

The Marine Society & Sea Cadets

Sea Cadet Training Update – May 2010

This update includes material that was included in the last Training Update in Dec 09 but is included for completeness. Please feel free to forward any comments to the Director of Training at <mailto:mosullivan@ms-sc.org>

Management of Training

A year ago, following widespread consultation, the MSSC Council agreed to adopt a formal strategy based around the **systems approach to training**, a model that is used extensively in large organisations and in defence. This requires the training development process to progress through clear stages, namely:

- The identification of a **training need** or **requirement** by an appropriate sponsor.
- The conduct of a **training needs analysis** which identifies in performance terms the outcomes or objectives of the training.
- The **training design** process which will involve the development of lesson plans and the controlled piloting of new courses.
- An **evaluation** process which ensures that the training meets its objectives as well as achieving value for money for the SCC.

Each step in this process is reviewed by the **Training Strategy Group** chaired by DoT and made up of suitably qualified staff and volunteers drawn from MSSC HQ, Sea Cadet Training Centres, Areas and Units.

Cadet Training

The new Cadet Core Syllabus will include the traditional elements of Sea Cadet training namely, seamanship, first aid and drill but will seek to broaden the cadet experience and ensure that all cadets have the opportunity to undergo a wide variety of adventurous and challenging activities. It will recognise community activities and will, where possible, provide externally recognised qualifications such as the St Johns' Youth First Aid award. The syllabus will be completed over 3 year's period, broken down into 48 activity sessions per year.

The process of putting together the final pieces of the 'jigsaw' has progressed more slowly than expected. The original target of July 2009 was over optimistic



and that target was withdrawn last year. However, we are now close to completion and the revised programme is as follows:

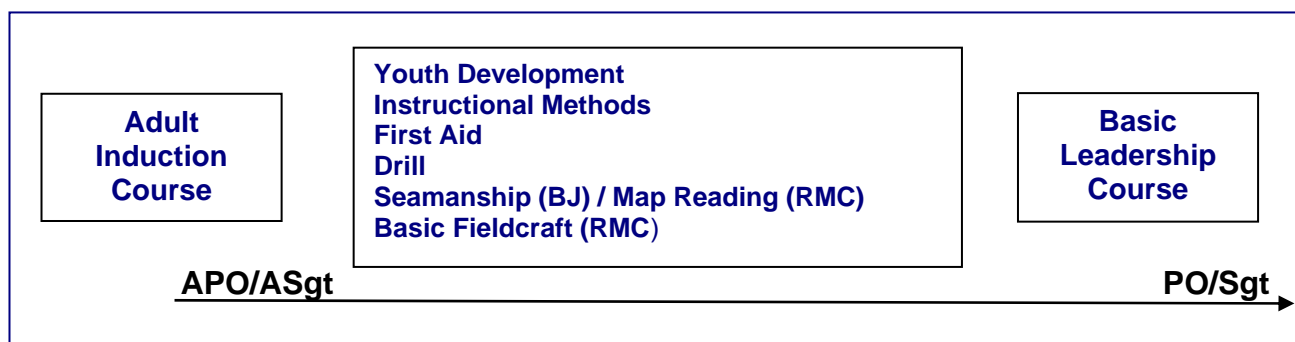
June 2010	Completion of all design work. Packaging and presentation of materials. Briefing area staff / Training Strategy Group Identification of pilot units (5% sample ≈ 20 Units)
July 2010	Begin pilot process. Collection and analysis of data <i>Process will take up to 4 months considering that many units will be concentrating on waterborne and other activities during the summer months.</i>
November 2010	Production and distribution of materials.
January 2011	Launch of new cadet programme <i>This will be a transitional process to ensure that cadets already in the system will not be disadvantaged.</i>
Throughout 2011	Monitoring & evaluation.

Adult Training

Changes to the cadet syllabus clearly have implications for volunteers. We have now completed the development and implementation of a training programme for adults designed to ensure that, ultimately, every unit will be able to deliver the syllabus from within its own resources. We have listened to concerns about the training burden on area teams and have modified the plans initially set out by the Adult Steering Group.

The programme requires new entrants to attend an Adult Induction Course within 6 months of entry and then, over the next 2 years, complete 5 weekend training modules at area level (6 for Marine Cadets) followed by a 2-day leadership course at national level. On completion, adults will be promoted to Petty Officer (or Sergeant for Royal Marines Cadets). Cadets who hold advanced qualifications in any of the subjects below will not be required to re-qualify as adults. Therefore, a well qualified former cadet may only be required to attend the Adult Induction Course, the Youth Development Module and the Basic Leadership Course.

The Adult Induction Course and the individual modules have been introduced progressively over the past year and most are in place. The Basic Leadership Course will be piloted in September 2010.



Other Training Development Projects

District Management Training. A course design team, under the leadership of an experienced District Officer is currently developing a course for newly appointed and potential members of district management teams. A training needs analysis was conducted in 09 and a full instructional specification agreed. The intention is that the training will be modular in order to enable flexibility in delivery and will concentrate upon DOs' roles and responsibilities on such issues as investigations, discipline, safeguarding, mentoring, etc.

Safeguarding. Whilst we are confident that our safeguarding training is current and of a high standard, a HQ working group is currently examining the way in which this training is targeted in order to ensure that it meets the specific needs of our staff and volunteers whether they be at basic awareness level, commanding officers, district officers, area officers, etc.

Leadership. The Leadership Focus Group, a working group consisting principally of volunteers but with some HQ input, has been working for approximately a year and has now produced its report. It is an excellent document which identifies 5 optimum stages in a Sea Cadet 'career' where leadership training would be beneficial. These range from senior cadet through basic instructor level to our most senior volunteers. It also offers specific training objectives for each of those stages. The first tangible results of this work are the Youth Development Module and the Basic Leadership Course which form elements of the new adult training programme described above. The next piece of work to be undertaken will be the development of a Cadet Leadership Course for our senior cadets.

