

***Exploring Employer of Choice Potential in the  
Shipping Industry:  
An Organisational Perspective***

NATALIE KOKOSZKO

B.Bus

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Business (Honours)

DEPARTMENT OF MARITIME AND LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT  
AUSTRALIAN MARITIME COLLEGE

November 2006

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***CERTIFICATION***

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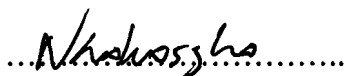
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Natalie Kokoszko

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

During the research and preparation of this dissertation, a number of people have provided continued support, assistance, knowledge and time, which I will be forever indebted to.

First and foremost, I acknowledge my supervisor, Dr. Stephen Cahoon for his continuous support, encouragement and invaluable time and knowledge throughout the year, particularly when I lost the motivation and focus to continue. He provided comments and ‘scribbles’ to encourage the independent development of ideas and concepts, and made me see that research was not just about statistics. As a result, my honours year has been a mixture of great challenges, a little fun and an enormous amount of learning, which I believe has made a great difference to my approach to future studies and my personal growth.

I would also like to acknowledge the shipping organisations that participated in this study, including all ship operators, ship management firms and maritime associations. The time they generously provided as well as the knowledge they parted with during the data collection process was critical to developing my understanding of the Australian maritime industry.

The following people also deserve acknowledgement:

- I would like to thank the other academic staff at the Australian Maritime College who have provided encouragement, support and advice during my studies at the College.
- The library staff, who sourced books from the mainland and never complained when they were overdue.
- Saffron Hodgson, my fellow Honours student for her support and advice throughout the year.
- My friends both near and far, who provided support, encouraging words and made me laugh throughout the year. Special mention goes to Gail French, Robert Alderson, Patricia Athanasiadis and Leigh Thompson.
- I would also like to thank my sister Monica, for her kind words and good humour

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Grace and Mario, who have always encouraged me to continue studying. It is their support and motivation that has pushed me along the way and given me the strength to never give up. Their love and confidence in me, has been instrumental in helping me complete my studies. I only hope I make you proud.

## ***ABSTRACT***

This dissertation into the maritime industry and its current shortage of seafarers examines the possible applicability of an employer of choice strategy into organisations employing seafarers to increase their recruitment and retention. This exploratory study examines how organisations may be able to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers by implementing strategies, concerned with satisfying the needs of their employees while still achieving organisational goals and objectives.

The implementation of an employer of choice strategy emerged after an analysis of the literature revealed that although the maritime industry has become increasingly aware of the shortage of experienced and highly qualified seafarers there has been little development of practicable strategic solutions. An exploration of other industries revealed that an employer of choice strategy may provide maritime organisations and the shipping industry with a practicable solution to the shortage of well trained and experienced seafarers.

In order to assess the current practices of Australia's maritime organisations as well as the applicability of the employer of choice strategy, primary data collection was conducted according to procedures outlined in the research design and methodology chapter of this study. A telephone survey instrument was developed and used to collect in-depth data from the small sample selected specifically for their knowledge and experience in managing the recruitment and retention of seafarers in their respective organisations. The design of the survey was considerate of the presence of bias and potential error, which could impact on

the validity of the data collected. Reducing the likelihood of errors and bias was controlled during the design process and through the use of pre-testing.

The data analysis and discussion were combined to produce a single chapter evaluating the results of the telephone surveys. The initial discussion examined the high response rate and varied survey length. The discussion of results undertook a functional approach as per the order of the survey instrument. The results indicate shipping organisations in the sample, are aware of the shortage of highly skilled and experienced seafarers, however, the practices to increase recruitment and retention varied in application. The conditions of employment in these organisations were found to be in line with employer of choice organisations. There was evidence that some organisations are adopting employer of choice characteristics but not necessarily the complete employer of choice strategy. Interestingly, attention was lacking to increase the awareness of the industry to a broader range of potential applicants who may increase the number of highly qualified and experienced seafarers produced in Australia.

The application of an employer of choice strategy to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers in shipping companies is possible. However, given the isolation of a single organisation trying to increase recruitment and retention in an industry experiencing poor awareness and reputation, there is a need for industry level investment. Therefore, an industry-wide initiative to improve operational standards, raise the image and awareness of seafaring careers and thereby increase recruitment and retention may be more effective.

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## ***GLOSSARY OF TERMS***

AMC	Australian Maritime College
BIMCO	Baltic and International Maritime Council
DWT	Dead Weight Tonnes
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
ISF	International Shipping Federation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

## ***CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION***

## 1.1 Introduction to the study

Healey's (1969, p. 7) definition of a seafarer, although dated, still describes seafarers in the maritime industry today as:

Every person, who shall be employed or engaged to serve in any capacity on board any vessel...and the term 'vessel' shall be understood to comprehend every description of vessel navigating on any sea or channel, lake or river.

However, the maritime industry has changed significantly since Healey's definition was created. Today's seafarers are distinguished by their qualifications and in some instances by the specifications of their vessels. For example, specific training and qualifications are required for bulk, oil, gas carriers and other commodities. Therefore, a seafarer as defined by Healey (1969) is a broad term that in reality encompasses various distinguishable roles from an Integrated Rating, and an Officer to the Master, which can be grouped according to the categorisation of the vessel and its trade. The industry too, has grown and developed through the added pressures of oil crises, cost cutting activities, the application of technology and the integration of markets to today's current global market (BIMCO/ISF 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005; International Labour Organisation (ILO) 2001; Lane 2000; Moreby 1975; Precious Associates Limited 2003; Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). As these changes to the industry have taken place they have had consequential impacts on manning scales and the roles and activities of seafarers.

The number of seafarers onboard a vessel has decreased as operators have sought to reduce costs and employ modern technology to improve their operating efficiency (Alderton 2004; Farthing and Brownrigg 1997; ILO 2001; Moreby 1975). The job of the seafarer has thus

become more complex due to reductions in crew size, cost cutting pressures in organisations, along with the implementation of technology that may require specific knowledge and training, such as navigation systems and advances in engine room automation (Alderton 2004). Seafarers are now more highly trained in the technical aspects of vessel operation compared to their predecessors, often having various levels of training and qualifications, making them highly flexible and multi-skilled employees (Alderton 2004; Farthing and Brownrigg 1997; ILO 2001).

The composition of seafarers onboard has also changed as some national fleets have deteriorated and operators have opted to flag out their vessels to further reduce costs, thus severely limiting the number of available training berths (Alderton 2004; ILO 2001; Lane 2000; Leggate 2004; Precious Associates Limited 2003; Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). Today, vessels holding international flags are able to take advantage of a larger pool of seafarers, often at a lower cost, by employing seafarers from various nationalities, making the work environment onboard culturally diverse and potentially more difficult to manage (Leggate 2004). The implication of the above mentioned cost cutting activities has been the emergence of shortages in the industry's supply of highly qualified and experienced seafarers.

The declining numbers of seafarers from traditional maritime nations, such as Denmark, Germany, and the United Kingdom, has been discussed in a number of studies (BIMCO/ISF Studies 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005; Leggate 2004; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999; Precious Associates Limited 2003; Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). Studies



such as these have noted the shortage of seafarers resulting in an aging workforce, attrition, low numbers of new recruits and the shift towards Eastern Europe, Far East Asia and the Indian subcontinent, referred to as some of the non-traditional maritime nations, for the supply of seafarers.

In Australia, many similar factors apply to the domestic supply of active seafarers. In the Thompson Clarke Shipping (2002) and BIMCO/ISF (1995, 2000, 2005) studies, Australia's supply of seafarers was studied and found to be suffering the same symptoms as other countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). That is, Australia's seafaring population, particularly officers, are an aging population, whose qualifications are highly regarded internationally and in the shore-based sectors of the maritime industry (Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). Therefore, in order to maintain a steady supply of seafarers it is important to continue the recruitment of new seafarers while ensuring the retention of current seafarers whose knowledge is invaluable to the continued development of the maritime industry.

## **1.2 Purpose of the research**

As the industry, both internationally and in Australia, has recognised there is a shortage of seafarers, there has been an increased interest in activities to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers. The implications of major studies such as the BIMCO/ISF series (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005), although useful in measuring the supply and demand of the seafarer population, does not provide specific suggestions or plans on how to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers. Therefore, further examination of the related

literature and the current practices in the maritime industry may assist in determining which areas in the recruitment and retention practices of shipping organisations require specific attention. Additionally, this study will evaluate the potential effectiveness of an employer of choice strategy to increase the supply of well-trained and experienced seafarers. An evaluation of this strategy may determine the benefits and factors important for becoming an employer of choice in the shipping industry.

The justification for this research rests with exploring how Australian shipping companies may benefit from applying a strategic approach to the shortage of highly qualified and experienced seafarers.

Therefore, the primary research question in this study is:

***What can Australian shipping companies do to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers?***

The secondary research questions to be researched in this dissertation are:

***What are Australian shipping companies currently doing to address the skills shortage in the industry?***

***What contribution could the application of 'employer of choice' strategy make to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers in Australian shipping companies?***

This exploratory study aims to evaluate the current practices of Australian shipping companies, such as ship operators and ship management firms that employ seafarers. The study also evaluates the industry, via maritime associations, whose contribution will be in representing the shipping industry and the interests of seafarers. Therefore, this study's exploratory assessment of the industry's practices seeks to determine the areas that may be

important to the successful recruitment and retention of more seafarers in Australia's maritime industry. By using the foundation strategies of an employer of choice, this study will seek to determine the applicability of the employer of choice strategy and its potential effectiveness in increasing the recruitment and retention of well-qualified and experienced seafarers.

### **1.3 Contributions of the research**

The contributions of this study will be in determining the current practices of organisations in recruiting and retaining seafarers through an in-depth study of the literature and exploratory primary data collection of Australian shipping organisations. The study will compile literature related to the seafarer shortage, assess the factors contributing to the shortage, as well as determining the implications of the seafarer shortage for organisations and the industry. Additionally, this study will explore, possibly for the first time, the applicability of an employer of choice strategy to shipping companies in order to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers. Given that there is a paucity of information regarding the application of an employer of choice strategy into shipping companies in the maritime industry, this study will collate all relevant employer of choice information; explore whether the strategy is being implemented and whether its application could be successful in increasing the recruitment and retention of seafarers. If applicable, this strategy may provide shipping organisations with a holistic approach to increasing the recruitment and retention of well-trained and experienced seafarers. Additionally, this study may provide guidelines for the implementation of an employer of choice strategy to other maritime-based organisations faced with skills shortages.

## **1.4 Structure of the dissertation**

A conventional approach is used for the presentation of this dissertation. The initial chapter is an introduction of the study that provides the background information necessary to set the context of the study. The second chapter is a literature review of the current information available on the seafarer shortage, internationally and in the context of Australia as well as analysing the current initiatives to increase recruitment given the benefits of seafaring careers. After establishing the maritime industry's situation, an analysis of an alternative solution, in terms of an employer of choice strategy, will be conducted. Chapter Two will also explain employer of choice strategies and investigate their applicability in the maritime industry and into shipping companies in particular. The third chapter discusses the research methodology and provides the design guidelines for gathering primary data. This chapter will explain a range of topics from defining the type of research and the sample for the collection of data to the design of the primary data collection instrument, which in this current study will be a telephone survey. The fourth chapter of the dissertation contains the data analysis and findings. It summarises the findings from the primary data collection process and discusses the significance of these findings in regard to the research questions. The final chapter concludes this study by presenting the implications of the study, any limitations encountered during the study and areas for future research.

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## ***CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW***

## **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the available literature of shipping companies and the maritime industry's practices to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers. The context of the current study is in Australia. However, due to the limited availability of literature on the shortage of seafarers within Australia specifically, additional material that discusses the international shortage of seafarers will be cited. This chapter will initially cover the various shipping-related statistics and studies identifying the shortage of seafarers as well as discussing the factors contributing to the shortage. This will then be followed by a discussion of the impact of the shortage on the industry. The advantages of seafaring careers will also be discussed, to determine which aspects of seafaring careers are attracting and retaining prospective and current seafarers. The chapter will then analyse the possible application of an employer of choice strategy and its uses in other industries.

## **2.2 Defining the seafarer shortage**

There are numerous articles, conferences and published studies all confirming that the maritime industry has been struggling for many years to attract significant numbers of seafarers to man the available tonnage. One of the most referred to studies is the jointly sponsored Baltic International Maritime Council (BIMCO) and International Shipping Federation (ISF) study into the worldwide demand and supply of seafarers (BIMCO/ISF 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005). These studies have been conducted since 1990 and every five years release an update of the current supply and demand figures of available seafarers across the maritime industry.

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According to Matthews (2006), the global population of seafarers totals 1.19 million. The most recent BIMCO/ISF update showed a 10,000 shortfall gap in the officer supply of 466,000 compared to the 476,000 officers required, while ratings level personnel increased 15 per cent since 2000 with a surplus in supply of 721,000 compared to a demand of 586,000 (BIMCO/ISF 2005).

An analysis of the 2000 and 2005 BIMCO/ISF reports indicates there was a worldwide estimated shortfall of 16,000 officers, or 4 per cent, in 2000 to a shortfall of 10,000, approximately 2 per cent, in 2005. Such figures could imply the following. Firstly, that the retention of qualified seafarers in the maritime industry has improved or the recruitment of seafarers has increased. Both scenarios indicate that current initiatives and an increased awareness of the shortage is leading to changes in the industry's attitude towards recruitment and retention. However, it should be noted that this growth is recorded primarily in non-traditional maritime nations, thus impacting on its validity to the industry's understanding of the current supply and demand of seafarers (BIMCO/ISF 2005). Alternatively, the BIMCO/ISF (2005) report states that improvements in the documentation and reporting of seafarer numbers is improving in non-traditional maritime countries with each successive report, this may be an additional factor resulting in the better than expected seafarer population estimates.

Interestingly, Fairplay International Shipping Weekly (2006), Leggate (2004), Li and Wonham (1999), and Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim (1999) claim that rather than a shortage of seafarers, there is a shortage of quality seafarers. The above mentioned studies

support the claims that there are shortages of qualified personnel from traditional maritime countries and that this problem is being exacerbated by insufficient recruitment of cadets. Additionally, this situation will be further agitated by the demand for experienced seafarers in shore-based positions, leading to increases in officer wastage rates. Therefore, the effects of the skills shortage have 'trespassed the sea boundaries to the shore-based maritime infrastructure' (Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999 p. 41). A possible indication that the shortage of well-trained and experienced seafarers will impact on the industry's ability to utilise seafarers' unique knowledge in the shore-based functions of the industry in areas such as education, policy formation or management.

Although there is a shortage of qualified and experienced seafarers, particularly officers, BIMCO/ISF (2005) and Li and Wonham (1999) note that there is an untapped supply of seafarers in non-traditional maritime countries, which could provide a potential supply of seafarers to the industry. While growth in non-traditional shipping nations may lead to a balance between supply and demand, the BIMCO/ISF (2005) study raises concerns regarding the shortages in supply in some countries that cannot be filled by the oversupply in others. This may be due to language, standards in qualification or restrictions of foreign nationals in various nations (BIMCO/ISF 2005). Additionally, Thompson Clarke Shipping (2002) attributes the loss of skills to the attraction of higher salaries luring highly qualified and experienced seafarers abroad into the oil and gas sector or into the shore-based sector. Therefore, there is a need to improve recruitment and retention in order to preserve the supply of highly qualified and educated seafarers.

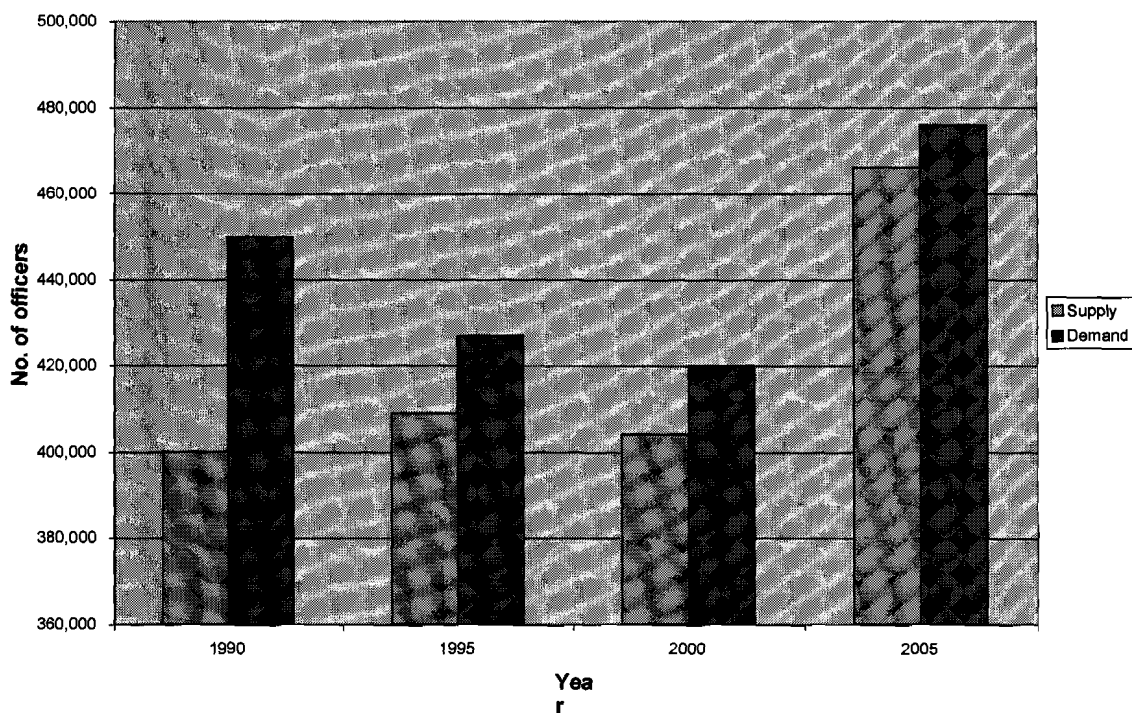


Figure 1.1 and 1.2 illustrate the supply and demand of officers and ratings since the inception of the BIMCO/ISF (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005) studies. However, it is important to note that reporting techniques have been improving with each consecutive report and as such the reliability of earlier studies may come into question. Improved reporting techniques will serve to overcome the concerns of Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim (1999), that there is limited statistical information on the number of personnel in the industry. Therefore, although there may appear to be significant growth in supply or demand, as shown in Figure 1.1 and 1.2, some of this may be attributed to improved reporting techniques and greater participation and accuracy from the data collection sources during the production of the BIMCO/ISF studies. An example by Li and Wonham (1999) demonstrating this problem can be seen in the number of Chinese seafarers, which was significantly higher than statistics which were documented in the BIMCO/ISF (1995) study.

