

國際海事組織(IMO)於 2008 年發起了“GO TO SEA”運動，因為全球航運界預見未來缺乏很多遠航海員(Seafarers)。2008 年 11 月 17 日 IMO 秘書長依費蜜奧士·米曹菠羅斯(Efthimios.E.Mitropoulos)在此運動上演說，呼籲吸引新人加入航運界，在其演說中，他提到由一顧問公司評審，發現全球商船隊 498,000 名高級船員中缺乏 34,000 名；船隊不斷擴張，報告預期至 2012 年，全球會缺乏高級船員達 83,900 名。

航運界缺乏人材，看來並不單只是香港的事，而是全球的事；香港海事專才推廣聯盟也發起呼籲年青人入行，他們不時到各中學校去演說，談談航運業的前途，引用不少過來人的經驗及其上岸後的發展和前景，希望能吸引年青人加入航運業；筆者尊敬他們的努力。

事實上，年青人加入航運業是非常有前途的，有了航海經驗和專業證書後，上岸還有很多航運相關行業需要類似經驗，如特區政府的海事處、領港員(引水)、船隊管理、監督、機務、船塢/船廠、造船、驗船和航海培訓等等。

以筆者為例子，筆者只是小學畢業，進入香港航海學校接受航海訓練，17 歲出海，17 年後考獲英聯邦船長適任證書，並在英旗船上擔任船長之職。多年航海可以環遊世界大部份的港口和城市，甚至旅行團也不會去的地方都去了，增廣見聞；在海所見所聞的，學習的知識，非一般學校可以教授的。

筆者認為：年青人如要航海，應趁年青時出海，同時尋求自己的專業資格，如想終止航海，可以在 40 歲前上岸，擔任與航海專業有關的航運行業。但是，全球大量遠航海員空缺，為什麼香港的年青人不想遠航呢？筆者在 1999 年海運季刊第 49

期曾討論過，在此不贅。

另外，特區政府的有關政策也出了問題，鼓勵不足，政策上沒有給與海員什麼保障，年青人便可能因此卻步，所以政府設了航海獎勵金等，以金錢來誘惑年青人加入航海（筆者以前是沒有獎勵金的）；一旦考取了第一個專業資格（即遠洋三級甲板高級船員或三級輪機師適任證書），便可能成為失業者；僱主能保證會繼續僱用他們（因為薪金太高）？不要忘記，遠航海員是全球性僱用的，僱主會找尋薪金更低的人國家的海員，節省成本，這永遠是做生意的人的想法，僱員永遠是最吃虧的一群。

現今入讀航海，法例太多限制，第一，學員要中五會考五科合格，為什麼？（筆者只是小學畢業啊！證明能力高於學歷，教育程度不是重要因素。）如果從少就培訓航海技能，相信沒有中五畢業水平的學員也可以成為船長的（筆者便是一實例子，遠航漁民也是）。筆者現摘錄 Captain Peter Aspinall (Admiral)在 1990 年 6 月 29 日於南華早報回覆 Mr. David Taylor (時任理工學院輪機系的講師) 的回信，如下：

BEST LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IS AT SEA

I REFER to Mr. Taylor's letter (*South China Morning Post*, June 13). I believe he has got it all wrong.

We don't want more polytechnic courses or vocational courses or other proliferations of like ilk.

Get the boys – at 14 or 15, or at whatever age the Education Department considers it has educated its youth to an acceptable standard,

and pack them off to sea at once. Give them a reasonable, but not excessive wage. Once at sea, keep them there, with appropriate bouts of leave. They ought to be able to enjoy themselves – most of us did. (註：上世紀的香港航海學校便是) And while they are there, they work and they learn to become seamen.

In their spare time they study and imbibe the knowledge that can make them officers. (註：筆者就是這樣成功的；重要的是社會有沒有給與年青人機會。” *‘Lam Kit came from the hawse pipe’ when Captain Terrence C. Cairns introduced me to the company’s director on board m.v. Alexandra Dio.*”)

It’s all been done before – for hundreds of years in fact. And it worked. It has been this introduction of high-tech training that has upset the balance.

And no mid-apprenticeship courses please. Don’t give them the chance to change their minds and become bank clerks or messenger boys. And similarly on no account let them near a polytechnic until absolutely necessary. **Seamen are trained at sea. Not in class rooms.**

After a period at sea, let these new sailors sit for an examination that qualifies them as junior watchkeepers.

It should be a simple examination. And I mean simple, because we are just talking about a watchkeeper. If you look at some of the qualifications required these days, no Jolly Jack in his senses would dream of going off to sea at the wages offered.

It is a fact that the majority of ships at sea are simple bulk carriers, and the assistance they get from the shore has, in recent years, multiplied enormously.

We are not looking for Vasco de Gama’s any more. We need only reliable young men. If you want special qualifications for tankers or box boats or QE II’s, then may be you have a case. Shipping superintendents, surveyors, Marine Department officers, etc – these all come later.

Invent new examinations for them and let them sit at the time. But first get the crews we require now – the sailors, oilers and junior watchkeepers. Presently, there are far too many superannuated chiefs and not enough young Indians.

And if the poly staff (perish the thought) risk redundancy, employ them on board as training officers.

A bit of sea experience might not come amiss.

PETER ASPINALL
(Admiralty)』

筆者就是這樣出身的，因此絕對同意 Captain Peter Aspinall 的意見。

香港的運輸九成是靠水路的，而香港獨立船舶註冊的、懸掛香港旗幟的商船有多少真正香港居民的遠航海員在船上任職？相信不會多於 100 名。經常香港商船出了事，據報船上沒有香港人；最近被海盜劫失敗的香港船也沒有香港人任職，只是印度籍和菲律賓籍的海員駕駛香港船隻，是不是政策出了問題？因為香港法例沒有優先雇用香港海員的政策，穩定職業的保障沒有了，這樣誰還會去航海呢？

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