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IMO Safer Seas : More fellowships help to secure university funding

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IMO—SAFER SEA

More fellowships help to secure unive

THE financial status of the Malmö-based World Maritime University has been made more secure in the past year through an increase in the number of fellowships.

The biggest private donation to the WMU came last year from the well-known Japanese philanthropist, Ryolchi Sasakawa, head of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation. Mr Sasakawa gave \$1 million to establish a special fund known as the Sasakawa Fellowship Fund. The fund will allow eight students a year from Asia and the Pacific to enrol at the WMU for two-year courses between 1988 and 1992.

The WMU was further encouraged by fellowship funding from the EEC which has provided for five fellowships from the African/Caribbean/Pacific countries this year.

Early this year Canada also agreed to continue its programme of fellowship financing, commenced in 1987, pledging support for another eight students this year. The International Centre for Ocean Development in Canada has also continued to fund two WMU fellowships a year.

It costs around \$14,000 a year to send a student to the WMU for the standard two-year course. The

university's board of governors has been acutely aware that for developing countries, at which the WMU is mainly aimed, this is a drain on already badly-stretched resources.

The WMU's major donors are host country Sweden which contributes \$2m towards the \$6m annual budget, the United Nations Development Programme which gives \$1.2m a year and the Federal Republic of Germany at \$500,000. Norway, Denmark and the Commonwealth Secretariat also make recurrent fellowship support available.

Now in its sixth year, the WMU takes in around 100 students a year, its maximum capacity. Last year 85 students graduated and this year 102 new students were enrolled. The most popular courses were General Maritime Administration (43), Maritime Education and Training (18) and Maritime Safety Administration (24).

In a recent academic review of the WMU, a distinguished team of maritime academics, including Dr J. A. Cowley, former surveyor-general of the UK, and renowned Canadian legal expert, Dr Edgar Gold, reported that the university had already shown itself to be "an effective medium in the maritime world for imparting more advanced skills and greater knowledge."

The report added that despite the



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difficulties any new institution has to face and the fact that its students had to date come from 97 countries, the WMU had made continuous progress in improving the training of each class.

While broadly in praise of the WMU, the report, however, finds scope for changes. It recommends that the minimum student entry standards be increased and that an upper age limit of 40 be imposed.

It also suggests that a new course of Ports and Shipping Administration be added to the existing

curriculum and that greater emphasis be given to economics, law and engineering. Less emphasis should be given, the report says, to written examinations and more attention to computer training.

Further recommendations of the report include the setting up of a planning committee; a survey of developing countries' training needs and existing training facilities; and the introduction of one-year specialist courses for well-trained administrators and managers and short-

term refresher courses for WMU graduates.

While the WMU continues to make progress, IMO's other training initiatives are being developed. One of the most important is the series of model courses designed to assist maritime institutes organise and introduce new courses and improve existing ones.

The main aim of model courses, parallel with that of the WMU, is the effective implementation of IMO conventions and other standards. The courses are designed and tailor-

sity funding



a student to the WMU for the

made for developing countries to enable them to catch up with the developed world in maritime training.

The courses have been developed under the existing technical programme of co-operation between IMO and Norway. The Norwegians have provided both financial and expert support, the latter in the form of the secondment of senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to IMO as special advisor on development of maritime training.

The first of the model courses to

be published earlier this year include "oil tanker familiarisation," "radar observation and plotting," the "operational use of ARPA," and "radar simulator."

These are basic short courses, designed to last a few weeks. There are two other distinct groups of model courses: the second group, courses lasting up to two months, is aimed at key shipping personnel such as administrators and lecturers and covers shipping operations, maritime legislation, hydrography, port management and maritime safety and efficiency; the third group is aimed at seagoing officers and is designed to back up the requirements of the Standards of Certification, Training and Watchkeeping Convention, with certification awarded at the end of the courses.

Meanwhile, two new maritime institutes are to be established. The first, under an agreement between IMO and the government of Italy, will be an international maritime academy at Trieste. Forming part of the University of Trieste, the academy will operate under the auspices of IMO with support from the Italian Government. It is expected to begin the first course this autumn.

The academy has been designed with the special model courses in mind.