Recognition of Prior Qualifications and Experience. We are often informed, anecdotally, of occasions when highly qualified individuals (some ex-Service) joining the Corps are told that their backgrounds mean nothing in the Sea Cadets and that they must undergo SCC-specific training in subjects where they are already highly qualified or have a great deal of experience. This, apparently, has led to some individuals walking away as a result.

We accept and strongly support the need to maintain high standards and, of course, new members must undergo induction and familiarisation training. However, we should be prepared to compromise to ensure that we add to the already high standard and numbers of our volunteers.

We will shortly publish a definitive table of exemptions from specific Sea Cadet qualifications. Those who hold external qualifications not included on the list may submit them to us for consideration. If approved they will be added to the table, which it is intended will evolve into an increasingly comprehensive list of acceptable prior qualifications and experience.

Communications. Our current cadet communications syllabus is based upon that of the Royal Navy but is some 20 years out of date. The modern Navy syllabus is operationally focused and unsuitable for cadets. We, therefore, plan to completely redesign our syllabus making it relevant to young people in the 21st Century. Some traditional elements such as Morse, Semaphore, etc, may be retained



because evidence shows that cadets thoroughly enjoy them and they undoubtedly have iconic status, but the syllabus as a whole is urgently in need of modernisation.

Navigation and Chartwork. This subject has, historically, been embedded in the Sea Cadet Seamanship syllabus and developed 'in-house' alongside ropework and rigging. Individuals wishing to follow the RYA route have done so as a separate process alongside Boatwork and offshore training. Our intention is to separate Navigation from Seamanship and perhaps establish it formally as a new specialisation within the Corps (some areas have already made moves in that direction). The proposed new training programme will map onto the RYA Scheme and lead to externally recognised qualifications for more of our cadets and adults.

National Training

The measures necessary to close Inskip, Gannet and Holyhead are now complete. As a result of the closures the national training programme was redesigned and courses reallocated to existing centres. This caused an understandable delay in the publication of the national training programme which has, in turn, resulted in some courses early in the training year being undersubscribed. However, I believe this to be a temporary downturn.

The opening of Weymouth as a major training centre has been extremely successful and the centre is already fully booked for the 2010-2011 training year. It will predominantly be used as a centre for waterborne activities; however, in order to maximise capacity, and to give volunteers more opportunities to view the facilities, a number of adult career courses, meetings and conferences will be run there. In addition, plans are well advanced to bring Marine Engineering Training to Weymouth. We have assessed the equipment requirements and should be ready to begin delivering Class 1 courses at the end of 2010. As an interim measure we will be running national courses on board TS Iveston (situated at Tilbury Docks) this summer.

Finally, we look forward to moving in to new state-of-the-art accommodation and training facilities at HMS Raleigh in early May 2010 and we continue to be extremely grateful for the superb support and encouragement that we receive on a daily basis from that establishment

Officer Selection and Development

During 2009 a thorough review was conducted into the process for selecting and developing SCC officers. The resultant report recommended significant changes and was agreed by AOs, SSOs and the MSSC Council. It stated that officers should give leadership, vision and direction; they should protect and maintain standards, act as ambassadors for the Corps and serve as role models for cadets. It was seen as important that we had a clearly defined chain of command and one that reflected the RN rank structure. Not only is this embedded in our culture but it helps us to interact with the military community and other cadet forces. However, it also recognised that we do not select military officers and those that we select will not be required to lead men into war.



The report considered that the qualities that we should look for in our officers were: Leadership, Effective Intelligence, Management and Organisational Skills, Interpersonal Skills, High Personal Standards, Corps Knowledge, Potential and Commitment.

Concern was also felt that we selected officers but did not train them for up to two years at which time they would be expected to complete the Junior Officer Staff Course. The report recommended that training and development be incorporated into the selection process. Hence, a 4-phase process is being developed:

- Phase 1: Area Training and Assessment. All areas now run a filtering process. That will continue but will be standardised across areas. It will assess practical leadership skills, Corps knowledge, personal standards, potential and commitment.
- Phase 2: Initial Officer Training. A weekend training course at a national centre which will cover leadership styles, time management, problem-solving techniques, teamwork, communication & presentation skills and Corps knowledge.
- Phase 3: Assessment and Selection. This will take place at a national centre and will include a series of scenario-based exercises, aimed at testing the qualities listed above. It will also include a formal selection interview.
- Phase 4: Development. Successful candidates at Phase 3 will be awarded acting rank and given local mentors. Over the course of 12 months they will be expected to undertake a number of tasks such as organising events or competitions. They will be also expected to demonstrate commitment and a willingness to accept responsibility. Subject to successful completion they will be confirmed in rank (backdated to the date of passing Phase 3).

We aim to introduce the new Phase 1 in autumn 2010; Phases 2-4 will then follow in early 2011. SCRs will be amended accordingly

HQ Training Management Structure

The HQ Training Management Structure has been revised over the past year and an organisational diagram of that structure is set out on the next page. I was delighted to make 2 new appointments earlier this year; these were Daniel Jardine, as Youth Development Officer, and Mike Cartwright, as Training Officer. Thus, for the first time in over a year the training team is fully manned and able to press ahead with its very full agenda.

Sadly, Carley Northcott, Assistant Director Training Support, has resigned for family reasons and will leave us at the end of June to return home to Australia.

Mike O'Sullivan
Director of Training



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Registered charity numbers: England & Wales 313013, Scotland SC037808