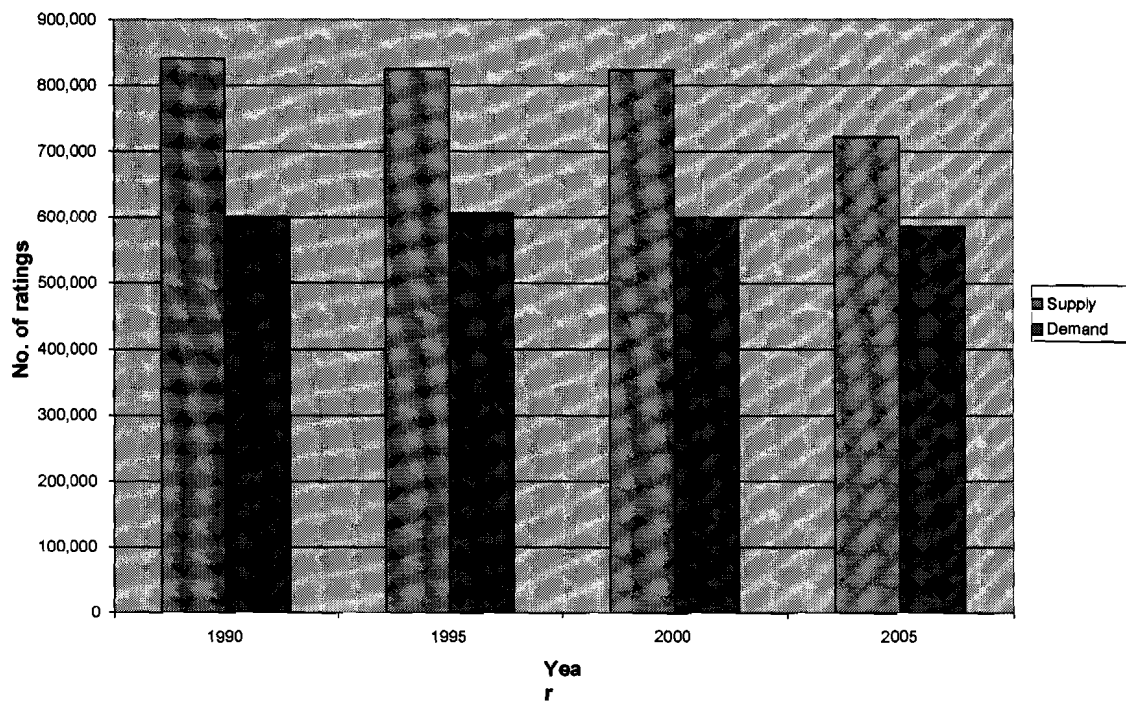
The BIMCO/ISF (2000, 2005) and the OECD commissioned reports (Precious Associates Limited 2003) both indicate a declining number of seafarers in the shipping industry from OECD nations globally. This is in contrast to the increased numbers of ratings and officers emerging from developing economies, particularly from Asia (BIMCO/ISF 2000; 2005; Leggate 2004; Precious Associates Limited 2003). The OECD geographical grouping is important in this current study because it includes Australia, which is the focus of this study.

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**Figure 1.1 The supply and demand of officers 1990-2005**



**Figure 1.2 The supply and demand of ratings 1990-2005**

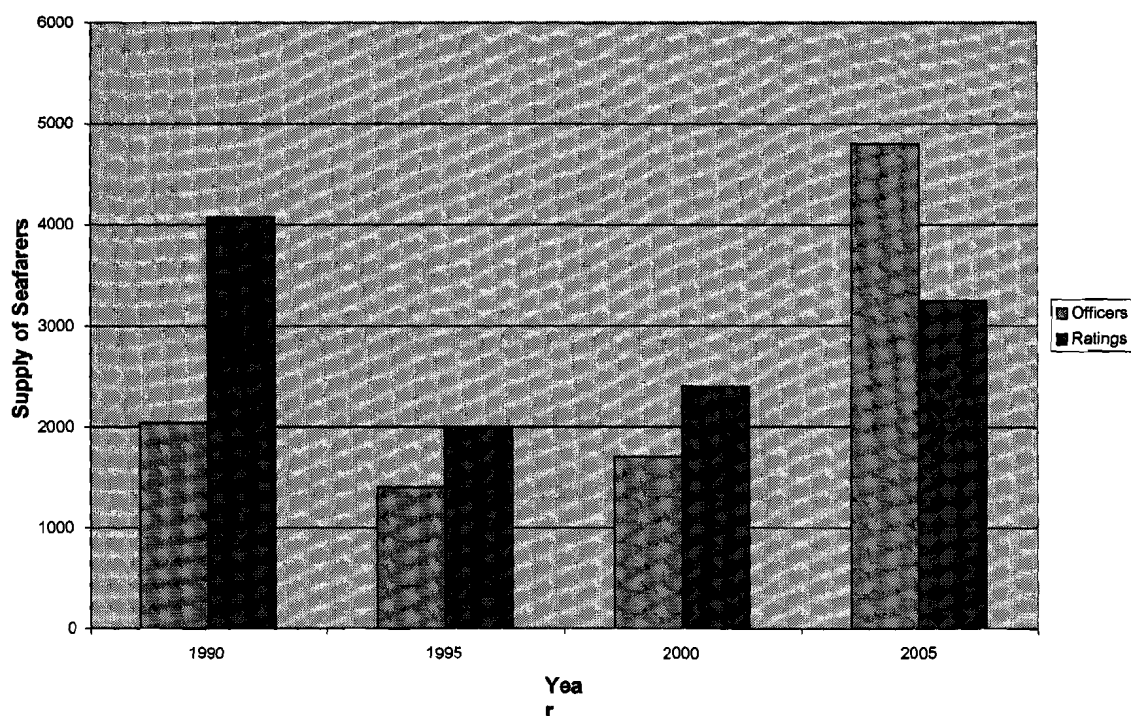


Sources for Figures 1.1 and 1.2: BIMCO/ISF (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005)

## 2.2.1 Australia's seafaring sector

Australia has an interesting shipping industry; surrounded by water the continent relies heavily on international flagged vessels for a significant amount of its trade needs. Australian flagged vessels service only 1.1 per cent of the Australian maritime trade in 2003/2004 (Apelbaum Consulting Group 2004). Given this, Australian seafarers are forced onto international flagged vessels, which could potentially lead to a loss of knowledge necessary for the Australian shipping industry's offshore and shore-based sectors. The BIMCO/ISF (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005) Manpower Updates report that in the 15 years since 1990 there has been a dramatic increase in the supply of Australian seafarers, as illustrated in Figure 1.3. Worth noting are the most recent figures which state that there are 4,800 officers and 3,240 ratings currently active in Australia (BIMCO/ISF 2005).

**Figure 1.3 Supply of Australian officers and ratings 1990-2005**



Source: BIMCO/ISF (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005)

## **2.3 Factors contributing to the shortage of seafarers**

Although some factors leading to the shortage of seafarers have already been mentioned, detail of the various factors that have impacted on the changing supply of seafarers may help in understanding the problems organisations and the industry face in increasing recruitment and retention. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2001), the cause of the skills shortage stems from a number of sources, primarily driven by financial and operational decisions. The shortage of experienced and well-trained seafarers, particularly officers, can be attributed to a number of incidences in the history of the shipping industry. Since the 1970's, oil crises, over tonnage, the flagging out of vessels, low freight rates, the implementation of technology and pressure to cut costs have all impacted on the supply of seafarers (BIMCO/ISF 2005; Gardner, Naim, Obando-Rojas and Pettit 2001; ILO 2001; Lane 2000; Moreby 1975; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999; Precious Associates Limited 2003; Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). The impact of these changes is now being felt due to the reduced awareness of the employment prospects offered by the industry, long lead times between the recruitment and qualification of officers, as well as the changing nature of career choices among potential new recruits (ILO 2001; Lane 2000; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999; Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). Additionally, there is an increasing shift towards non-traditional maritime countries as a source of labour, due to the greater availability of human resources at a lower cost to operators.

Parsons (2004) suggests a number of other reasons for the seafarer shortage. His study is particularly valuable to the current study as it surveyed 132 participants across ten

Australian maritime industry-related stakeholder groups. Parsons (2004) found that the most frequently stated reason for Australia's shortage of seafarers was the small number of available training berths, which was due to the diminishing number of nationally flagged vessels (Parsons 2004). This was followed by the lack of publicity given to seafaring as a rewarding career, high levels of attrition and the unattractiveness of seafaring careers, particularly when compared to other vocations in Australia (Parsons 2004). From the sourced literature, the image of the industry has not received much attention, unless attached to an accident or environmental damage. This is interesting given that industry awareness and image are recognised as important factors to the recruitment and retention of personnel into the industry yet little attention has been given to improve it (Mitropoulos 2004; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999; Parsons 2004; Precious Associates Limited 2003)

In Moreby's (1975) study of *The Human Element in Shipping*, he discusses the various changing social values that are affecting seafarers. Some of issues raised by Moreby (1975) in the 1970's have come to fruition, such as the rising standards of education, which has led to the shift towards white collar occupations that are more 'intellectually stimulating and challenging' (Moreby 1975, p.26). Additionally, Moreby (1975) notes there is a growing participation in decision-making in younger people, which could limit a new recruit's acceptance of the traditionally hierarchical structure found onboard a vessel. Moreby's (1975) considerations of the job structure differ from many of the other suggestions, which look at changes to the environment of seafaring occupations, such as the changing nature of technology, the image of the industry and the flagging out of vessels to open registries

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(BIMCO/ISF 2005; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999). The existence of all these factors illustrates the depth and complexity of the issues and obstacles organisations and the industry face in trying to increase the recruitment and retention of well-trained and experienced seafarers.

## **2.4 Impact on the shipping industry**

All vessels require crews in order to operate efficiently and fulfil the requirements placed on the industry by organisations like the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). However, the shortages in experienced and skilled seafarers is impacting on the operating costs of vessels, particularly specialist vessels (Matthews 2005, 2006). Due to this shortage in experienced and well trained seafarers, employees are demanding higher salaries or in some cases, organisations are luring crews from their competition by offering better remuneration packages. According to Matthews (2006), oil and gas carriers are most affected by the shortage of quality seafarers, and this is driving up the costs of operating, to in some cases, as much as 40 per cent of total operating costs. Additionally, shortages in experienced shore-based personnel may result in increased salaries as organisations aim to attract adequately qualified seafarers away from active service (Dinwoodie 2000). These practices potentially increase operational costs and in doing so, diminish profits.

According to Joshi (2005), the labour shortage has given employees greater power to determine the terms and conditions of their employment. For employers seeking employees in a poor employment market this usually means agreeing to the employee's conditions. However, Day, chairperson of Teekay Shipping, believes there is the need to satisfy

employees in order to retain them, and in doing so, he also gains organisational benefits. In an article for Lloyd's List, Joshi (2005, p.1) states that,

By providing seafarers with job security and clearly defined career paths, mentoring and leadership skills, we will not only provide better customer service but also mitigate one of the most serious risks we face as ship owners – human error.

Therefore, the benefits of satisfying the human resources of the organisation can have positive effects for the organisation, especially in service delivery. Unfortunately, some of these practices can come at quite high financial costs to the organisation, and these increasing costs can be difficult for some operators to take on-board given the competition between operators with freight rates along with the constant pressure to reduce costs.

The increased demand for tonnage and trade has increased the demand for seafarers to man these new vessels in recent years (BIMCO/ISF 2005). As previously articulated, amongst other reasons a shortage of quality officers from traditional maritime countries has resulted in a shift towards Asia and the Indian sub-continent where labour pools are larger and cheaper (BIMCO/ISF 2005; Mitropoulos 2004, Precious Associates Limited 2003; Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). Less experienced and poorly qualified seafarers may be selected on the basis of lower cost or availability, which given the shortages in experienced and well trained seafarers in some nations, leaves operators no real other alternatives (Fairplay International Shipping Weekly 2006; Lloyd's Ship Manager 2005/2006). Shifts away from traditional maritime countries where standards are high and remuneration and conditions are much better, are likely to increase as supply falls and demand increases (BIMCO/ISF 2005).

## **2.5 The difficulties in recruiting and retaining seafarers**

Some of the difficulties shipping companies face in recruiting and retaining seafarers relate to external factors such as recessions, higher operating costs, environmental concerns such as pollution, the criminalisation of seafarers, industry exposure and the industry's management of these situations. Additionally, the activities of some organisations impact on other operators due to the global nature of the industry (Higginbottom 2005). Therefore, many of the difficulties companies face in recruiting and retaining seafarers require industry-wide attention.

Sambracos and Tsiaparikou (2001) and Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim (1999) state that the low and inadequate levels of recruitment are due to shipping's poor image. The maritime industry's image is conveyed to a broader public audience through media outlets primarily when unfortunate accidents have occurred which threaten or damage coastal environments causing socio-economic damage for local communities or result in the loss of life. These factors could negatively affect the opinions and career decision of the broader public population, making the industry unfavourable amongst potential recruits (Mitropoulos 2004). Other obstacles affecting the recruitment efforts of shipping organisations mentioned by Sambracos and Tsiaparikou (2001) and Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim (1999) include the perceived limited career prospects in seafaring, as well as high training costs, which may have to be privately funded by the trainee.

Recent instances of seafarers being prosecuted for pollution and shipping disasters has meant that criminalisation of seafarers has become, an additional issue of concern in the



recruitment and retention of skilled maritime workers (Joshi 2005). The inclusion of criminal penalties for those found to have negligently caused the pollution of the environment has potentially concerning implications for those found accidentally polluting (Mitropoulos 2005). Additionally, Mitropoulos (2005) raises concerns that criminal proceedings following such incidence may negatively impact the global campaign to attract new recruits to the industry, and discourage those already in the industry to stay. The potential concerns, which then emerge, are that the loss of valuable knowledge and experience may increase the likelihood of accidents and incidence of pollution, given the loss of highly qualified seafarers.

Rayner (1990) and Higginbottom (2005) describe the maritime industry as tough, with excessive hours, periods of isolation, performing physically demanding work in a potentially dangerous environment, and being surrounded by a culture that is considered to be macho and male-dominated. Such conditions are unlikely to attract new recruits; rather they may deter new recruits or lead to short-term careers where the job holder remains in the position for a short time until they find more suitable employment. According to Eurasia Group managing director Rajaish Bajpae, ‘treating crews with respect and dignity is the first building block towards improving the image of shipping, improving crew wages and providing better service’ (Joshi 2005, p. 1). Therefore, improving the conditions of employment and living standards on vessels appear to be factors important to increase the recruitment and retention of human resources, particularly in times of shortages.

## **2.6 The advantages of seafaring careers**

Whilst there may be some negative aspects to a seafaring career, there are also many advantages. According to the International Shipping Federation (ISF) (2006), careers in shipping could offer potential recruits the advantages of:

- receiving good remuneration
- early responsibility
- global travel
- career opportunities at sea and in shore-based positions
- career flexibility and security
- long holidays
- satisfaction in knowing that you are doing something useful and exciting

Some of these stated advantages will be discussed to illustrate what features of seafaring careers can assist in attracting more recruits and may provide seafarers with increased job satisfaction.

The provision of high remuneration has already been identified and discussed as an advantage of seafaring careers and will not require further discussion. New entrants to seafaring can experience increased responsibilities early on in their careers, with quick promotion as they gain skills and experience at sea that cannot be mimicked in land-based institutions (Dinwoodie 2000; ILO 2006; Precious Associates Limited 2003). Young new cadets entering the industry are often given individual responsibility of particular areas or functions upon vessels soon after receiving positions onboard (ISF 2006; Precious

Associates Limited 2003). This responsibility could be due to the reduced number of personnel on vessels and the solitary nature of the work.

The shipping industry being global in nature provides opportunities for employment around the world. Although opportunities to travel are limited to the destinations of the vessels seafarers are employed on, many options are available (ISF 2006). Additionally, the global nature of shipping means that if seafarers were to enter the shore-based sector, many shore-based positions also offer travel opportunities to employees (ISF 2006).

The demand for experienced ex-seafaring personnel in the landside division of the maritime industry is an attractive option to those seafarers tired of the mariners' lifestyle or seeking a change (Thompson Clarke Shipping 2002). Career development and progression opportunities through the industry are relatively easy for those experienced and skilled whose knowledge is of value across the shipping industry. As previously mentioned, various shipping industry sectors are always looking to employ those with seafaring experience due to the unique and often specific knowledge and skills they have acquired while at sea (Precious Associates Limited 2003). Therefore, the transferability of skills internationally is a highly attractive prospect to potential new recruits considering employment in an industry that is truly international (ISF 2006).

The conditions of seafarers' employment include long breaks between seagoing periods, in some organisations this is split, with equal portions of sea and shore based time (ISF 2006). This however is not always the case and does vary from country to country and operator to

operator. It is also possible that given the shortages in qualified and experienced seafarers, in addition to the high salaries available to seafarers many would be spending expended periods at sea.

## **2.7 Efforts to increase seafarer recruitment and retention**

Current practices to attract new recruits while trying to retain current employees include providing increased remuneration packages to encourage employee retention; tax benefits to operators to encourage cadetships and training programs; and employer programs to encourage employee development and satisfaction (Gardner et al. 2001). Some of these initiatives have had minor success, however, it may be possible that, they have targeted the wrong group of people and therefore have failed to lead to substantial increases, or be widely adopted in the industry. For example, governments are rewarding ship owners with tax cuts if they train new recruits, as seen in England and some European countries, rather than changing perceptions, increasing maritime career awareness and attracting new recruits to the industry (Leggate 2004).

