing chain and the acquisition and installation of new equipment. This work, now completed, also included instruction in the operation and maintenance of the chain. Another phase of this scheme involved the application of computer-based tide prediction techniques. This resulted in the publication of a new tide table for Bangladesh.

Inland navigation is of tremendous importance to Bangladesh. Following an accident involving a ferry, the Government asked for help in improving safety. Assistance duly arrived to help set up the procedures for the survey and inspection of inland vessels. The brief included ship design, survey and certification. Following up on this visit, a project was prepared based on the findings of the investigation.

Another major international project for training of seafarers has centred on Malaysia, where the courses available at the Melaka Maritime Training Centre have been expanded during the past six years. Once again, the principal objective is to reduce dependence on expatriates. The project began with the creation of pre-sea cadet training courses, followed by junior officer and senior marine engineer training. By 1982, the Centre, now known as the Melaka Maritime Academy, had a far wider range of facilities, including navigational aids

and engineering training equipment.

Malaysian staff of the Academy visited the UK and other European countries, to gain experience in teaching methods and examination practices. In turn, more overseas experts visited Malaysia to open a new phase of the project — concerned with maritime safety and search and rescue.

Pollution sensing

Assistance provided to the People's Republic of China has concentrated on the introduction of advanced technology in a variety of fields. One scheme has been prepared to provide help in setting up aerial sensing of oil pollution around the Chinese coastline. Last year, a team of Chinese scientists visited several states to assess the latest techniques for remote sensing. The results of this mission are now being evaluated by the Government.

A scheme has also been prepared to help establish vessel traffic management systems at Shanghai. This scheme will include the acquisition of an advanced VTM radar for the port and advice in setting up an organisation to run the VTM service.

Many countries in Central and Latin America have received assistance in the area of maritime training. They include Panama, which decided some years ago to boost the number of nationals serving aboard Panamanian ships.

This called for the expansion of the Panama Nautical School and the modernisation of training equipment and facilities. The new facilities included a Loran C simulator and echo-sounders. Panamanian nationals have also received specialised training at overseas academies.

Schemes in Latin America include a series of visits by specialists to Brazil, to assist state pollution control authorities. This has concerned advice relating to the formation of two centres for dealing with oil spills. Over 20 Brazilians have already received training in marine pollution prevention and control.

There is now a concerted effort to close the gap between developed and developing shipping countries. There is some evidence of success as many training academies in the developing world now offer training to very high standards.