

ARF Fleet Crewing Issues

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Fleet Crewing Issues

- A “crisis” in the maritime world - shortages of good crew throughout the industry
- ARF Impacts
 - Ship tie ups
 - Science cruise delays
 - Lost science days
 - Ship operators scrambling to fill open positions
- NSF & ONR directed the UNOLS Office to start a ARF Crewing Tiger Team to look into the crewing issues

Crewing Tiger Team

- Started Fall 2021 - 9 meetings held to date
- Comprised of ship operators, ship Captains & Chief Engineer, hiring coordinator, NOAA rep
- Reviewed 2019 Quality of Life at Sea survey results
- Developed recommendations for improving crew recruiting & retention
 - They include ideas such as:
 - Extra day during port calls for ship & personal business
 - Provide a bunk for cadets, possible crew familiarization/training
 - Hiring a Crewing Support Coordinator
 - Developing a pool of qualified mariners that could sail on different ships
 - Hiring incentives
 - Increased pay
 - Crew surveys
 - Outreach!

Crewing Tiger Team Ideas

	Ideas	Viable?	Rank	Cost	Short/Long Term to accomplish ?	Action / Questions	Who
1	Pay: a. recruitment bonuses b. Funding even time in crewing schedules (50/50) c. Institutions conduct salary surveys & update pay structures Resolve conflict between drive to maintain low day rates while offering competitive compensation / shore time rotation	Maybe	1	\$\$	Long	Operators work with their institutions. Institutional HR policy changes? Salary surveys & adjustments to pay structure. Agency support for added costs? How do CBAs impact this?	Operators / Institutions / Agencies
2	Hiring Incentives a. bonus for signing up b. referral bonus for crew who refer others to sign up	Yes	2	\$	Short	Operators work with their institutions. Institutional HR policy changes? Salary surveys & adjustments to pay structure. Agency support for added costs?	Operators / Institutions / Agencies
3	Ship Business / Crew Time Add a day between Mob / DeMob for ship's business & crew personal business time for tightly packed ship schedules with back-to-back cruises,	Yes	3	\$	Short	Operators add to schedules. Agencies approve scheduling guidance.	Operators / Agencies
4	Surveys: Conduct Surveys - Including: a. Market Surveys to benchmark pay & benefits vs commercial sector. b. Quality of Life on a regular basis c. End of Rotation Crew Survey (see UH example) to see who wants to work between rotations New hires, and those who turn down ARF opportunities . Use Professional service to conduct surveys & provide results.	Yes	4	\$	Short	Develop Survey Plan	UNOLS / CTT
5	Outreach: Focus on outreach including: update job opportunities brochure, develop outreach letter & send to training schools, maritime academies, participate in job fairs, partner with maritime training schools to further develop crew skills/credentials Reach out to trade school, Maritime Academies, Community Colleges, increase social media (part of crewing coordination contract?), provide clearer explanation of how to get a job on an ARF vessel, more visibility / more complete info on UNOLS Job Opportunities Website,	Yes	5	\$	Short	Updated brochure / reach out ltr. Investigate how to get support to do this work.	UNOLS
6	Crewing Management: Create a ARF crew exchange / crewing pool	Maybe	6a	\$/ \$\$\$	Short/Long	OSU Developing Crew Exchange as a Pilot Program. A full Crew Pool requires further examination & analysis to determine alternatives and resources needed	OSU / CTT / UNOLS
7	Crewing Management: Add Crewing Coordination Capability. Could be: a. UNOLS Office CC b. Contract with commercial entity to provide services	Maybe	6b	\$\$\$	Long	Contract for this or UNOLS Office hire? Cost? Awaiting info from Crowley / MMS to get idea of cost & what are possibilities. Agency funding for this to be added as UNOLS responsibility?	UNOLS / CTT
8	Recruiting: Provide STEMSEAS-type opportunities (Day trips / short cruises) for crewing opportunity introductions. Conduct in conjunction with other (STEMSEAS-like / outreach) cruises? Can bunks be made available on ships to help with further development of crew?	Maybe	7	\$\$	Short	Will agencies fund so it doesn't have significant impact on day rates? Lots of local coord/planning required	Agencies / Operators

Crewing Cont'd

- NSF & ONR agreed to fund a new Crewing Support Manager in the UNOLS Office
- 14 applicants for the position - a number of them well qualified
- Hired Meegan Corcoran
 - Small ship Captain
 - Prior UW Port Captain
 - Former Navy sailor



Setting the stage

Maritime Industry Employee Statistics

- There are approximately 200,000 credentialed mariners in the US. (1)
- As of November 2022, there are 8,400 crew jobs available in US marine transportation industry alone. (2)
- Data collected from 16 of the 17 vessels in the ARF shows that there are 86 crew (temporary and permanent) positions open within the next 6 months.
- In early 2021, researchers found there was a global shortfall of 26,240 certified officers indicating the demand for seafarers in 2021 has outpaced supply. (3)
- Through the pandemic, the unemployment rate in the marine transportation sector was higher than the national average by up to 5.2 percentage points (peaked in July 2020). (4)
- 73% of mariners work in the private sector. (5)
- 42% of ship workers stay in their job for less than a year. (5)

[Source: (1) National Maritime Center, (2) Rickorford.com, (3) VOA News, (4) Bureau of Transportation Statistics, (5) Zippia

Major Crewing Issues

“The Perfect Storm”

1. Retention
 - a. Going to better paying jobs (ie, oil and gas)
 - b. Going to other vessels in the ARF – better pay/benefits/ports/covid restrictions
 - c. Retiring – Covid increased retirement rate across the industry
2. Recruitment
 - a. Not enough mariners for all of the jobs available nationally
 - b. Lack of mariners joining the industry
 - c. ARF not as well known as oil/gas/towing/shipping
 - d. ARF pays less than private companies

Retention Actions

1. Work with institutions to understand why people are leaving.
2. Create a survey for current crew to understand what is working and what is not. This will create a baseline. The survey can later be used to measure progress.
3. After collecting data, host a crewing/retention workshop.
4. Provide training.
5. Explore bonuses for crew/crew referral programs.
6. Crewing pool – Can crew be contractors?
7. Crew exchange – Relieves boredom from ships going to the same port.
8. Survey pay rates across the fleet so that some institution can justify increased pay for crew.

Recruitment Actions

1. Meet with each institution to understand operations in order to promote their ships
(Manning requirements, crew schedule, etc).
2. Attend career fairs across the country.
3. Create physical and digital pamphlets
 - a. One for current mariners/cadets
 - b. One for potential mariners (How to become a mariner in the ARF)
4. Create ARF promotional video – Promote quality of life and dynamic nature of work.
5. Update website with hiring manager information.
6. Create a robust cadet program.
7. Work with Military to Mariner program.
8. “Think outside the box” promotions
 - a. NPR story about life aboard?