In Moreby's (1975) study he discusses occupational choice, whether it be the selection of a specific industry or organisation, and the considerations that recruits make when selecting a career path. There are considerations that potential recruits make when selecting an organisation or career and these are based on various factors regarding the conditions of employment, opportunities for development, the cost of attaining a qualification as well as the social desirability for prestige jobs (Moreby 1975). Additionally, Moreby (1975) discusses the retention of employees by satisfying their expectations and needs through

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good organisational practices, which do not necessarily rely on high remuneration rates. In recent years the International Shipping Federation (ISF) (2001) released guidelines for organisations employing seafarers, which are aimed at implementing similar organisational practices. These recommendations cover the legal obligations required of maritime organisations, as well as the recommended practices organisations can adopt to be 'good practice employers'. These studies and others (ISF 2001; Moreby 1975; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999) illustrate the emerging attention being placed on the human element, that is the seafarers, as the shipping industry realises that shortages may increasingly impact on the industry's performance.

Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim (1999) propose that organisations apply greater strategic planning in order to establish policies and guidelines to direct decision making into the long-term. Given this, the application of a long-term strategy to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers may provide an alternative approach. The implementation of a strategic approach is given greater credibility when considering the unique approach adopted by the Norwegian Ship-owners' Association. Their adoption of a marketing strategy aimed at improving the attractiveness of the industry to new recruits was successfully implemented with positive results leading to increased recruitment in the Norwegian shipping industry (Lloyds List 1999).

Having identified marketing and good organisational practice as recurrent themes in the literature pertaining to the recruitment and retention of seafarers it was found that similar characteristics are encompassed in the employer of choice strategy. This strategy combines

elements from the marketing and human resource sectors to form a comprehensive organisational strategy, which could increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers.

Although the seafaring sector is unique there is support for the literature that the employer of choice strategy is adaptable to any organisation in any industry (Ahlrichs 2000). The results of this research found that there are a number of industries suffering from skills shortages. However, most industries do not face many of the challenges of seafaring work such as, the isolation of the job, the long periods away from home in potentially perilous conditions. Two examples of industries and organisations also faced with a skills shortages are the mining and rail industries. Both industries have experienced similar conditions as the shipping industry and therefore provide useful examples of potential solutions to the shortage of seafarers. One of the suggested solutions was the implementation of an employer of choice strategy, which according to the literature has not previously been applied to the maritime industry.

A study prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2006), for the Australasian Railway Association, examined the rail industry's ability to recruit and retain employees. The findings of this study indicate that as in other industries, the rail industry faces a future shortage in the supply of employees due to an aging work force, low recruitment levels, difficulties in retaining new recruits and low investment in career development and training. In their research, PricewaterhouseCoopers (2006) suggest the Australasian Railway Association position itself as an employer of choice by improving the awareness and image of the industry to target new recruits. To increase retention the study suggests

providing leadership that can support an organisational culture supportive of employees and their career development in the industry. Additionally, the report highlights the importance of the industry's support in improving the recruitment and retention of rail workers. This support includes the collective involvement of employers, unions and employees to change the culture and image of the industry in order to increase the recruitment and retention of rail employees (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2006).

Additionally, the mining industry has also documented its need to increase the recruitment and retention of mining employees by making careers in the industry more attractive. Similarly to seafaring careers in mining are no longer attractive given the long working hours in remote and isolated areas (Colley 2005). These draw-backs are leading to a significant turnover of miners who are keen to take advantage of the high earnings but not willing to stay in mining organisations (Colley 2005). According to Colley (2005), two possible solutions may be applied. The first suggests employing foreign workers to do the job that Australian workers will do, and the second solution is to improve the job so that it is more attractive to Australian workers. The second suggestion recommends reducing the hours of mining workers and increasing the shift breaks so that workers are able to maintain healthy social and family lives. This suggestion places a greater emphasis on the balance between work and recreational time to increase employee satisfaction without diminishing the output and productivity of the mines. Colley (2005) discusses the balance between work and recreational time, and the need for employer flexibility as important to a mining company's status as an employer of choice.

There are a number of reasons for selecting employer of choice theory in order to increase recruitment and retention. Firstly, there is an increased awareness of the human element in the industry. Researchers (Higginbottom 2005; Obando-Rojas, Gardner and Naim 1999; Mitropoulos 2004, 2005; Thomas 2003) are becoming aware of a broad range of areas which require consideration, such as the contact seafarers have with their families, the industry's image and reputation, and corporate social responsibility to mention a few. Secondly, there are examples of the successful implementation of employer of choice strategies in other organisations and in other industries that indicate this strategy may be part of a potential solution to the shortage of seafarers in the maritime industry.

## **2.8 Employer of choice strategy**

As previously discussed, the apparent ineffectiveness of previous efforts by shipping organisations and associations to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers may need to take a different approach. According to Lawler (2003), recruiting and retaining high-performing individuals is not a matter that can be left to chance, rather it needs to be based on intelligent strategies and implemented through effective practices, which identify the right people, attract them, and retain them. Having observed the adoption of the employer of choice strategy in other industries and organisations also suffering difficulties in recruitment and retention, an analysis of the strategy and its applicability seems worthy. A strategic change in the organisation's human resource management activities, like becoming an employer of choice, may increase the satisfaction of current employees, while increasing organisational awareness and attracting more well-trained and experienced recruits. The employer of choice strategy, including its benefits and components, will now



be analysed to determine whether its applicability into shipping organisations may be successful.

Herman and Gioia (2001), comprehensively discuss the benefits employer of choice organisations accrue. These benefits include:

- Reducing the marketing and recruiting expenses
- Optimising performance
- Reducing turnover, while increasing loyalty
- Attracting higher calibre employees
- Improving efficiency, effectiveness and profitability
- Attracting a waiting list of potential employees
- Creating less stress and more fun in the workplace
- Facilitating long-term planning and forecasting
- Increasing the company's attractiveness to investors and customers.

These advantages accruing in employer of choice organisations are significant because they illustrate the many benefits this strategy may provide to many areas of the organisation. Importantly, the organisation could increase its recruitment of well-trained and highly ambitious employees, while retaining and developing those employees whose knowledge and experience is important to the continued success of the organisation (Lenaghan and Eisner 2002). Additionally, employer of choice organisations experience smaller turnovers because of their strategic recruitment processes designed to attract the most appropriate new recruits, who choose to be associated with the best company's achievements

(Compton, Morrissey and Nankervis 2002; Herman and Gioia 2001; Pfeffer 1998). Furthermore, once employed in an employer of choice organisation, these employees remain loyal because of the benefits and conditions their employers provide (Branham 2005; Lenaghan and Eisner 2002). Some of these benefits and conditions may include performance-based incentives, flexible working arrangements, opportunities for learning and developing skills or providing long-term career prospects (Branham 2005; Pfeffer 1998). By providing these benefits organisations may improve employee job satisfaction and thus their bottom-line, which is important in determining an employer of choice organisation (Woodruffe 2001).

With lower employee turnover, employer of choice organisations can reduce recruitment costs, increase their bottom-line and thereby attract increased interest from investors and customers (Herman and Gioia 2000; Leary-Joyce 2004). The reputation of an employer of choice is important in increasing the awareness of the organisation to more well-trained and experienced recruits (Herman and Gioia 2000; Obston 2005). Additionally, internal and external marketing may be used to highlight an organisation's employer of choice status. In doing so, prospective and current employees may identify with the organisation, promoting it to others and furthering the organisations employer of choice reputation (Martin, Beaumont, Doig and Pate 2005). Therefore, the combination of human resource management and marketing functions in an employer of choice strategy positively impacts on the organisations long-term success in attracting the most suitable employees, who can continue working towards achieving the organisation's goals and objectives (Compton, Morrissey and Nankervis 2002; Martin et al 2005).

The literature describes a number of different factors that contribute to the formation of employer of choice workplaces (Beckett-Hughes 2003; Clarke 2001; Conference Board 1996; Leary-Joyce 2004; Pfeffer 1998; Woodruffe 2001). These factors have mainly built upon each other to form an understanding of what organisations will need to do to satisfy their human resources, thus increasing recruitment and retention and becoming employer of choice organisations. Clarke (2001) states that an 'employer of choice is an organisation that outperforms its competition in the attraction, development and retention of people through innovative and compelling human resource programs'. This definition by Clarke (2001) provides a description of an employer's role in becoming an employer of choice, by making mention of human resource programs. It was selected because, unlike other sourced material, it provided a simple and clear description of the employer of choice strategy, while suggesting strategic depth, with the implementation of human resource programs. Determining what human resource management programs and activities organisations should adopt to become an employer of choice may provide a clear definition of what an employer of choice organisation is and how other organisations can adopt this strategy.

One of the frequently cited authors is Ahlrichs, who in 2000 released a book containing six foundation strategies to become an employer of choice. Ahlrichs (2000) used previous studies to define the characteristics of an employer of choice organisation and to determine how the strategy has developed over time to attract and retain employees. These studies illustrate how certain characteristics are fundamental to becoming an employer of choice, regardless of organisation and industry (Ahlrichs 2000). According to Ahlrichs (2000), the

six interlocking strategies that emerged from her research into employer of choice characteristics, and form the foundation of an employer of choice strategy are:

1. Add improved recruiting and retention to the strategic plan of the organisation; set measurable objectives for each supervisor, manager, director, and vice president.
2. Build and communicate a top-employer reputation.
3. Hire well-or not at all.
4. Treat employees as if they were customers.
5. Retrain and develop current employees for tomorrow's needs.
6. Build support processes to ensure ongoing success of the foundation strategies.

To gain a further understanding of what is meant by employer of choice; Ahlrichs' (2000) six foundation strategies of an employer of choice will now be discussed with reference to other generic human resource literature to determine what an organisation should do to become an employer of choice. This is because the six foundation strategies of an employer of choice are primarily human resource management related functions or philosophies, grouped together to form a holistic strategy. Ahlrichs (2000) provides one of the few resources that link these factors to illustrate the relationship between these individual strategies. Therefore this source will be widely used to support the discussion of the employer of choice strategy in the remaining sections of the chapter. After determined what an organisation should do to become an employer of choice, consideration will be given to the application of the strategy to shipping companies.

### 2.8.1 Strategy

The implementation of an employer of choice strategy relies on the organisation's ability to commit to and apply an organisation-wide approach that supports the successful achievement of employer of choice status. According to Ahlrichs (2000, p. 44), managers should be aware that,

...without the right people in the right jobs, no strategy can be fully implemented, no goals met, and no significant profits made' [therefore] 'employers of choice have elevated improved recruiting and retention goals into their written strategic plans.

When organisations are considering becoming employers of choice they must be aware that strategically, their employees are their competitive advantage. After all, according to Leary-Joyce (2004), employees are an organisation's only truly unique and lasting competitive advantage. Strategy must not only focus on the employment of the best employees, it must also ensure the organisational environment supports the recruitment and retention of these important organisational assets (Fitz-Enz 1997).

Christiansen (2006) describes strategic human resource management as bridging the gap between employees and business success. 'It looks at the relationship among the human, financial, market, and technological assets of an organisation in order to build organisational capabilities that enable companies to win in the marketplace' (Christensen 2006, p. 11). This is also true in employer of choice organisations, where employees are treated as components of the organisation's success. Therefore, employers of choice are strategically managing their human resources in order to improve their organisation's capabilities in increasing recruitment and retention.

Ahlich (2000, p. 44) adds that the successful achievement of an employer of choice strategy 'requires the ongoing effort of every manager and every employee working to support six basic strategies'. Strategy underpins all six employer of choice foundation strategies mentioned above. This is because the success of the remaining strategies rests with the organisation's implementation and management of an employer of choice approach through the effective development of policies, beliefs, traits and practices which determine employee behaviour and as such the achievement of organisational goals and objectives (Fitz-Enz 1997).

### **2.8.2 Image and reputation**

The use of marketing and human resource strategies to increase public awareness of companies is increasingly common in ever-competitive markets (Martin, Beaumont, Doig and Pate 2005). According to Ahlich (2000, p. 46-47), communicating an employer of choice strategy is necessary to 'ensure that every employee takes pride in being part of an employer of choice organisation, and understands his or her role in attaining and maintaining that status'.

Employers are increasingly trying to communicate the values of their organisation to attract and retain employees, because when current employees are satisfied in the workplace they tell others and refer people to their organisation (Herman and Gioia 2000). Employees therefore have the potential to become 'brand ambassadors' (Sutherland, Toricelli and Karg 2002, p. 15).

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Sutherland, Toricelli and Karg (2002) suggest that employer branding provides a method for communicating an employer of choice strategy, both internally and externally. Internal and external marketing is widely recognised as attracting and retaining those employees best suited to the organisation, who can fulfil its long-term strategies, goals and objectives (Ahlrichs 2000; Herman and Gioia 2001; Martin et al. 2005; Price 2004; Sutherland, Toricelli and Karg 2002).

According to Martin et al. (2005), the external image and the internal culture of the organisation are combined for the purpose of creating an employer brand. The objective of this brand is to attract new recruits and develop their talent to obtain the organisation's long-term objectives. When differentiating the internal and external marketing functions, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) provide a distinction between the roles of each. However, these two marketing functions complement each other and may only be one long-term process in developing the organisation's reputation. They state that 'internal marketing helps create a workforce that is hard for other firms to imitate' because of its distinct organisational culture which aims to achieve the organisation's corporate goals and objectives (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004, p. 503). The 'external marketing of the employer brand establishes the firm as an employer of choice', enabling the organisation to attract the best recruits (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004, p. 503). Therefore, it becomes apparent that these two functions are complementary, given that the internal culture must represent the external image of the organisation as an employer of choice in order to attract and retain the best recruits. This is supported by Ahlrichs (2000) who believes the internal marketing of the organisation is one of the early steps in becoming an employer of choice.

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It is important that current employees feel the same way the organisation claims they do. It would be unproductive to claim an employer of choice reputation if employees are unsatisfied and leaving the organisation when they realise their expectations and the reality of the organisation are very different (Ahlrichs 2000; Herman and Gioia 2000). Therefore, although an organisation may be able to attract more recruits, retaining the very best will be difficult unless they can satisfy their employee's needs.

### **2.8.3 Recruitment**

For employer of choice organisations the recruitment process is an important step for the retention of employees. Employer of choice organisations hire the right employees rather than recruiting just to fill a position (Ahlrichs 2000). Any decision to hire an applicant is seen as a long-term investment for the organisation (Ahlrichs 2000). According to Dibble (1999, p. 31), 'job descriptions, recruitment, selection and orientation are the foundations of retention'. These steps have been identified as important in determining the success of a potential recruit, as they provide an opportunity for the recruit and the organisation to assess each other's compatibility (Dibble 1999).

Pfeffer (1998) suggests several methods to increase the likelihood of employing the right people. This includes considering an applicant's skill, abilities and attributes to ensure their suitability for the position job specification and importantly the organisation, positively impacts their adjustment to the new position (Dibble 1999 and Pfeffer 1998). Anderberg and Froeschle (2006) suggest hiring from within the organisation can increase new recruit success because the candidate is already aware of the organisation's culture and structure,

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hence little adjustment to the new environment will be required. Additionally, Herman and Gioia (2001) state that when employers of choice recruit new employees they may do so on the recommendation of their employees, because talented employees like to work with like minded talented people. Therefore, the increased number of talented candidate makes the recruitment practices of employer of choice organisations easier, while the selection processes seeks to match the suitability of the applicant with the organisation's culture to reduce new recruit failure or adjustment difficulties.

#### **2.8.4 Retention**

According to Ahlrichs (2000), due to today's low unemployment rates employers have to be more selective in their hiring, given that their employees continued retention is important to the company's long-term success. Therefore, organisations are implementing various policies, benefits and practices to increase employee satisfaction. This in turn should increase retention and productivity, thereby reducing turnover costs. As previously mentioned there have been a number of studies that have identified the characteristics employer of choice organisations possess (Beckett-Hughes 2003; Clarke 2001; Conference Board 1996; Leary-Joyce 2004; Pfeffer 1998; Woodruffe 2001). These characteristics where identified as being used to increase employee satisfaction, thereby ensuring retention. These and other activities employer of choice organisations adopt to satisfy their employees and maintain retention will now be discussed.

According to Branham (2005), providing a balance between work and recreation is increasingly becoming important to employees and employers as organisations realise that

satisfied employees are good for business. Employer of choice organisations compensate their employees with monetary and non-monetary awards, such as improved work/life balance (Leary-Joyce 2004). Anderson (2006) believes that the expense of providing benefits that assist employees in having work/life balance or differentiate the organisation for others encourage loyalty and therefore reduce turnover costs.

Woodruffe (2001, p. 12), identified several components to achieving employee satisfaction, these include:

- A sense of achievement
- A sense of being respected and recognised
- A sense of autonomy
- A need for balance between work and private life
- A sense of fun in a good working environment.

These components reflect an organisational culture which provides employees flexibility, in an environment that recognises the best performers and rewards them, because they understand that recognition and feeling valued are important to employees. Employer of choice organisations can adapt and implement various components to suit the individual needs of the employee. Therefore creating customised packages that should satisfy that employee needs, and therefore promote their sense of loyalty to their organisation.

According to Dibble (1999), creating career paths and providing equitable remuneration are determining factor for employees when considering when to stay or leave a job. Branham (2005) recommends implementing policies and succession plans in an organisation, with

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training and development allocated fairly and to those employees with the potential to benefit greatly and provide long-term strategic benefits to the organisation. Creating career paths and providing training and development are recognised as a high priority for employer of choice organisations and therefore will be discussed further in the next strategy (Hay 2002).

### **2.8.5 Training and development**

Lawler (2003, p. 114) describes training and developing activities as opportunities for employees to 'develop new skills and knowledge that raise their ability to perform and excel'. Training and development is a component of employees' conditions of employment that is becoming increasingly important. According to the findings of a study conducted by the Conference Board (1996), the factor that appeals most to highly qualified workers is career development and advancement. Woodruffe (2001), who believes that employees are seeking to improve their levels of employability for the future, supports this. Employers of choice understand this and provide employees with opportunities to develop their skills, otherwise, they know employees are unlikely to be satisfied and remain with the organisation (Ahlrichs 2000).

