

# DECKHAND CERTIFICATE UNDER WAY

The inshore commercial industry's new entry-level qualification, the certificated deckhand, was launched in December by the Minister of Transport Safety, Harry Duynhoven.

"The new qualification is an example of how well the industry, government departments and parliament can work together and achieve an outstanding result in a reasonably short space of time," the minister said.

The advanced deckhand qualification was not meeting the inshore marine industry's needs, and as a result, the association drew up the certificated deckhand qualification to better meet those needs and those of the crew.

The minister described the qualification as "a sensible, practical solution" to the industry's needs and Maritime New Zealand's safety requirements, and it would hopefully attract new entrants into the industry.

The inshore industry's training organisation, Competenz, and Maritime New Zealand echoed Duynhoven's comments.

"This qualification is the first step which forms the pathway to other higher level qualifications in the maritime industry," said Carl Davies of Competenz. "The qualification aligns with the government's industry education policy of seamless or life-long education."

Maritime NZ's Rule 32 amendments, approved in 2006, allow the CDH qualification to be largely gained by "on the job" assessment, a licence assessment agreement acceptable to both Maritime NZ and Competenz.

The qualification is registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Authority framework, and Maritime NZ confirms that the CDH meets the approved training programme requirements.

The acute shortage of skilled people at the basic entry level into the industry, coupled with the expected growth in transport requirements in the New Zealand Transport Strategy, which benefits both ferries and barges, should create a good demand for CDH training.

When someone decides on a career as a seafarer, the candidate has two choices. Either they or their employer can register their interest with Competenz, which will hook them into the NZQA framework. Competenz provides all the details of each element of the qualification, together with the taskbook and the assessment guides. When all the unit standards are complete, the skipper of the vessel, who is also the workplace assessor, will sign off the paperwork, and Competenz will register completion with the NZQA. This will confirm that the candidate has completed the unit standard and add it to his or her Record of Learning.

This is important, as each completed element of the framework will become a building block leading to other qualifications. For instance, when a candidate intends to continue towards a fully qualified master, some parts of the CDH certificate will count towards the Commercial Launchmaster Certificate.

One example is the first aid section, provided by a recognised


training provider, will be the same for CDH, Inshore Launch Master or New Zealand Offshore Watchkeeper. Once the certificate has been completed, the only requirement is to keep it current.

A similar situation applies to radio certificates and the like. As the candidate progresses towards the higher certificates, some elements will need to be expanded, and this is why Competenz, as the Industry Training Organisation, is an important partner in the learning process. This route also includes training subsidies from Competenz.

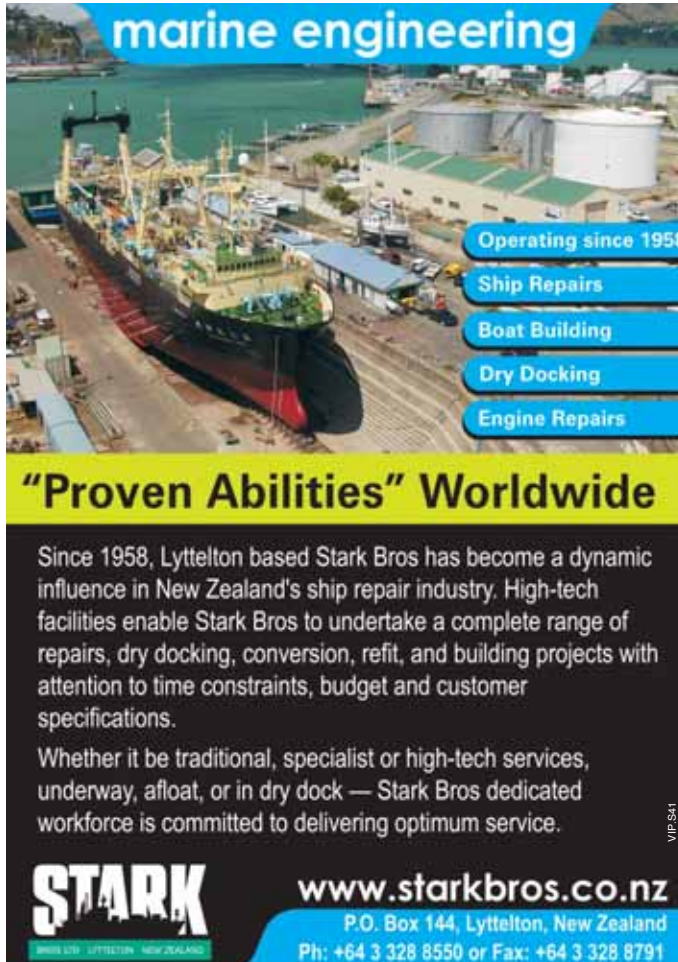
A simpler alternative is for a candidate or employer to obtain a taskbook from the association, complete the requirements and be examined by a Maritime NZ examiner. The disadvantage of this is that none of the learning will be registered on the NZQA framework, and any future qualification requirements will have to be completed again to satisfy that examination.

As is the case with all maritime qualifications, the candidate must subject him or herself to an examination by a Maritime NZ examiner, and this will be the final requirement before any certificate is issued.

The MTA's certificated deckhand task book is the only one approved by Maritime NZ for the CDH qualification, and contains all the information required for anyone to launch their new career. It is strictly protected by copyright to prevent illegal copying or plagiarism.

The taskbooks are available directly from the association for \$35 + GST for members, or \$56.90 for non-MTA members. 

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