



LOGISTICS

MATTERS

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Maritime UK Secondment

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Following 3 very busy operational charge deployments I found myself desiring a new challenge and applied for a secondment to Maritime UK, joining the team to head up their Careers and Outreach programmes.

The post particularly appealed as it gave the opportunity to combine my previous experience as a teacher with my experiences as a seafarer, as well as presenting the opportunity for me to broaden my knowledge of the wider maritime sector.

Since starting the secondment at the end of November 2024 I have gained not only an awareness of how truly huge the maritime sector is, but also the RFA's role contribution to the sector.

Supporting 1.1 million jobs and contributing £116 billion to the UK economy annually, maritime covers everything from shipping to sub-sea technology, ports to aquaculture, maritime legal and financial services to leisure marine, and from the Royal Navy to commercial fishing. Maritime does not just mean ships and sea based infrastructure, it also includes all of the shore based support infrastructure associated with it. Responsible for enabling 95% of the UK's global trade, maritime touches every part of our lives. Quite simply, without maritime, half the world would freeze, and half the world would starve.

The RFA's role within the larger maritime sector in facilitating and extending the operation of the Royal Navy in protecting and ensuring the safe passage of shipping cannot be understated.

The role of Maritime UK is to be the single voice for the UK's maritime industries, acting as the conduit between government and maritime to create a thriving maritime sector. With a team of only 7 people and with programmes which include careers and outreach, diversity and inclusion, technology and innovation, skills, policy and public affairs, as well as the establishment and supporting of a national network of maritime clusters, the amount which is achieved by a small team is truly staggering.

How best to promote maritime careers within this macro picture of maritime was quite daunting to begin with, but I began by assessing how I could utilise my previous experience and get maximum impact from any actions taken. I also wanted to explore ways to facilitate engagement between education, job seekers, and the maritime industry both on a local and national level. When I joined, Maritime UK already had a successful network of over 350 active ambassadors which I wanted to build upon and was tasked with helping to support.

I began by exploring ways to promote the ambassador programme to schools and colleges as well as ways to nationally raise awareness of the opportunities offered by a career in maritime. Working in collaboration with career leads from Maritime UK's member organisations I designed a set of lesson plans and resources for careers teachers as well as a complimentary set of presentations and resources for use by the ambassadors. These resources were then sent nationally to careers teachers in



schools and colleges through the National Careers Hubs in England and their equivalent organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Following the launch of the resources I gained introductions to several of the regional hubs and began the process of speaking to each hub to promote the resources, the ambassador programme, and to establish how best to facilitate industry engagement with education in each region. A number of engagement and employer opportunities presented themselves which were then passed on to member organisations, including the RFA. An example of this came from a landlocked hub in the spine of England who had a lack of employment opportunities and career options for the students in the region. As well as linking them with the maritime industries in their region I also connected them with the maritime industries who recruit nationally and do not require employees to relocate, such as the RFA, the Cruise Line Industry Association and the superyacht sector. This engagement was mutually beneficial, promoting maritime careers in an area which was not a traditional maritime region, providing fully funded entry routes into job opportunities



for the region, and allowing maritime industries to recruit from previously underexploited areas.

Recently, and as a result of the work of the team at Maritime UK, the Department for Work and Pensions has appointed a National Manager with responsibility for the maritime sector. With access to the National Careers Centres this will

allow the careers and outreach programmes to reach post school age candidates and people seeking to change careers.

I am very much looking forward to expanding this area of the role and exploring the opportunities presented by it.



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