Interestingly, ongoing training and development encourages employees to remain loyal to organisations. Companies that invest in their human resources encounter a smaller turnover and also have more productive and efficient employees (Branham 2005). Additionally, Pfeffer (2001) adds that organisations that implement training programs but fail to support employee recruitment and retention with the other employer of choice foundation strategies will not gain the complete benefits of training investment. This may be due to their

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employees not feeling as though they are an important component to the success of the organisation.

### **2.8.6 Leadership and culture**

Leadership and culture are two important elements in becoming an employer of choice because of the impact they have on the effectiveness of the organisation (Lawler 2003). Herman and Gioia (2001) support this by stating the guidance of good leadership is very important in employer of choice organisations because it determines the culture of the organisation, which underpins effectiveness. Therefore, strong leadership and organisational culture are synonymous and both are necessary in employer of choice organisations.

Herman and Gioia (2001) describe a number of features of good leaders. These include a future orientated perspective; open communication to all levels; accessibility; consider human resources as strategic tools for the organisation; provide and accept feedback; motivate and coach personnel; and are open to change, to mention a few.

The culture of a company is also important, as employees are unlikely to remain in an organisation where the culture is dominant and autocratic (Ashby and Pell 2001). Good company cultures are flexible to employees needs, they encourage participation, innovation, communication and motivate employees into action, to exceed expectations and to achieve organisational goals (Ashby and Pell 2001; Herman and Gioia 2001).

It has been widely recognised (Ashby and Pell 2001; Branham 2005; Leary-Joyce 2004) that all practices to retain employees are reliant on the strategies of the organisation and the satisfaction of employee expectations through the implementation of these strategies. Ashby and Pell (2001), who have recognised that a relationship between employee retention and corporate culture exists, further support this argument. They identified features of great organisational culture (Ashby and Pell 2001), such features include:

- Organisational enthusiasm
- A sense of pride, sincerity and cooperation
- Removal of complacency - continuous re-evaluation and improvement
- A value based mind set and management style
- An emphasis on creativity and innovation
- Developing role models rather than just leaders
- Establishing high expectations and professional standards
- Fair compensation and incentive programs
- Celebrating achievement and success
- 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you'

The above mentioned identifying features of organisational culture target the policies and practices in the organisation that produce a culture that places importance on productivity while emphasising the softer human resource management attributes that make places of work more attractive. Hence, 'employee understanding of organisational culture dictates how they think about their jobs, their performance on the job and plans for the future' (Ashby and Pell 2001, p. 32). This places greater pressure on management to get it right to

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ensure productive and satisfied employees. The relevance and relationship of organisational culture to the continued recruitment, retention and success of the organisation is an important variable in an organisation becoming an employer of choice.

## **2.9 Employer of choice strategy and shipping**

As the shortage of new recruits to the shipping industry takes its toll on the future supply of skilled labour, employers are trying to promote the career prospects of seafaring. In addition to developing training programs for land-based positions and promoting the quick promotion, challenges and remuneration aspects of seafaring careers, all areas of the industry are beginning to apply various methods to improve the job market and retain the quality of new recruits. (International Labour Office 2006, p. 37).

The above quote from the ILO (2006) indicates that increasingly, organisations in the maritime industry are developing strategies to reduce the shortage of well-trained and experienced seafarers in the shipping sector. However, up until now many of these initiatives have not been particularly successful, given that shortages continue to concern members of the industry. The foundations of an employer of choice strategy have detailed the use of strategic human resource management and marketing practices in the successful recruitment and retention of employees. In addition to the other benefits, it was also found that an employer of choice strategy can be implemented by any organisation in any industry.

The foundation strategies provide a framework for the development of the strategy and its implementation in an organisation. This includes making organisations aware of their internal and external markets, and ensuring the whole organisation is aware of the strategic importance being placed on good organisational practices and employee satisfaction, from the top down and bottom up. Therefore, while seafarers may be off at sea, there are still ways an employer of choice organisation can improve its practices to increase the job satisfaction of its seafarers, while also improving the organisations ability to attract more potential recruits.

However, this strategy is not a 'quick fix' solution. It has many components, which together form a comprehensive organisational strategy aimed at improving recruitment and retention. The long-term planning and commitment that is required to become an employer of choice, means that organisations, and particularly managers, have to support the strategy's implementation and continued changes in order to gain its advantages. While some immediate results may accrue from applying components of the strategy such as better practices and marketing activities, there may be a significant time lag before the external image and reputation of some shipping organisations can improve.

## **2.10 Summary**

A revue of relevant literature suggests that although the shortage of seafarers has been well documented there needed to be a clear understanding that the shortages exist in well-trained and experienced seafarers. This distinction is necessary because of the decreasing availability of highly qualified and experienced seafarers from traditional maritime

countries and the OECD, compared to non-traditional maritime countries where supply continues to grow. This growth in seafarer numbers in less developed economies has raised questions about the quality in the training and skills of these seafarers. The factors contributing to the shortage were then discussed and included the flagging out of vessels, fewer training berths, reduced awareness of the industry and the changing nature of career choices in young people seeking less structure and hierarchy.

The impacts of the shortage and the difficulties in recruiting and retaining seafarers followed. This discussion analysed some of the impacts the industry is faced with, in increasing its own supply of well-trained and experienced seafarers, given the shift towards non-traditional maritime labour supply sources, cost cutting pressures and a poor industry image. Furthermore, while there had previously been discussion of the unfavourable image of the industry, it seemed important to highlight some of the positive aspects in seafaring careers. This helped determine what advantages of seafaring jobs could be capitalised on in order to attract more recruits and retain those already trained and qualified.

The discussion then focused on the previous efforts of the industry, which may have had minor success, before analysing new options to improve recruitment and retention. An analysis of other industries and organisations in similar situations revealed that an employer of choice strategy may be effective in increasing recruitment and retention in the shipping industry. Analysis of the employer of choice strategy revealed that this holistic approach may theoretically be applicable and successful if fully implemented and adopted by



organisations, however primary data collection may be necessary to determine its current use and applicability in shipping organisations.

## ***CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY***

### 3.1 Introduction

As noted in Chapter Two, there is little information in the literature regarding possible solutions, at the organisational level, to the shortage of seafarers in the maritime industry. Therefore, qualitative and quantitative primary data collection is necessary in order to gain a greater understanding of the skills shortage in the Australian maritime industry and to determine what organisational practices are currently being implemented to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers.

The aim of this chapter is to outline the process of data collection used to explore what ship operators and other maritime industry participants are doing to attract and retain seafarers. Additionally, this study will explore the applicability of an employer of choice strategy to shipping organisations, a process that has previously not been well documented in maritime service organisations, such as shipping companies. This will be done through the research design, which provides the necessary guidelines for determining the sample population and primary data collection technique. The data collection method will be established by assessing the available options and finding the most suitable technique given research constraints such as cost, time and a widely distributed population. Finally, the design of the data collection instrument will be carried out with particular attention given to (i) the error control processes to reduce respondent error and confusion and, (ii) the response rate, which is important to increasing the validity of this study.

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### **3.2 Research design**

The research design is an important stage of this study because it outlines the necessary components of the data collection process (Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005). The research design provides the structure or plan for empirical research, and establishes the type of research, methods and techniques for collecting research and analysing the results (Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005; Zikmund 2003). It is therefore, an essential component of the current study into the maritime industry's practices to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers.

When commencing a study, defining the type of research not only describes its purpose, but also 'influences the choice of research methods' and data analysis available to the researcher (Zikmund 2003, p. 54). The various research types include exploratory, descriptive and causal (Cooper and Schindler 2006; Zikmund 2003). An assessment of the various research types will determine the selection of the most appropriate method for the current study.

Exploratory research is a means of gathering knowledge about an issue, which may be new or vague, while descriptive and causal research are conducted to determine the who, what, when, where, or how of a situation; or the relationship between variables (Cooper and Schindler 2006; Zikmund 2003). Given that this issue has only gained prominence in recent times, any in-depth studies and analysis are going to be difficult to undertake. Furthermore, according to the literature the application of employer of choice strategies into the shipping industry has not previously been studied. Therefore, the most appropriate type of study for

the current research appear to be exploratory given the nature of the problem and the apparent lack of previous research into the chosen issue.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006, p. 143), exploratory studies allow researchers to ‘develop concepts more clearly, establish priorities, develop operational definitions, and improve the final research design’. They achieve this by applying exploratory data analysis, otherwise referred to as descriptive statistics, which summarise and present the data in simpler forms for graphical representation or analysis (Collis and Hussey 2003). Thus, this form of research allows researchers to develop an understanding of the problem and the context it is placed. The characteristics of exploratory research are most suitable to the current study due to the apparent lack of knowledge surrounding the developments to remedy the seafarer shortage. Additionally, the selection of undertaking an exploratory study is supported by the absence of literature to the application of employer of choice strategies in the shipping sector.

It is worthwhile reiterating that although some shipping organisations identified themselves as employers of choice on their websites or other promotional media, there was no explanation of why they were employers of choice and which organisational practices make them more attractive employers than other organisations in the industry. Additionally, reference is made to other organisations and industries that had successfully implemented such strategies in order to illustrate the success employers of choice have in attracting and retaining employees. Therefore, an exploratory study into the shipping industry and the

practices of shipping organisations may reveal whether employers of choice do exist and the benefits this status may provide organisations given the shortage of seafarers.

The following sections analyse and select the most suitable sampling and data collection methods available to complete this current exploratory study of shipping companies. Of importance is the selection of a sample of respondents who are knowledgeable and experienced in Australia's maritime industry, and able to provide information about the recruitment and retention practices in Australia's maritime industry during the data collection process.

### **3.3 Sampling strategy**

In situations where large populations of maritime organisations exist, it is common for researchers to segment the population. According to de Vaus (1995), sampling allows the researcher to collect information about some members of a population in a manner which attempts to represent the opinions and characteristics of the group. In the current study, the sample will include three segments from the population of maritime organisations, these three segments will include, (i) ship-owners and (ii) ship managers who are both employers of seafarers, and (iii) maritime associations that are closely allied with seafarers.

The selection of the above segments to source samples is based on the policies of the ISF, an international body concerned with 'maritime manning issues,' that proposes the implementation of good practice guidelines for employers, unions and governments (ISF 2001). The ISF study provides recommendations for good practice in such areas as general

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work conditions, including wages, hours of work and contracts of employment; health and safety; as well as guidelines for handling industrial relations issues (ISF 2001). These previously mentioned parties, particularly employers and unions, who are the focus of this study due to the government's poor attention to matters relating to the Australian maritime industry, are influential in the monitoring and changing of work practices for seafarers in the maritime industry. They are therefore, well placed to discuss the work practices of Australian seafarers during the data collection process in this current study.

The involvement of ship-owners, ship management firms and maritime associations in the various sectors of the industry directly affects the recruitment and retention practices of seafarers in the Australian maritime industry. As mentioned in ISF (2001), the previously mentioned industry groups are able to change the work practices in the industry; and therefore should be knowledgeable in the current issues impacting on seafarers' employment. The selection of these groups, as recommended by ISF (2001), will provide the breadth which is necessary in better understanding the current conditions of seafarer employment. Additionally, studying this sample further may provide insight into problems Australian organisations face in recruiting and retaining seafarers. To assist in the development of a sample it is necessary to establish a sampling frame, which can identify the most useful sample participants (Zikmund 2003).

Initial plans to include seafarers in the sample had to be changed for pragmatic reasons. However, the study did include seafarers unions to represent the opinions of seafarers. Their inclusion in this study follows the recommendations of Precious Associates Limited

(2002), which also surveyed unions to collect a representation of the group. The inclusion of union representatives will provide an associations perspective of the interest of seafarers. Given future research opportunities the surveying of seafarers' opinions will be important to obtaining a complete understanding of the satisfaction of seafarers.

### **3.3.1 Sampling technique and sample frame**

The sample participants were collected through the non-probability sampling technique of convenience sampling, where the sample is selected at the researcher's convenience. Convenience sampling uses a selective method to choose participants who fit certain criteria to partake in the data collection process due to the nature and purpose to the study (Huck and Cormier 1996). In the current study the use of convenience sampling is beneficial for the collection of accurate data that is representative of the population as opposed to other convenience sampling methods which select participants just to make up numbers (Kumar 1999). It is considered necessary to collect data through convenience sampling methods, which select the most appropriate participants for the completion of the study, rather than randomly selecting participants whose knowledge and understanding is likely to contribute little to the understanding of the current maritime industry practices.

The current study requires the involvement of management level representatives who are familiar with their organisation's human resource policies, as well as the industry's practices and policies in recruiting and retaining seafarers. The need to collect their specific knowledge and understanding of the current industry practices in the recruitment and retention of seafarers is necessary to increase the validity of this study.



The sampling frame for this study consists of Australian owned and operated cargo shipping companies and ship management firms employing active Australian seafarers from the master and officers to ratings levels. In addition, maritime associations who are closely involved with seafarers are included in order to increase the breadth and depth of knowledge about the industry, as previously highlighted in the above section. Together, these various sample groups form the potential respondents for data collection in order to accurately assess the current recruitment and retention practices of seafarers from the organisational and industry perspective.

The current study used the 'Shipping Sites' link of the Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006) *Shipping Sites Search* website ([www.lrfairplay.com](http://www.lrfairplay.com)) to source lists of Australian ship operators, ship managers and maritime organisations. Maritime organisations will be referred to as associations during the remainder of the current study, while the term organisations will be used to refer to the sample collectively. Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006) was selected due to Lloyds' reputation as a valuable resource in the shipping industry. These lists provided a sampling frame for the selection of potential participants. In order to reduce sampling frame error or that potential sample participants may be omitted or irrelevant organisations may be included, cross referencing of ship operators and managers against an Australian Shipowners Association (ASA) study was conducted (Apelbaum Consulting Group 2004). The ASA study provides statistical data about the current status of the Australian maritime industry, including vessel owners, operators and their managers. The study was prepared for the ASA, which over the last 20 years has been

involved with the development of policies and practices in the industry as well as the promotion of the industry.

The lists of organisations representing each group were collected from Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006), and included:

**Table 3.1      Organisational distribution according to Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006)**

<b>Maritime organisations</b>	<b>No. of organisations in each population</b>
Ship owners	73
Ship managers	7
Maritime associations	13

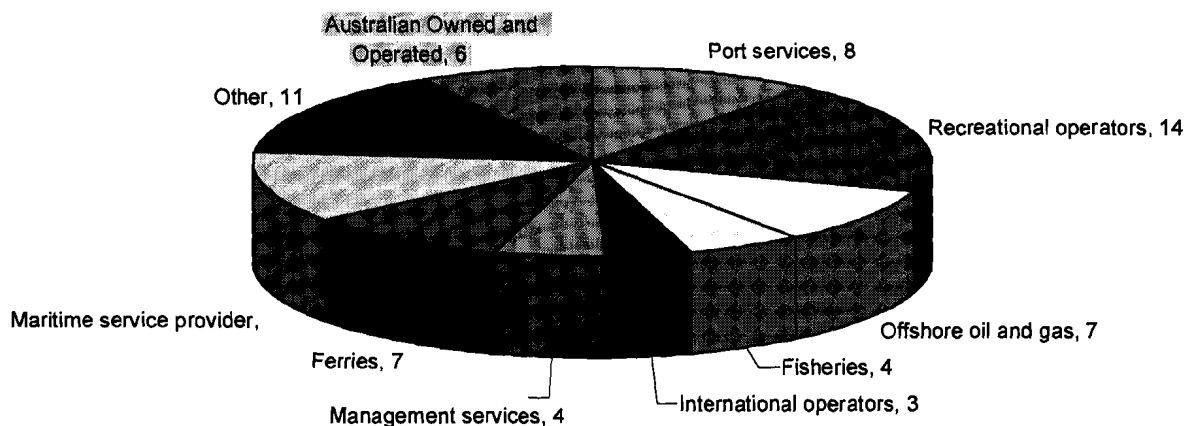
Having established the sampling frame it was necessary to define the samples that would be selected to participate in the data collection process.

### **3.3.2 Defining the samples**

From the lists sourced from the Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006), samples of Australian cargo ship operators, ship managers and maritime associations were gathered by eliminating those listed organisations whose functions were unrelated to the needs of the current study. The ship operating sample was determined by eliminating the operators of recreational vessels, fishing vessels, towage and salvage operators, port service providers, offshore oil and gas companies, management services, chartering services, international operators, ferry services, supply vessels, and other shipping sector service providers. As illustrated in the pie chart below in Figure 3.1, the Australian owned and operated cargo

shipping companies, including tankers, bulk carriers and container vessels were selected from the segment highlighted. The remaining operators were excluded because they did not employ the necessary range of seafarers, from ratings through to officers, as defined in Chapter One, on cargo carrying vessels over 1,000 dead weight tonnes (dwt) or they may not be fully Australian owned and operated. Therefore, they did not align with the requirements of this study, which focus on the recruitment and retention practices of the range of Australian seafarers employed by Australian cargo ship operators. The selection of vessels over 1,000 dwt removes all small craft vessel owners, such as fishing vessels, small ferries, recreational vessels and those whose functions are not related to the commercial shipping of cargo.

**Figure 3.1 Complete Distribution of the 73 Ship Operators Identified by Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006)**



Source: Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006)

During cross referencing with the ASA study (Apelbaum Consulting Group 2004), which lists all owners and the respective managers of Australian registered vessels over 1000 dwt, some ship operators were added who had not been listed in the Lloyd's Register Fairplay

(2006) provided lists. Other vessel operators were eliminated, due to the fact they used already selected ship managers to outsource the management of their crewing functions onboard their vessels. Therefore, relinquishing control of the crewing function to a third party meant that the third party then become the more appropriate sample participant because of their knowledge and understanding of the current practices for employing and retaining seafarers.

Ship management companies who supply Australian seafarers were selected from among the available Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006) list of ship managers, which included seven organisations. Of those seven listed, three were chosen. The other four ship managers were removed because as in one instance they either no longer existed, employed no Australian seafarers or were a division of one of the other selected ship managing organisations.

The maritime associations selected to participate in this study of the seafarer shortage and the recruitment and retention practices of various Australian organisations were those with a direct interest in the recruitment and retention of Australia's seafarers and Australian vessel operators in the domestic maritime industry. Again the Lloyd's Register Fairplay (2006) was used. It produced a list of 13 maritime organisations, including various associations and unions, of which three sample participants were selected after it was determined that the others were not directly related to the employment of seafarers or the interests of vessel owners.

Therefore, the final sample generated from the sample frames included:

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**Table 3.2      Sample distribution according to organisational group**

<b>Maritime organisations</b>	<b>No. of organisations in each sample</b>
Ship operators	7
Ship management firms	3
Maritime associations	3

With 13 sample members this is clearly a small sample. However, it is important to note that the ship management firms often represent more than one firm. Additionally, some ship operator's manage the crewing functions of other operators, therefore the final sample numbers, although small disguise the fact that there are a larger number of organisations being represented. Approximately 12 additional shipping companies are represented by the three ship management organisations identified as participants to this study.

As noted, this is an exploratory study and although it is necessary to obtain a large enough sample, the size of Australia's population is not significant enough to produce a large sample. Therefore, by implementing convenience sampling, the likelihood of collecting valuable knowledge from the selected sample participants about the current seafarer recruitment and retention practices in the maritime industry increases. Additionally, the exploratory nature of the study, which combines qualitative and quantitative research, will determine the selection of particular participants who can generate the necessary data for this study, without necessarily producing a large sample, as common in quantitative studies (Jankowicz 2000; Mason 1996; Byrne 2001).

Byrne (2001, p. 494), states that qualitative research 'increase understanding of a phenomenon as opposed to generalizing [sic] data extrapolated from the sample to the

population at large'. This study will apply qualitative methods in order to gain in-depth knowledge of the industry's current seafarer employment practices from a sample, which has been purposefully selected using convenience sampling methods to ensure quality and validity of responses (Byrne 2001). While quantitative methods will be used to collect information about the opinions and characteristics of survey participants, and will primarily be administered through Likert type questions (Moore 2000). According to Ticehurst and Veal (1999), these two approaches compliment each other, as quantitative research should be based on initial qualitative research. Finally, the analysis of quantitative results will use simple descriptive statistics, given the exploratory nature of the study and the small sample size, to measure opinions rather than to establish relationships about the use and applicability of an employer of choice strategy in the shipping industry (Hair, Babin, Money and Samouel 2003).

### **3.4 Data collection method**

The selection of one data collection technique over another is based on the suitability of each for the required information needs of the current study, with particular consideration of their constraints (Moser and Kalton 1972). According to Zikmund (2003), some of the available methods for data collection for exploratory studies are secondary data analysis, case studies, focus groups and surveys. The suitability of the previously mentioned data collection methods are discussed to determine the most appropriate method to be used in the current study.

Secondary data analysis utilises the results from previous studies, reports and media related to the research objective to complete a study (Cooper and Schindler 2006; Zikmund 2003). A less detailed form of secondary data analysis is evident in the literature review in Chapter Two of this current study. However, as highlighted by the inadequacy of the available literature regarding possible remedies to the shortage of seafarers, more extensive data collection is necessary (Zikmund 2003). That is, although the literature has documented the skills shortage, none found have directly suggested the application of a strategy such as an employer of choice strategy to improve the recruitment and retention of seafarers. Therefore, primary data collection is necessary to gather information specific to the current study.

Case studies provide in-depth knowledge of 'a single organisation, situation, event, or process at a point in time or over a period of time' (Cooper and Schindler 2006, p. 217). Researchers study the participants to gather information relating to their selected research problem, with the aim of determining the 'order of events as they occur or to concentrate on identifying the relationships among functions, individuals, or entities' (Zikmund 2003, p. 116). The weakness of the case study approach is its poor applicability when generalising. Given that precision is necessary to ensure data validity for each case and no organisation's situations, events or processes are likely to be the same; this makes comparisons and predictions difficult (Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005). The usefulness of the case study data collection method is limited because, according to the literature, the maritime industry has to date not implemented employer of choice policies. Therefore, it would be difficult and beyond the time constraints of this current study to find an organisation who has

implemented this strategy, then await approval to study the implementation of the strategy to determine if it has been effective in increasing recruitment and retention. Additionally, rather than focusing on the actions of one organisation, this study aims to determine what all relevant Australian organisations are doing to increase recruitment and retention. Therefore, the information requirements for this study are not fulfilled by the focused approach found by conducting case studies

Focus groups are another possible consideration for data collection. This method is characterised by the free discussion of issues, relating to the researcher's problem, by a group of people (Zikmund 2003). Moore (2000) describes interaction as a key feature of focus groups. Additionally, Smithson (2000) argues that focus groups assess the communication, both verbal and non-verbal, between participants as they discuss issues and react to the opinions of other members. Given the large geographic distribution of the sample, it is not manageable to assemble all participants to conduct focus groups without incurring excessive costs and time for the participants and researcher. Additionally, due to the limited number of issues discussed in such groups, usually three or four, this form of data collection does not fulfil the information needs of the current study which cover a number of factors contributing to employer of choice strategies as well as an analysis of the industry (Moore 2000).

Although recommended as exploratory research data collection methods; secondary data analyses, case studies and focus groups present various disadvantages to this study, such as time, cost or suitability factors (Zikmund 2003). When determining the most appropriate



data collection method, the selection is limited by which method is most appropriate for the purpose of the study, and is appropriate given restricting factors such as geographic distribution of the sample and time and cost restrictions (Moser and Kalton 1972). These factors all impact on the selection of a successful method for primary data collection. Therefore, the data collection technique selected for this study is the surveying method, which is the most appropriate given the above restricting factors and the data requirements of this study and will now be discussed in greater detail.

The selection of surveys to gather the necessary primary data appears to be most suitable for the current study because it is an effective method for collecting information from the research sample. ‘The survey is an effective tool to get opinions, attitudes and descriptions’, through the administration of questions and conversations (Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005, p. 124), additionally, it is a timely and cost effective method of in-depth data collection (Cooper and Schindler 2006). The three main techniques of surveying are through face-to-face, mail or telephone data collection methods (de Vaus 1995; Jobber 1991). Additionally, electronic formats of data collection are now also available and deserve consideration (Gill and Johnson 2002). These techniques will now be discussed and the most appropriate method will be selected for use in the collection of primary data.

### **3.4.1 Survey technique selection**

Having selected the data collection method, a discussion of available survey techniques is necessary to determine the most suitable option for this current study. The face-to-face method is removed from contention due to the geographic distribution of the current

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study's sample, the time and high costs associated with conducting surveys through such methods. The use of mail surveys in primary data collection is characterised by advantages and disadvantages that affect its applicability in the current study. Mail surveys are able to reach a widely dispersed sample at a lower cost due to the absence of an interviewer (Zikmund 2003). However, mail surveys lose their appeal due to the length of time necessary for developing, administering and collecting the questionnaire along with the risk of a poorer response rate (de Vaus 1995; Zikmund 2003). Furthermore, when considering mail surveys there may be a lack of depth and complexity to the questions due to the simpler nature of mail survey content, and the inability of participants to gain assistance for complex questions (Dillman 1978; Cooper and Schindler 2006; Moser and Kalton 1972). Therefore, the limitations of mail surveys to provide the necessary information requirements for the current study mean that they will not be considered as possible data collection techniques in the current study.

Some of the advantages of electronic data collection include its low cost, the ease and speed of administration, access to a larger sample and participant anonymity (Fox, Murray and Warm 2003; Zikmund 2003). Consideration does however need to be given to the disadvantages of this data collection technique such as the possibility of experiencing technical problems, which may affect the collection of information by servers (Fox, Murray and Warm 2003). The authenticity of responses from the selected respondents and concerns about security of the data once collected, that it may be tampered with or accessed by outsiders known as hackers, are additional concerns affecting the implementation of this technique in the current study (Fox, Murray and Warm 2003; Zikmund 2003). Gill and

Johnson (2002, p. 104) also express concern about the ‘representativeness’ of the sample because access to participants through this method may exclude those that do not have access to the internet or do not use e-mail. Although, this unlikely for the managers of the organisations selected in the sample of this current study. The concerns of technological failure, security and respondent authenticity make the electronic format an unappealing method of data collection in the current study.

The fourth survey option is a survey administered by telephone and is the preferred option for the current study given a number of factors such as, the wide distribution of participants across Australia, lower costs, ease of administration and validity of the data collected. According to Edward and Talbot (1997, p. 89) telephone interviews have ‘many of the advantages of face-to-face interviews’. Some of the advantages of telephone interviews include the immediacy of the delivery, the low cost, high participation rates and collection of in-depth data, all of which are important considerations and advantages over the other data collection techniques for this study (Cooper and Schindler 2006; Jobber 1991; Zikmund 2003). These benefits make this option more attractive for the current study than face-to-face, mail surveys and electronic formats which are quite time consuming or can be expensive.

However, telephone interviews also have some disadvantages that need to be considered. Some of the disadvantages of telephone interviews include the length and complexity of the interview, although some authors have disputed this, because they found that interested participants are unlikely to notice the length of the call (Cooper and Schindler 2006; and

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Dillman 1978; Lavrakas 1993). Given the contemporary nature of the research subject, and the importance the topic has in the successful development of the industry, there is an assumption that participants will be willing to contribute to the study and the most convenient method may be through telephone surveys.

The absence of visual aids and face-to-face contact can also affect the participant's understanding and openness. Without the assistance of visual cues or even the presence of the interviewer, the respondent is reliant on the interviewer for any clarification (Dillman 1978). Unless visual aids are provided prior to the administration of the telephone survey, the interviewer can only provide further explanation to the respondent when asked or when they sense respondent confusion or misunderstanding.

Ease of termination and reduced participant involvement are possible disadvantages that should be considered (Leedy and Ormrod 2005; Zikmund 2003). However, some of these disadvantages can be avoided through appropriate design measures. Consideration of question wording, layout in the telephone survey, and survey process will now be discussed to explain how potential disadvantages and design errors can be overcome to improve responses and completion rates

### **3.4.2 Survey questions**

The structure of the questions in the surveys comprises both closed-ended and open-ended questions to gain greater detailed answers to questions, by elaborating and providing explanations for previous questions (Kumar 1999). An example of this complementary use

can be seen in Question B3 of Section B (Appendix A) <sup>1</sup>, where the respondent is asked why they believe there is or isn't a shortage of officers or ratings after having responded to two previous dichotomous questions asking them if they believe there is a shortage of officers and ratings. According to Kumar (1999, p. 118), closed-ended questions are more appropriate for 'factual information' and open-ended questions for 'seeking opinions, attitudes and perceptions'. The advantages and disadvantages of each for this study will now be discussed.

Closed-ended questions offer a number of alternatives that the respondent must choose from that best represent their opinion, characteristics or other self-identifying points of view (Zikmund 2003). One of the disadvantages of closed questions is that they may bias the future response of an open-ended question by 'directing thought in a particular way' (Anderson 1989, p. 166). The various categories of closed-ended questions, which are used in this current study, include dichotomous (as seen in Question A2 of Section A), forced choice (as seen in Question A1 of Section A) and Likert type questions (as seen in Question B5 to B11 of Section B). Open questions, differ in that they invite uninhibited answers from respondents (Zikmund 2003). Question C5 of the survey instrument illustrates how the use of open ended questions was necessary in some cases during the development of the survey given the complexity of the question asked and the need for detailed responses from respondents (Kumar 1999).

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<sup>1</sup> All reference to question numbers and sections relate to Appendix A, unless otherwise specified.

### **3.4.3 Measurement scales**

The use of measurement scales assists researchers in evaluating the attitudes, behaviour and knowledge of participants (Cooper and Schindler 2006). Its usefulness in this current study will primarily be in determining the characteristics of participants and their practices. Measurement scales can be classified into three categories, nominal, ordinal and interval/ratio (de Vaus 1995). The current research contains nominal and ordinal measurement scales, which have been selected due to the exploratory and descriptive nature of the research objective and the structure of questions used to classify knowledge, opinions and attitudes, as opposed to determining relationships, which is commonly associated with interval/ratio scales (Zikmund 2003). Given that interval/ratio scales will not be used in the current study, their properties will not be discussed in this section.

Nominal and ordinal measurement scales have specific characteristics, which will arrange results, determine relationships, and assist in drawing conclusions during the analysis process. Nominal scales are characterised by the 'classification of individuals, objects or responses' on the basis of 'a common/shared property' (Kumar 1999, p. 59). In this current study the strength of these common properties will be through the use of the arithmetic mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and standard deviation (SD). This is evident in both Sections A and H of the survey where respondents are asked to classify themselves and their organisations individual characteristics or opinions. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003, p. 313) nominal scales 'are the least powerful', in that they do not represent 'order or distance relationships and have no arithmetic origin'. They will be applied in the current study through dichotomous and fixed choice/closed-ended questions and will be used to group

respondents according to their shared characteristics (Cooper and Schindler 2006). Ordinal scales will be applied to the current study's survey instrument primarily through five point Likert scales as seen in Section D questions D1 to D10 of the survey. Ordinal scales take the characteristics of nominal scales one-step further by ranking the sub-groups in either ascending or descending order, but with no fixed value (Kumar 1999).

### **3.5 Error control methods**

As stated by Edwards and Talbot (1997, p. 33), 'no survey is perfect; however, the aim of the research is to avoid error and bias as much as possible, and to proceed in a logical order'. Knowing that the research will not be perfect, being aware of where and how potential errors may occur and to then attempt to minimise them is an important step in the design of the survey and interview process. Consideration of the possible areas for errors in survey design often leads researchers to look closely at the order of the survey items, the physical appearance of the survey and at any bias present in the data collection method; these problem areas will now be discussed (Fowler 1995; Zikmund 2003).

#### **3.5.1 Telephone survey layout**

The layout of the telephone questionnaire is designed with the intention to assist the interviewer to accurately complete the data collection process. This is because the respondent has no visual contact with the survey, therefore the administration of the survey over the telephone should consider the interviewers needs for clarity and layout (de Vaus 1995). De Vaus (1995) suggests, providing instructions and question routing for the

interviewer to follow in a distinct font next to the questions, in this current study these will be in italics to prevent confusion with the questions which are in 'normal text' (see Section B). Other distinctive text in the survey such as bold words have been included for the interviewer's convenience to emphasise particular words during survey administration (see Question D11 and D12). Some of the other de Vaus (1995) guidelines suggest clearly labelling and coding the answers, and also ensuring a clear layout that is most appropriate for the interviewer's administration (Section G), which additionally may assist in the analysis of the surveys. Coding is used to simplify the statistical analysis of the data in later stages, and was used extensively throughout the survey, for example five point Likert questions are represented by numerical values rather than the description of the respondents' opinion. Therefore, although the respondent will not see the survey, presentation is still very important in ensuring the whole questionnaire is easily administered, and importantly easy for the interviewer to read and follow.

### **3.5.2 The survey question order**

According to Anderson (1989, p. 165) the order of the questions is important in interviews 'where the respondent cannot look ahead'. The importance of this aspect in questionnaire design is that it can improve the flow and development of thoughts by making the respondents' and researcher's task clearer (Anderson 1989). The flow of the questions may reduce respondent confusion; make data collection simpler and increase respondent comfort and openness' (Zikmund 2003). The order of the current survey has been determined by the six foundation strategies of employers of choice suggested by Ahlrichs (2000) and previously discussed in Chapter Two and as illustrated in Table 3.1. In total there are eight



sections with the questions relating to the specific data collection requirements of those sections. For example, this is illustrated in Section D, where all questions relate to the image and recruitment practices of the participant's organisation. Additionally, the order of the questions initially begins with quite simple five point Likert questions then moves to open ended questions requiring answers of greater depth.

**Table 3.3 Dimensions used to determine employer of choice foundation strategies**

Section	Interview schedule dimensions	No. of items	Types of questions			
			Dichotomous	Likert	Forced Choice	Open
A	Establish the context for this study	4	3	-	1	-
B	The Maritime Industry	11	2	7	-	2
C	Strategy	5	-	3	-	2
D	Image and Recruiting	16	-	10	-	6
E	Retention	17	1	7	4	4
F	Training and Development	9	-	8	-	1
G	Leadership and Culture	9	2	4	-	3
H	Respondent Information	7	3	-	4	-

Adapted from: Cahoon (2004)

The funnelling of questions is a technique applied in this current study, which moves from asking general to more specific questions. The use of the easier general questions initially welcomes the respondent and establishes rapport rather than confronting them with questions which may be sensitive or personal in nature (Cooper and Schindler 2006; Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005). For example, Question B5 asks respondents if they consider the seafarer shortage is an issue the whole industry should be concerned with. As the questionnaire progresses Question G4 asks respondents whether financial considerations

are more important than employee considerations when making major organisational decisions, a harder question which requires more depth and thought than Question B5.

It is also necessary to consider that the context of a question can affect the respondents' interpretation of a proceeding question. According to Converse and Presser (1986), the meaning of questions can be affected by a preceding question, therefore careful consideration in determining the sequence of questions was necessary. Filter questions were another important consideration when diverting respondents past questions which may be inapplicable to them (Anderson 1989; Zikmund 2003). In the current study, the distinction between ship operators, ship managers and maritime associations was necessary throughout the data collection process due to the varying levels of direct involvement respondents have with seafarers and their employment. The participants' ability to respond to the various areas of the data collection instrument was limited by the fact that they may or may not be employers of seafarers, as was the case of the participating maritime associations. In this instance, respondents for maritime associations had to be directed around those sections and questions which related to organisations employing seafarers and instead asked to respond to Section H (see Section B).

### **3.5.3 Survey wording**

The wording of questions is very important, given that the questions asked during data collection aim to obtain responses relevant to solving the research questions. An important point made by Zikmund (2003) is that questions for telephone interviews should be written in a conversational style. This was also supported by Fowler (1995, p.86) who stated that:

If surveys are interviewer administered, wording of the questions must constitute a complete and adequate script such that, when interviewers read the question as worded, respondents will be fully prepared to answer the question.

Given this, it was important to prepare the survey and test its usability during pre-testing to ensure that the conversational style was ‘natural’ and understandable.

Some of the problems associated with the wording and design of questions mentioned by de Vaus (1995) include making sure the question is understandable and minimising the use of jargon or technical terms. Additionally reducing the length of questions was important when considering that during telephone interviews respondents must remember a great deal more. Converse and Presser (1986, p. 31) argue that wording should be ‘specific and concrete’ so that interpretation variation between survey participants responses is less likely. Anderson (1989) mentions other question wording issues which were considered during the data collection instrument design. These include loaded words/phrases, leading questions, ignorance/failure of memory, and double-barrelled questions, all of which are now discussed.

Leading and loaded questions insert bias in the results by suggesting answers (Zikmund 2003, pp. 336-337), the first guides the respondent to select an answer by the wording of the question while the latter suggests socially desirable answers by ‘emotionally charging’ the questions. Therefore, when designing the questionnaire the wording of certain questions, such as Section D, question D2, regarding the image and safety concerns of the industry had to be carefully constructed to ensure respondents did not feel pressured to provide certain answers in defence of the industry. Questions that require respondents to

rely on their memory may unfairly bias results, given that participant's long-term memories may vary. For these types of questions, developing the respondent's recall was necessary through prompts (Moser and Kalton 1972), while other suggestions in the literature mention the provision of the 'don't know' answer for respondents whose memory or knowledge cannot accurately respond to the question, as seen in the Likert statements in Appendix A (Zikmund 2003). Double-barrelled questions cover multiple items at once, and may lead to respondent confusion, misinterpretation and can negatively impact on the data analysis process because of the potentially varied responses to a question (Zikmund 2003). During the survey administration additional care was taken to ensure any questions which may have been double barrelled were separated in order to be addressed fully by the respondent.

All of the concerns related to the wording of the questions influence the potential answers from respondents and also affect the quality of the research. Knowing what wording and sentence structure errors to avoid when developing the questions was necessary in reducing response errors. By taking measures to prevent these errors impacting on the study, such as the use of pre-tests (discussed in Section 3.7) and continuous assessment during the design process, reduced the likelihood of these errors impacting on the quality of the responses when the survey was finally administered.

### **3.5.4 Bias**

The interference of bias can be seen in a number of forms during interviews. Questionnaires or interviewers can bias perspectives during administration, while non-

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response error and response bias can skew responses in a certain direction (Zikmund 2003). As previously discussed the wording and structure of questionnaires can affect the answers respondents provide. While non-response error reduces the sample size through non-response, sometimes those that do not respond may be 'different from those who do', and therefore the sample size reduces and is unlikely to be representative of the population (Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005, p. 154). During the current study reducing the possibility of non-response bias was crucial given the already small sample size. Additionally, response error can lead to self-selection bias, whereby the respondents who feel strongly about a subject may participate, while those that are indifferent tend not to participate (Zikmund 2003).

During the design of the survey, consideration was given to reduce response bias which occurs when 'respondents tend to answer in a certain direction' (Zikmund 2003, p. 178) and by doing so they cause the results to incorrectly represent the sample. Other forms of response bias include interviewer bias, which occurs when the interviewer may influence the respondent; auspices bias occurs when the association conducting the study can influence participants' responses; and finally social desirability bias, which is caused by the respondents need to present themselves in a favourable position (Zikmund 2003). All of these potential biases were considered in order to ensure that respondents were not misrepresented. The presence of bias can impact on the validity of studies if it is found that results are not representative of the sample, therefore reducing their likelihood was crucial to the accuracy of results.

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### **3.6 Increasing the response rate**

By increasing the response rate of the primary data collection process the likelihood of non-response error decreases (Zikmund 2003). Therefore, by checking that all selected sample members contributed to the study, it may have been possible to reduce non-response bias in the study and increase validity. Some of the methods applied to increase the response rates of the surveys in the current study included pre-notification letters, which were sent to participants on the Australian Maritime College (AMC) letterhead (see Appendix B). By presenting all written communications with the AMC's letterhead the respondents may perceive a greater legitimacy to the study and therefore may have been more willing to participate given the AMC's reputation in the maritime industry. According to Dillman (1978) and Frey and Oishi (1995), the response rate and quality of the responses from telephone interviews improves when respondents are informed that they have been selected to participate in the telephone survey by a letter mailed to them prior to the call. As cited in Cahoon (2004) pre-notification can eliminate the 'element of surprise' common in 'cold calling' and 'provides tangible evidence that the interviewer is legitimate'.

The information in the pre-notification letter was personalised and encouraged the potential respondents to participate in the study because of the importance of the skills shortage to the continued operation of vessels in the industry and the valuable knowledge they, the respondents, could contribute to the study (Appendix B) (Cahoon 2004). For the current study the internet was useful for sourcing the contact details of the various survey participants. In instances where there were no details or where gaps existed it was necessary to make phone calls to the various organisations to determine the most suitable

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survey participants and their contact details. The pre-notification letter also informed the respondent of the purpose of the study, why the participant has been selected and the sort of information the researcher was seeking to collect (Appendix B) (Ghauri and Gronhaug 2005). Additionally, in accordance with Ghauri and Gronhaug's (2005) suggestion, the expected time the survey should take to complete, the method of recording the data along with the interviewer's agreement to retain the respondent's identity in confidentiality were also included in the pre-notification letter used in this current study (Appendix B).

For the current study the pre-notification letter also include a response card (Appendix C), this card was used as a visual aid for the respondent during the Likert responses and may have contributed to their understanding and openness during surveying as previously discussed in Section 3.4.1 (Cahoon 2004; Triebe 2002). To assist in distinguishing the response card for the respondent it was printed on coloured paper and stapled to the preliminary notification letter to reduce the possible separation or loss of either piece (Cahoon 2004). Finally, call backs were also used during this study to increase the response rate, however, their use was limited to three respondents who happened to be engaged at the time of contact (Lavarakas 1993) (Appendix D).

### **3.7 Pre-testing**

Pre-tested of the survey was conducted by a number of academics, peers and friends to determine whether there were any errors in the data collection instrument. This pre-testing contributed to the error control process and may have assisted in increasing the response rate of the study by improving the design of the survey prior to administration. According

to Cooper and Schindler (2006), pre-testing is useful in discovering any errors in the survey while also training and preparing the interviewer. It can uncover any bias, ambiguity or problems in the questionnaire design, which should be corrected before implementation (Zikmund 2003). Pre-testing of the survey instrument for the current study was conducted to determine if it could be successfully implemented and could satisfactorily collect relevant data. Questions were developed which highlighted particular areas of concern and interest to the researcher and were then presented to the pre-test participants to guide their evaluation of the survey instrument (Appendix E). The questions were sourced from Cahoon (2004) and Triebe (2002) and covered such areas as the appropriateness of the layout, wording, question relevance and validity and survey length (see Appendix E).

The pre-test was administered to a sample of seven people, a size greater than the half of the survey sample, with various backgrounds. Of the participants, five were academic staff from the AMC, two of which had prior seafaring experience, while the remaining three participants were knowledgeable about the maritime industry. Pre-testing participants who had no maritime industry experience but varying degrees of knowledge were important in assessing the wording and flow of the questionnaire, to ensure it was understandable and flowed like a conversation. While those participants with greater levels of understanding and experience in the maritime industry provided assistance with terminology and determining the appropriateness of the questions for the sample participants given the purpose of the research. A few final changes and improvements were made before administering the survey to the sample participants. The improvements were mainly related



to the wording of some of the questions which may have been biased or leading, as well as a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.

### **3.8 Summary**

The methodology presents the guidelines for primary data collection. Having determined an exploratory study would be most beneficial given the contemporary nature of the issue and the absence of significant literature the selection of an appropriate sample for data collection was necessary. The final survey sample of 13 produced seven ship operators, three ship managers and three maritime associations. The small size of the sample has been highlighted as a major limitation of the study. However, discussion of the validity of small sample sizes in qualitative research has indicated this should not diminish the value of this study, given its exploratory nature.

The chosen survey method was telephone surveys due to the presence of time constraints and the depth of information required in addition to the security and high response rates achieved through this method, which further reinforced the decision to select telephone surveys against the other available options. While the design of the data collection instrument considered elements such as the layout, order, wording and bias of the survey instrument.

During the design process heightened awareness of the need to gain a high response rate ensured the design of the data collection instrument decreased the possibility of respondents terminating the conversation early. While mail correspondents with respondents were given

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greater credibility with the addition of the AMC's letterhead, this also may have positively impacted on increasing the response rate. Additionally, pre-testing was applied, during which participants were asked to find any errors, biased questions or difficult questions that may lead to respondent misunderstanding or error.

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## **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the data collected through the telephone surveys administered to the ship operators, ship managers and maritime associations, which make up the survey sample. The discussion covers the response rate achieved during primary data collection before analysing and discussing the results of the surveys.

The analysis of results will look into the specific characteristics of the respondents (Section H of Appendix A), before analysing the organisations' characteristics. This will impact on the remaining format of the surveys administration, given the use of routing for maritime associations (Section A of Appendix A). The remaining analysis and discussion of the data will mainly highlight relevant findings in the same order as the survey's administration (see Appendix A). This grouping of the data may simplify the findings and ensure thorough evaluation of the research questions.

## **4.2 Response rate**

While addressing letters to the selected respondents during the pre-notification stage of the data collection process, it was found that one organisation in the sample had stopped operating a month prior to data collection. This was one of the potential errors considered when using the internet and websites to source information and personal details about potential respondents. As discussed in Chapter Three, it was determined that cross referencing the information available electronically, with a phone call to the organisation may reduce the likelihood of error when addressing the pre-notification letters to sample

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participants. Therefore, the original sample size of 13 had to be amended to 12 participants, of whom one respondent declined the invitation to participate, due to her busy schedule and lack of interest in participating in the study.

The completed telephone surveys resulted in a 91.66 per cent response rate with 11 of those 12 selected respondents agreeing to participate in the survey. The high level of response may be indicative of the importance participants place on the need to improve the current recruitment and retention practices of organisations in the Australian maritime industry. It may also indicate that the use of pre-notification letters and other tools, such as the use of the AMC letterhead and the tangibility of a response card, was successful in increasing the response rate. During survey administration, some respondents mentioned they had received the letter and expected to participate in the telephone survey. This preparation and expectation of the survey may have increased the sample members' willingness to participate and hence resulted in the high response rate achieved in this study. According to Curtin, Presser and Singer (2005), the average response rate they achieved during their studies into telephone survey non-response in 2003 was only 48 per cent. Therefore, the response rate achieved here is significantly above their average expected response rate. Although the small sample size has been identified as a limitation in this study, the high response rate indicates that those organisations that did respond showed an interest in the issue. Additionally, by participating in the survey, respondents increased the validity of the study by contributing detailed information of the recruitment and retention practices in Australia's maritime industry.

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The survey took 20.36 minutes on average to complete, with a range from five minutes to 35 minutes. The significant difference in time was due to the respondents from the maritime associations only being required to complete three sections of the survey. The ship operators and managers had to complete all eight sections of the survey because they are employers of seafarers, and can therefore contribute knowledge maritime associations may not have. This difference in the respondents survey participation meant that those surveys completed by ship operators and ship managers took up to 35 minutes and required more detailed responses than those found in the three sections maritime associations were required to complete.

The design of the survey, as seen in Appendix A, is divided into sections. Some of these sections cover areas specific to employers of seafarers (Sections C to G of Appendix A)<sup>2</sup> such as ship operators and ship managers. Meanwhile Sections A, B and H are focused on establishing the context for the study, discussing the maritime industry and lastly collecting information about the respondent. To conclude, due to the varying levels of contribution from respondents, and the structure of the survey with its many Likert questions, the range of survey completion times is quite large.

### **4.3 Profile of contributing maritime organisations**

The profile of survey participants is based on the responses gathered through the telephone surveys, which collected company specific (Section A) and respondent specific information (Section H). The title of each participant's position in the organisation was confirmed

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<sup>2</sup> All references to question numbers and sections relate to Appendix A

during the introductory phase of the interview to ensure the suitability of the party to the survey. In a few instances, those initially contacted nominated other people because they were busy or thought other colleagues were more suitable to participate, given the specific seafarer related information needs of this survey. This change did not impact the study greatly; rather it may have increased the quality of data, given that the most suitable respondent from the organisation was participating in the data collection process. The various positions and levels of experience those surveyed hold will initially be discussed before proceeding to look into the organisations' practices.

#### **4.3.1 Respondent characteristics**

As discussed in Chapter Three, the respondents in this survey were initially selected for their specific knowledge in recruiting and maintaining the retention of seafarers in Australia's maritime organisations. As Table 4.1 indicates, the participants have varying responsibilities from personnel management, training and development roles to the general manager. Their participation in this survey greatly increased the validity of the study given their knowledge and understanding of the industry and the employment conditions of seafarers.

Other characteristics surveyed sought to determine whether the respondents had previous seafaring experience. In addition to, the length of their employment not only as seafarers but also in their current positions, see Table 4.2. Of the survey respondents, 54 per cent had previous seafaring experience (Question H1), and of which only one was still active as a seafarer (Question H2), having worked onboard as recently as the previous summer. The

remaining respondents with seagoing experience had varying lengths of experience, from less than 12 months to 17 years, (Question H3) with 66 per cent having over 15 years prior sea-going experience before moving to their shore based roles. The time since they stopped working as seafarers, (Question H4) varied with a range from three to five years to more than 15 years, while one participant was still actively working as a seafarer during the year. This development of seafaring skills into the land-based management functions of the maritime industry may provide examples of the career development opportunities seafarers have in the maritime industry and may indicate an added perspective. That is, while some managers may not have prior seafaring experience, those that did may offer additional insight into the industry because they have had prior experience, therefore there is the added advantage of gaining two perspectives.

**Table 4.1      Respondent Job Titles**

Question Number	Question Description	Percentage Response* (Actual Response)
Introductory Section	<i>Job Titles</i>	
	Marine Manager	9    (1)
	Ship Manager	9    (1)
	Training Manager	27   (3)
	Chief Operations Officer	9    (1)
	Employee Relations Officer	9    (1)
	Personnel Co-ordinator	18   (2)
	General Manager	9    (1)
	Human Resource Manager	9    (1)

\*Percentages have not been rounded and may not equal 100%, see Appendix F for complete spreadsheet of results

From the surveyed participants, 45 per cent had worked less than five years in their current organisation while 36 per cent had worked more than ten years in their current organisations. These long periods of employment in the one organisation may be attributable to the good standards of the employer's working conditions, given that they an

employee is unlikely to remain in an organisation if they are not satisfied. Additionally, it may be worthwhile considering that these long periods of employment in a single organisation may indicate that the respondent considers their employer as an employer of choice, which again may be due to the conditions of employment, the salary, career development opportunities or overall satisfaction with the employer, as discussed in Chapter Two.

In Question A1 the respondents were asked to classify their organisation's, 63 per cent identifying themselves as ship operators, 27 per cent as maritime associations and 9 per cent as ship managers (see Table 4.3). However, one of the survey participants did identify his organisation as both a ship operator and ship manager, this was because the organisation owned and operated its own vessels and provided ship management services to other vessel owners. As discussed in Chapter Three, this management of vessels is an additional factor contributing to the small sample size, whereby the number of organisations represented by management firms is much larger than the number of participants in the sample. For the purpose of this data analysis this participant will be treated primarily as a ship operator as requested by the respondent and to reduce confusion.

The low portion of ship managers in this sample is deceptive, given that ship managers act as agents for many ship operators when organisations choose to outsource these functions. By outsourcing, operators and owners are able to concentrate on their organisation's primary functions, while third parties manage the auxiliary functions such as crewing, freight management and bunkering (Mitroussi 2004; Panayides 2001). Because of this

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control over the crew management functions, they are a part of the sample and the actual operators are not.

**Table 4.2 Respondent Characteristics**

Question Number	Question Description	Percentage Response* (Actual Response)
H1	<i>Seafaring experience</i> Yes No	54 (6) 45 (5)
H2	<i>Still actively working as a seafarer</i> Yes No	16 (1) 83 (5)
H3	<i>Length of employment as a seafarer</i> < 12 months 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years > 15 years	16 (1) 0 (0) 16 (1) 0 (0) 0 (0) 66 (4)
H4	<i>Period since employment as a seafarer</i> < 12 months 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years > 15 years	0 (0) 0 (0) 20 (1) 20 (1) 20 (1) 40 (2)
H5	<i>Period of employment in current position</i> < 12 months 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years > 15 years	9 (1) 27 (3) 18 (2) 36 (4) 9 (1) 0.... (0)
H6	<i>Period of employment in current organisation</i> < 12 months 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years > 15 years	0 (0) 27 (3) 18 (2) 18 (2) 18 (2) 18 (2)

\*Percentages have not been rounded and may not equal 100%, see Appendix F for complete spreadsheet of results

Careful consideration was given during the research design and sample selection process to include industry bodies that represent seafarers, ship owners and operators. Although they

do not employ seafarers, their contribution to the study provides a broader range of opinions about the industry's environment and practices as well as the recruitment and retention of seafarers.

**Table 4.3      Organisational Characteristics**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question Description</b>	<b>Percentage Response* (Actual Response)</b>
A1	<i>Organisational Classification</i> Ship operator Ship manager Maritime association	63 (7) 9 (1) 27 (3)
A2	<i>Organisational employment of seafarers</i> Yes No	72 (8) 27 (3)
A3	<i>Preferred employment of Australian officers</i> Yes No	100 (8) 0 (0)
A4	<i>Preferred employment of Australian ratings</i> Yes No	100 (8) 0 (0)

\*Percentages have not been rounded and may not equal 100%, see Appendix F for complete spreadsheet of results

Respondents employing seafarers were asked about their preferences in employing both Australian certified officers (Question A3) and ratings (Question A4). For both questions, it was agreed that all respondents preferred to employ Australian certified officers and ratings (see Table 4.3). This may be attributable to the fact that due to legislation Australian flagged vessels must employ Australian seafarers. However, it may be that operators and managers see Australian certified seafarers as more highly qualified and experienced than other internationally certified seafarers. This was apparent in the literature discussed in Chapter Two, which described Australia as a source of highly educated and trained seafarers.

#### 4.4 The maritime industry

Respondents were asked questions related to the industry and the shortage of seafarers (Section B). Of particular interest were the various factors and conditions affecting the maritime industry's ability to attract and retain seafarers. Questions B1 and B2 asked respondents whether they believed there are shortages of officers and ratings in the Australian maritime industry. The results of these questions are worthy of noting with a unanimous yes to the presence of a shortage of officers, however, 18 per cent disagreed that there is a shortage of ratings. These responses coincides with the available literature that notes the shortage of officers and ratings in OECD countries. Respondents' justification for these responses (Question B3) reveals that some believe that a shortage of rating does exist but to a lesser extent than the current shortage of officers. Some respondents commented that it was a '*training resources issue*', which was leading to '*fluctuations*' in the industry's supply of capable ratings. One of the other comments made regarding why respondents believe there is a shortage of officers, and seafarers in general, were that the industry had changed. A respondent commented:

*The industry's changed a lot since I joined 17 years ago, a lot of people have left, retired, and not necessarily been replaced, ships have gone, people have gotten out of it and haven't come back.*

Respondent No. 3 (Ship operator)

Some of the other responses also made mention of people leaving the industry and there not being enough new trainees to replace them. One respondent said that the two major factors he perceived to be the reason for the shortage were a lack of awareness and the poor availability of careers. The responses from sampled managers indicate that the problems

faced by organisations in recruiting and retaining seafarers are industry based problems, rather than organisational issues. It appears that sampled respondents believe that it is the industry's inability to attract a consistent supply of new recruits, which is leading to the shortage of seafarers. This coincides with the literature that identified the industry's inability to attract more recruits, possibly due to its image.

Respondents were asked how the skills shortage was affecting their organisation (Question B4). Some common affects included operators sailing shorthanded, asking seafarers to return to work early from their breaks, and seafarers 'doubling up'; spending longer periods at sea until relief can be found. Additionally, there was greater work required by the management and administration staff to source seafarers. Respondents commented that the shortage was making the management of vessels much harder, given the difficulty in sourcing seafarers, while potentially also impacting on the safety of the vessels. By extending the sailing periods of seafarers or requiring fewer seafarers to continue the operation of a vessel short handed, the vessel operators may be risking the safety of the vessel and its crew by placing greater pressure on seafarers to maintain service schedules. Additionally, the attraction of seafaring careers may diminish as seafarers become weary of extended periods at sea away from their family and friends.

The ship managers and maritime associations' experiences were not a great deal different from the ship operators. Ship management firms have experienced greater difficulty in sourcing seafarers, there is more hands-on involvement and planning in ensuring vessels

maintain sailing schedules and are safely manned. Whilst the involvement of maritime associations has taken a more proactive approach, one respondent described it as requiring:

*More involvement in the recruitment practices of the industry, we're more proactive in trying to retain the workforce*

Respondent No. 5 (Maritime association)

Recognising the data was collected from a small sample, it may be possible to infer that the shortage of seafarers is impacting sectors other than those directly employing seafarers. Maritime association respondents commented that they experienced difficulties in fulfilling their requirements to safely man vessels, although probably not as great a difficulty as those employing seafarers, given that those organisations not employing seafarers do not have the same concerns sourcing employees. These findings coincide with the literature which highlighted the impact the shortage of seafarers will have on a broad range of sectors of the maritime industry.

The remaining Likert questions in this section are listed in Table 4.4. Respondents' opinions were measured with a five point Likert scale, with five indicating strongly agree and one strongly disagree (see Appendix A), zero was also included in the survey instrument however, its use was primarily for the researcher's benefit when routing around questions which were not significant for some respondents. All Likert results will be discussed with reference to the arithmetic mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and standard deviation (SD). As discussed in Chapter Three, the main objectives of these descriptive statistics is to find common characteristics which may provide details of the current opinions and practices of the surveyed organisations. Due to the small sample size no level of significance will be

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provided given its poor utility and the exploratory nature of this study (Ticehurst and Veal 1999).

**Table 4.4 The Maritime industry**

Question Number	Question Description	Mean	Standard deviation
B5	The shortage of seafarers is a concern for the whole industry	4.54	0.52
B6	Australia needs to increase recruitment to satisfy its own needs	4.00	0.44
B7	Mixed crews could provide a solution to the shortage of Australian seafarers	3.36	1.02
B8	Greater public awareness of the industry is necessary to increase applicant numbers	3.90	1.22
B9	The maritime industry has an image as a poor choice for employment	2.54	1.21
B10	The potentially dangerous environment reduces the industry's ability to retain seafarers	2.00	0.44
B11	Positive aspects of seafaring careers are not well known to prospective recruits	3.54	1.03
D2	Negative incidence in the industry can impact on the attractiveness of the organisation as a potential employer	2.87	0.99

As indicated by the resulting mean and large standard deviation (Question B7,  $\bar{x}=3.36$ ,  $SD=1.02$ ), respondents had a wide range of opinions when asked if through changed industrial policy Australian companies could employ mixed international crews to overturn the skills shortage. The majority, 54 per cent, either strongly agreed or agreed that mixed nationality crews could provide a solution to the shortage; however, 27 per cent disagreed with this statement. Disagreement with this statement may indicate that these respondents wish to protect the domestic industry and its standards from foreign trained and ticketed seafarers. Additionally, as previously discussed, Australian ship operators may prefer to employ Australian certified seafarers because they perceive them to be highly qualified and experienced, a point previously made in Chapter Two. The findings do not clearly represent

any distinct opinions amongst participants, they may however, indicate that some members of Australia's maritime industry are aware that, as in many other documented instances, there is a shift towards non-traditional maritime nations for the supply of seafarers.

Statements regarding the need for greater public awareness and improvement of the image of the industry also provided a wide range of responses (Question B8 and B9). The standard deviations for both these questions (see Table 4.4) are inflated and represent the varying nature of responses in the industry. In general, greater public awareness of the industry is necessary however, the image of the industry as a choice for employment may deter potential recruits. Awareness of the industry, as discussed in Chapter Two, is primarily generated through the media and often the images generated presents negative depictions of the maritime industry. These images may negatively affect the opinions of potential recruits who may be unaware of the many advantages of careers in the maritime industry (Question B10, B11 and D2). Therefore, it may be possible that the respondents could be biased and may not consider the industry image being presented to a broader audience of potential employees.

## **4.5 Employer of choice foundation strategies**

Following the layout of the foundation strategies discussed in Chapter Two, the survey was designed with clearly defined sections which represented the necessary components of an employer of choice. These foundation strategies include strategy, image and recruiting, retention, training and development and the leadership and culture of the organisation. The questions in these sections were only answered by ship operators and ship managers

because of there specific applicability to the organisation's practices in employing seafarers.

#### **4.5.1 Strategy**

The strategy section of the survey (Section C) used closed and open-ended questions to ask respondents about the strategic importance of their organisation's employees. Table 4.5 indicates that seafarers are seen as an important part of the organisation, which may be a positive sign for increasing the recruitment and retention of seafarers through the implementation of an employer of choice strategy (Question C2). Analysis of the methods for feedback (Question C4) and the available communication channels (Question C5) in organisations reveal meetings with senior officers, having an open door policy and even conducting surveys with their seafarers, to gain feedback. An interesting response provided by one respondent was that they did not actively encourage feedback rather it was something they expected to come through in the day to day contact with their seafarers. This may indicate the existence of an informal communication channel and friendly organisational culture, as well as good management practices necessary in employer of choice organisations. This approach to seafarers supports the results that indicate seafarers are an important part of the organisation, whose contribution is valued.

This positive response to the linking of the land-based and sea-based operations of shipping organisations is encouraging given that it may be easily assumed that an 'out of sight, out of mind' attitude may easily develop. These results may also indicate that organisations are increasingly becoming aware of the need to continually address seafarer concerns and

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suggestions in order to satisfy their needs and thereby ensure retention. As discussed in the literature the extension of seafarers' careers into the land-based activities of the industry is beneficial because of the unique knowledge and experience they can provide.

**Table 4.5 Employer of choice strategy**

Question Number	Question Description	Mean	Standard Deviation
C1	Seafarer awareness of organisational mission, vision, goals and values	3.37	0.91
C2	Attracting the best recruits is one of the organisations strategic goals	4.25	0.46
C3	Feedback is collected from seafarers to improve the operational activities of the organisation	4.00	0.00
D8	Our recruitment process has been designed to select applicants which are most suitable to be employed as seafarers	4.00	0.00
F3	Supporting employees with training and development is important for seafarer retention	4.12	0.64
G2	The organisation aims to provide employee satisfaction while achieving organisational goals	4.00	0.00

As discussed in Chapter Two, strategy underpins many of the organisational decisions managers make in regards to their human resources. Therefore, additional results from other sections of the survey reveal some of the organisational strategies to the recruitment and retention of seafarers. As seen in Table 4.5, organisations unanimously agree that when recruiting, the selection process is designed to select applicants most suitable to be seafarers (Question D8,  $x=4$ ,  $SD=0$ ), which as discussed in Chapter Two, reduces recruitment costs and provides stability in the organisation by reducing employee turnover. In response to Question F3, organisations are realising the importance of providing training and development to their seafarers in order to add value to the organisation and importantly to retain seafarers. By satisfying their needs for career and skill development the organisation is demonstrating good practice and implementing one of the foundation strategies of an

employer of choice. Additionally, there was general agreement from respondents that organisations aimed to satisfying the needs of employees as well as those of their organisation's (Question G2,  $x=4$ ,  $SD=0$ ). This balance between satisfying the needs of the organisation and its employees is important in ensuring retention and importantly the economic success of the organisation.

#### **4.5.2 Image and recruiting**

The image of the maritime industry was questioned previously in Section B; however, in Section D respondents were asked questions about the image and recruiting practices of their organisation. From the results presented in Table 4.6, it is evident that respondents take great pride in their organisation's image and reputation. Respondents were very positive about the attractiveness of their organisations' as potential employers (Question D3,  $x=4.25$ ,  $SD=0.46$ ); they also felt strongly that improvements to their image were not necessary to attract more seafarers (Question D5). This result was unexpected given that this study is interested in determining what organisational activities may increase recruitment. If those surveyed respondents disagree that their image needs improving, this may indicate that the importance of image in attracting and retaining seafarers is not properly understood. Having researched the literature presented in Chapter Two there is an understanding that image, along with other marketing functions, plays a significant role in an organisation's ability to attract and retain employees. Therefore, it is interesting that marketing functions and improvements to the organisations image rate so poorly.

Interestingly, during later stages of the section, respondents were given the opportunity to explain why their image did not need improving (Question D13). Some organisations

explained that the feedback they received from job applicants indicated that the image of the organisation was very positive. Others were happy with the current position of their organisation and did not think anything had to be done. As one respondent commented they provided the '*vehicle for employment*', the vessel, and applicants would approach them if they were interested. This may be an indication that organisations may not be placing enough effort in attracting new recruits by implementing strategic marketing tools to develop industry and organisational awareness.

**Table 4.6 Employer of choice image and recruiting**

Question Number	Question Description	Mean	Standard Deviation
D1	Marketing techniques are used to increase the exposure of the organisation and to attract more seafarers	3.25	0.88
D3	Seafarers are attracted to our organisation because of our reputation as a good employer	4.25	0.46
D4	Career paths are provided to attract new recruits	4.12	0.35
D5	The image of our organisation as an employer needs improving to attract more seafarers	1.87	0.64
D6	The job expectations of new recruits are different from the reality of the job	2.75	1.03
D7	New recruit numbers are low	2.75	1.03
D9	We recruit seafarers whom we believe will remain in the position for the long term	4.00	0.00
D10	The remuneration packages of seafarers are attractive to potential employees	4.12	0.35

A surprising response from one participant was that they claimed to be the employer of choice in their local region, they supported this by stating they had a good reputation and long-term employee retention therefore they were satisfied with their image and did not see the need for improvement. These results positively reinforce the current assumption that

although organisations may not consider improvements to their organisation's image as necessary, there are marketing activities, which will later be discussed in detail, that could be applied to increase the organisation's exposure and improve the image of the industry to a broader audience of potential recruits.

Respondents were asked whether there is a difference in the expectations and the reality that new recruits are faced with when they become seafarers (Question D6). This question is significant because of the wastage rate of new seafarers when they enter the industry. Responses to this statement (Question D6) indicate that while 62.5 per cent disagreeing that there is a difference in expectations and reality, 37.5 per cent agreed. Again, the closeness of survey respondents to the industry may bias their judgement. As noted in Chapter Two, wastage is a problem, and the unrealistic or inaccurate expectations of new entrants are a contributing factor. Most respondents considered a new recruits expectations were inline with the reality of the job. However, one respondent, representing a maritime association, stated that there was a difference in expectations and it was caused by the poor understanding of the industry. This point was made in Chapter Two and may again reaffirm that there needs to be an increase in marketing to promote the industry's career advantages, this may help reduce wastage and attract more recruits.

Respondents were asked how they thought potential and current seafarers viewed the industry as a preferred employer (Question D11 and D12). Some of the common responses to both questions included the money being an attractive incentive and the uniqueness of the job. Lifestyle specific factors were also included, such as the ability to travel to remote

communities serviced by vessels in the Northern parts of Australia and to take long breaks. The characteristics mentioned by respondents correspond with the available literature which previously highlighted the advantages of seafaring careers. In addition to some of the above mentioned factors, the majority commented that they thought current employees viewed the industry highly. One respondent said this was because they had never heard of people leaving the industry to go to another industry. There were however, a few negative comments from one respondent who thought that current seafarers viewed the industry as insecure, with shifts to the oil and gas sector and poor opportunities in the industry for seafarers to transfer their skills or even move around the industry. An interesting comment made by one respondent regarding the views of potential seafarers was that seafaring was not viewed as a long-term career. This assessment of potential and current seafarers' opinions of the industry may be helpful in determining the areas that may require improvement, such as career development, and those that may not, such as remuneration.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the organisation's application of marketing practices, both internally and externally, to attract potential new recruits and retain current employees (Question D1 and D14), varied among the organisations participating in this study. While some operators and managers currently used newspapers and magazines to advertise or increase awareness, most stated this was not a common practice. Only one respondent stated his organisation was beginning to become involved with field days, where they could exhibit and promote their organisation. The remaining respondents relied on the continuous supply of job applications and their reputation in the industry to attract new recruits and

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therefore saw no real need to invest in marketing practices. One respondent's answer was frank about investing in marketing to attract new recruits:

*We don't do any marketing. We expect that providing a ship should be sufficient.*

Respondent No. 8 (Ship operator)

The success of the marketing activities varied (Question D15). Most claimed that the various marketing techniques to attract applicants did increase the number of applications received, but not all of these were suitable. Additionally, one respondent said that after placing advertisements in all the daily newspapers their organisation received no responses, a possible indication of poor industry awareness. The organisation decided to then only place advertisements in industry related journals four times a year. This targeting of a population already aware of the industry, may limit the potential recruitment of new candidates.

This mixed response shows the varied results of implementing marketing strategies in the shipping sector, but does not necessarily indicate great success in increasing applicant numbers through implementation. Additional suggestions to increase applicant numbers (Question D16) included going to colleges to source more highly skilled applicants, developing training programs to attract more young people and interestingly, providing more tonnage was considered to help increase the awareness of the service. However, this is at a significantly larger cost than many other activities, which are realistically achievable and likely to increase the awareness of the industry to a broader audience. As discussed in the literature, some of these practices are being implemented with varied success, but there are concerns that the problem requires industry assistance in order to be successful.

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### 4.5.3 Retention

Section E asked respondents about the employment conditions in their organisations and sought to develop a representation of the job satisfaction of seafarers. When respondents were asked about the satisfaction of their seafarers in regards to their working conditions the responses varied (see Table 4.7), 50 per cent agreed and 12.5 percent disagreed, others commented that there were always going to be unsatisfied employees (Question E1). Although organisations aimed to please all their employees some stated that they could not be certain that all seafarers were satisfied with their employment conditions, hence the significant number of unsure responses (Question E1). Some respondents assessed seafarers' job satisfaction through reactive methods, whereby commentary and feedback let management know of any unsatisfied employees, and then there were the more formal measures using performance appraisals and exit interviews (Question E17). One participant suggested the length of employment was an indicator to the job satisfaction of its seafarers. This appears to be true to the literature discussed in Chapter Two, as employees are unlikely to remain in the same organisation if they are unhappy.

Follow-up questions to seafarers' job satisfaction asked respondents if there are any improvements which their organisation could make to increase seafarer job satisfaction. As discussed in Chapter Two, organisations that are complacent will not be able to attract and retain seafarers, therefore the following suggested improvements are an indication that some organisations may be aware of the need to improve their organisation's ability to increase seafarer satisfaction, and as such, recruitment and retention (Question E16). These suggestions included providing more variety to the job descriptions of seafarers, attempting

to give greater involvement to seafarers in operations, job sharing, better remuneration and finally, giving greater ownership of the position so that seafarers feel a greater sense of responsibility and contribution to the organisation. Some of these suggestions have been discussed during the literature review and indicate an awareness that developments and improvements can be made to improve seafarer job satisfaction.

**Table 4.7      Employer of choice retention**

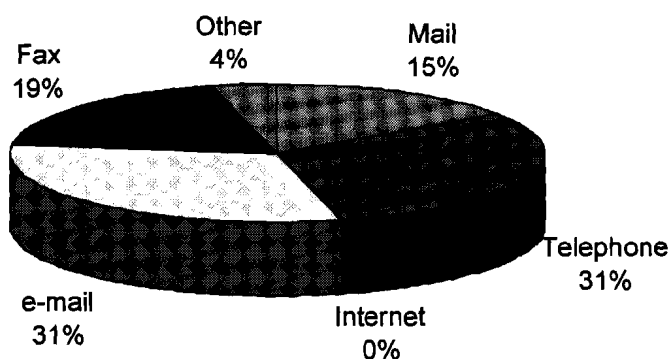
<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question Description</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
E1	Seafarers in our organisation are satisfied with their employment conditions	3.37	0.74
E2	Our organisation uses remuneration as a competitive tool to retain our seafarers	3.50	0.92
E3	Working conditions onboard vessels are improved to attract seafarers away from our competition	3.62	0.74
E4	Conditions on Australian vessels are of a high international standard	4.12	0.64
E6	Seafarers are provided with access to facilities for personal ship-shore communication	3.37	1.18

When assessing seafarers' job satisfaction, attention was paid to the remuneration packages, working conditions and facilities onboard vessels (Question E2 and E3) (see Table 4.7). Both areas were seen as being quite satisfactory for seafarers; comments were made that these conditions did not vary much on Australian vessels. This may indicate that organisations should consider improving those areas where there may be a need for improvement, such as the image of the industry and career development opportunities.



Facilities for ship-shore communication were previously identified in the literature review as important to the satisfaction of seafarers while at sea away from their families and friends. Organisations are primarily providing telephone and e-mail facilities for personal ship-shore communication (Question E7). The use of mail and fax has become dated and although available were not considered popular methods of communication. The use of the internet is still considered too expensive for most and therefore did not feature in any responses. The complete illustration of the facilities used onboard for personal ship-shore communication has been shown in the pie chart below in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1 Facilities Available for Ship-Shore Contact**



The sea-going periods for seafarers (Question E9 and E10) in the organisations surveyed varied between one week and ten weeks at sea at any one time (see Table 4.8). There was no difference found between the sea-going periods of ratings and officers, when compared to the rest of the Australian industry. Most organisations believed that they provided similar conditions (Question E10). However, given the significant distribution this clearly is not the case. The rest periods of seafarers were much the same as the periods spent at sea.

Equal work and rest breaks of four to six weeks appeared to be the most common arrangements on the vessels of the surveyed organisations (Question E12 and E13).

**Table 4.8 Employer of choice retention results continued**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question Description</b>	<b>Percentage Response* (Actual Number)</b>	
E7	<i>Shore Contact Facilities</i>		
	Mail	9	(2)
	Telephone	36	(8)
	Internet	0	(0)
	e-mail	36	(8)
	Fax	13	(3)
	Other	4	(1)
E8	<i>Ratings Sea-going Periods</i>		
	1-4 weeks	37	(3)
	5-6 weeks	37	(3)
	7-8 weeks	12	(1)
	9-10 weeks	12	(1)
	11 weeks to 3 months	0	(0)
	4 months to 6 months	0	(0)
	More than 6 months	0	(0)
E9	<i>Officer Sea-going Periods</i>		
	1-4 weeks	37	(3)
	5-6 weeks	37	(3)
	7-8 weeks	12	(1)
	9-10 weeks	12	(1)
	11 weeks to 3 months	0	(0)
	4 months to 6 months	0	(0)
	More than 6 months	0	(0)
E11	<i>Ratings Shore Break Periods</i>		
	1-4 weeks	37	(3)
	5-6 weeks	37	(3)
	7-8 weeks	12	(1)
	9-10 weeks	12	(1)
	11 weeks to 3 months	0	(0)
	4 months to 6 months	0	(0)
	More than 6 months	0	(0)
E12	<i>Officer Shore Break Periods</i>		
	1-4 weeks	37	(3)
	5-6 weeks	37	(3)
	7-8 weeks	25	(2)
	9-10 weeks	0	(0)
	11 weeks to 3 months	0	(0)
	4 months to 6 months	0	(0)
	More than 6 months	0	(0)

\*Percentages have not been rounded and may not equal 100%, see Appendix F for complete spreadsheet of results

One respondent did mention that variation in the periods at sea or on shore could be caused by supply and demand factors. This was evident in the discussions with respondents that often seafarers, particularly officers, were cutting short their breaks to return to work because of the shortage of available seafarers. Further indicating that Australia is experiencing the effects of the shortage and it is impacting on other members of the industry, supporting the need for a potential solution such as the employer of choice strategy.

#### **4.5.4 Training and development**

In Chapter Two, emphasis was placed on the need to develop employees' skills and abilities to improve organisational productivity and boost employee moral. Here (Section F) the organisations' provision of such training and development opportunities was analysed further. Most respondents agreed that their organisation provided seafarers with opportunities to acquire new skills (Question F1,  $\bar{x}=4$ ,  $SD=0.75$ ) and furthermore, they agreed that their organisations provided seafarers with opportunities to develop their skills, as measured in the standard deviation of the results (Question F2,  $\bar{x}=4$ ,  $SD=0.53$ ). This positively supports the presence of the training and development foundation strategy for the applicability of an employer of choice strategy in a shipping organisation as it confirms that surveyed organisations understand the benefits of these practices. According to the literature the organisations approach towards succession planning and the development of career paths was seen as important to the satisfaction of seafarers but also beneficial to the organisation's long-term stability. The application of succession plans onboard vessels and in the organisations land activities (Questions F5 and F6) was evident however, not widely

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used (see Table 4.9). One respondent commented that their organisation was too small to implement such strategies. Respondents strongly agreed that career paths were available for seafarers to follow in their organisations (Question F8). This result was surprising given the previous results for succession planning. However, it may be possible that management has not considered the use of such a strategy to provide employee development opportunities and continuity in the organisation. Succession plans could be implemented into the traditional hierarchy of a vessel, but perceived difficulties in the organisations size and the ability to fill these positions with suitable candidates may present some difficulties.

**Table 4.9 Employer of choice training and development results**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question Description</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
E5	Our organisation employs previously experienced seafarers in our land based positions	4.00	0.53
F1	Seafarers are provided with opportunities to acquire new skills	4.00	0.75
F2	Seafarers are provided with opportunities to develop their skills	4.00	0.53
F4	Ratings are encouraged to qualify as officers	4.00	0.53
F5	Our organisation has developed succession plans onboard our vessels	3.37	0.91
F6	Our organisation has developed succession plans in the organisation's land based operations	3.12	0.83
F7	Experienced seafarers are valuable assets who should be employed in the industry's land based operations	4.12	0.35
F8	Our organisation offers career paths for seafarers to follow	4.00	0.00

All respondents were in agreement that seafarers should be employed in the organisation's land-based operations, where their skills would be of great use (Question F7). However, the actual employment of seafarers in the organisations land-based activities appeared to be less prevailing than expected, as illustrated in Question E5 in Table 4.9. This variance in results may indicate that seafarers may not actually be given many opportunities to progress

in the organisation's land-based positions, or it could possibly indicate that the shortage of seafarers is reducing on the number of positions filled by previously experienced seafarers in the organisations surveyed. Therefore those positions which previously would have been filled by experienced seafarers are now being filled by employees who have had no seafaring experience. As discussed in Chapter Two, this loss of first hand knowledge and experience could be a great disadvantage to the land-based operations of organisations and the industry , therefore more needs to be done to increase recruitment and retention.

#### **4.5.5 Leadership and culture**

The final element in the foundation strategies for becoming an employer of choice is leadership and culture. As discussed in Chapter Two, this area is very broad because of the significant importance that organisational leadership and culture has on all aspects of an organisation. The organisation's culture towards its employees was assessed by determining the value that organisations place on their employees, specifically seafarers, as seen in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10      Employer of choice leadership and culture results**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question Description</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
G1	Performance management is used to improve seafarers job satisfaction	3.62	0.74
G3	The impacts on seafarers are considered when making organisational decisions	3.50	0.92
G4	Financial considerations are more important than employee considerations when making major organisational decisions	3.12	0.83

As discussed in Section 4.5.1, organisations aim to provide employee satisfaction while achieving organisational goals (Question G2). However, organisations were not quite so considerate of seafarers when making organisational decisions (Question G3). This is likely to be due to the fact that financial considerations were considered 75 per cent more important than employee considerations (Question G4). These results are not too surprising given that most organisations are likely to be more concerned about their bottom-line than its employees. However, as stated in the literature, unlike most organisations, employers of choice are concerned about the human element and they consider their employees when making organisational decisions. Therefore, there needs to be a change in organisational culture in order to improve the organisation's perspective on the importance of its employees.

Respondents were asked whether they were familiar with the employer of choice concept (Question G5), which although was alluded to in this survey, had not yet been mentioned. Of the 50% of respondents who were familiar with the term employer of choice, all believed that they were an employer of choice organisation (Question G6). This point is of interest because the responses collected and analysed indicate no particularly strong correlation to support this. That is, although the surveyed organisations have implemented practices which contribute to the foundation strategies of an employer of choice there appears to be no indication a holistic approach to strategically managing an organisation has been implemented. The respondents' justifications for labelling themselves an employer of choice produced varied responses (Question G7). Some stated they are continuously approached by seafarers who wish to work at their organisation. Other

responses included organisations explaining that they provided good conditions, with competitive wages and opportunities for advancement to seafarers; therefore, they believed that they were employers of choice in the industry. One of the respondents also added that their organisation's environment made people feel like they were a part of the success of the organisation, which was still small enough to have a family owned company atmosphere and this made them attractive to potential new seafarers.

When asked what respondents would like to do to improve their image as an employer of choice (Question G8), a few suggestions included respondents taking a greater interest in attracting and training people at the 'bottom end' to join the industry and working on marketing the organisation within the local community. Two respondents suggested that larger organisations, which may have more vessels are able to do more. Whether greater market share necessarily improves image is difficult to say. What it may do is increase presence in the industry and therefore organisational awareness but there may be more effective options which should be considered, that are much cheaper than expanding the organisation's operations. The final question for the section asked respondents' whether being an employer of choice is important in the maritime industry (Question G9). Here respondents unanimously all stated that employers of choice attracted the best employees and this was important to the success of their organisation so it was very important in the maritime industry.

## 4.6 Summary

The results collected through the survey presented a broad depiction of the current employment conditions, practices and opinions of organisations in Australia's maritime industry. Overwhelmingly there is agreement that a shortage of officers, and to a lesser extent ratings, exists in the industry and that after many years there is now greater attention being given to the issue. The various organisations surveyed had extensive ideas about the industry's ability to attract and retain seafarers. Particularly about the attractiveness and conditions which ensure the long-term supply of seafarers.

Organisations were asked of their own capacities to satisfy their seafarers and most did see the importance of providing career paths, developing skills and awarding competitive remuneration packages; which, in addition to the already comfortable working conditions, make the industry an ideal place to work. One of the inconsistencies that did emerge was the opinion that the industry is attractive to prospective new recruits. While those that know about the industry will agree that it is attractive, there is a significant portion of potential new recruits who are not aware, this is where the marketing functions of the industry are failing to maximise recruitment.

The organisations that identified themselves as employers of choice had quite a firm idea that the benefits of being a good employer and having others know about it would increase the number of applicants and their quality. However, the results do not present these organisations with significantly better results than those that were not aware of the strategy. This could indicate that considering ones self as an employer of choice in the shipping



industry may not be completely true to the foundation strategies of an employer of choice as discussed in the literature.

All sample participants appeared to have an understanding that various components could enhance the organisation's performance and attractiveness, unfortunately the main weakness was in marketing activities. While organisations were aware of the advantages of training and development, there was little support for increasing marketing activities or improving the organisation's image. This varied understanding may present some challenges to shipping organisation wanting to implement an employer of choice strategy. Importantly though these results indicate that some members of the industry are aware of the shortage, and that some organisations, those sampled, are implementing processes to improve their employees satisfaction, just as the literature had stated.

## ***CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION***

## 5.1 Purpose and value of the research

Having completed all stages of data and literature evaluation, it is now necessary to draw conclusions about the value and contributions of this research. The research questions defined at the beginning of this dissertation will be examined, with the secondary questions addressed firstly. The first of the secondary questions asked,

**What are Australian shipping companies currently doing to address the skills shortage in the industry?**

The results of this study reveal that Australian organisations are adopting strategies previously identified in the literature as conducive of good practices in shipping organisations and important to increasing recruitment and retention. The recruitment practices of the surveyed organisations aim to select those seafarers best suited to positions, regardless of the shortage. The organisational practices used to retain seafarers included providing competitive salaries and good working conditions with close to equal ratios of sea and land-based periods.

The Australian shipping companies surveyed also provided training and development opportunities to attract and retain seafarers. Such initiatives may be furthering seafarer's knowledge and qualifications, encouraging ratings and cadets to progress to higher ranks of officers, or preparing seafarers for careers in the shore-based sectors of the industry. The benefits of these activities however, are much greater, as stated previously in the literature training and development initiatives build loyalty in employees by reinforcing the organisation's awareness of the importance of its employees. Therefore not only is the

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organisation benefiting from employing more highly qualified employees it also increases retention.

The culture and leadership of those organisations surveyed recognised seafarers as important to the success of the organisation, and as such, tries to ensure their satisfaction while maintaining control of the financial considerations of the organisation. Respondents' supported this recognition of seafarers' by ensuring the culture of the organisation contributed to the seafarer's satisfaction. Surveyed respondents indicated that seafarers were important to the organisation's efficient operation through their contributions and feedback. This may be an indication of the managers' leadership and organisational culture which may promote high standards of work in an organisation's employees.

A few of the sampled organisations were also applying marketing techniques such as magazine and newspaper advertising to attract potential recruits. There was limited evidence of strategic marketing amongst the sample participants, most relied on their reputation to attract new recruits, however they failed to recognise the need to manage their reputation. Having recognised the importance of an organisation's image and reputation in the literature relating to the industry it was surprising to find participants' believed their image did not need improving nor was there a need for additional marketing activities. It may be that this poor adoption of marketing techniques by shipping organisations, could be limiting the organisation's potential to increase recruitment.

When determining the applicability of an employer of choice strategy, the following secondary question was asked,

**What contribution could the application of an ‘employer of choice’ strategy make to increase the recruitment and retention of seafarers in Australian shipping companies?**

When determining the possible contributions an employer of choice strategy could make in increasing the recruitment and retention of seafarers, an evaluation of the strategy’s advantages in the context of the current research is necessary. Reference is made to Section 2.8 of this research, where the benefits were first highlighted. From the surveyed organisations findings it appears that organisations implementing an employer of choice strategy may reduce their marketing and recruitment costs because they have a better image and reputation, thus they are able to attract and retain highly qualified and experienced seafarers. Their image and reputation is developed through high standards of organisational practice and marketing efforts designed to promote the organisation to a broader range of potential employees. With these increases in applicants the organisation may be able to strategically recruit candidates it believes are best suited to the specifications of the job and organisation.

Once recruited by an employer of choice, these seafarers may contribute to high standards of operational efficiency and in doing so may increase the effectiveness and productivity of the shipping company. The employer of choice organisation’s ability to retain seafarers will reduce turnover and increase loyalty through the development of strong organisational relationships, led by good management and organisational culture. Because of the employer of choice organisation’s reputation higher standards of applicants may be expected. This

benefit to shipping companies is important in raising the standards of qualifications and experience in the industry, resulting in safer work places and happier employees. Furthermore, it raises the image of the organisation and industry which increase the standards of applicants and makes the recruitment process more competitive. By reducing turnover, the organisation may be able to effectively plan ahead, allowing greater strategic management of the organisation towards its goals and objectives.

The bottom-line effect of this strategy is its benefit to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation which in turn will positively impact on the organisations profits. Employer of choice organisations will attract highly qualified and experienced recruits, who will continue to contribute to the organisation's operating efficiency because they are recognised and appreciated by their organisation. Furthermore, seafarers may remain in an employer of choice organisation for longer, reducing turnover costs and leading to long-term organisational planning in the development of seafarers' careers that ultimately will benefit the shipping companies' success and future sustainability.

The primary research question of this study asked,

**What can Australian shipping companies do to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers?**

Having examined the current practices of Australian shipping companies, and determined the contribution of an employer of choice strategy it is important to establish what Australian shipping companies can do to increase recruitment and retention.

While trying to address this question, consideration is given to those areas in the data analysis that appeared to require greater attention such as the marketing of the industry, the image and awareness of the industry. These areas were selected due to their importance in the successful implementation of an employer of choice strategy and also because they appear to have not been as seriously regarded by respondents as the other strategies and characteristics of an employer of choice. As discussed in Chapter Two, it is important to increase the awareness of the industry to a broader range of potential seafarers. Additionally, marketing the positive aspects of seafaring careers is necessary to the successful development of a strong employer image. Hence the need for industry-wide initiatives to improve the image of the industry. This, however, cannot be achieved without improvements to the practices of the industry. The removal of false expectations, along with bad practice organisations may assist in improving the image of those organisations trying to achieve employer of choice status.

As illustrated by surveyed organisations, through the implementation of various components and characteristics of an employer of choice, organisations can improve their ability to attract and retain employees. But this practice does not represent an employer of choice strategy. In order to be an employer of choice and gain the benefits of this strategy, an organisation must implement the strategy holistically. The relationship between strategic recruitment and selection, good organisational practice and marketing strategies to develop and manage the image and reputation of the organisation are important for establishing the foundations on which an organisations employer of choice strategy can develop. These foundation strategies compliment each other when implemented collectively, because they

comprehensively address the important human resource and marketing areas necessary for increasing recruitment and retention.

Australian shipping companies should be implementing all components of the employer of choice strategy across their organisations. Current practices indicated those surveyed had implemented various components of the strategy, however without all the foundation strategies and unified administration and management organisations will not be able to gain the benefits of increased recruitment and retention, lower turnover, better long-term organisational performance and greater organisational awareness, which could all result in better profits for the organisation.

However, considering the size of the industry and the effect one organisation's actions are likely to have on the recruitment and retention levels of Australian seafarers, it may be more beneficial to expand the strategy's implementation. By including other organisations and bodies, such as unions, the effectiveness of the implementation may more significantly impact of the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers. That is, by adapting an employer of choice strategy to an industry, domestically or globally, its benefits may produce more significant increases in the number of seafarers being recruited and retained, providing a solution to the shortage of qualified and experienced seafarers in the maritime industry.

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## 5.2 Limitations

Some of the limitations encountered during the completion of this study included those associated with using studies and various literature such as the BIMCO/ISF (1990, 1995, 2000, 2005) studies. Although these studies provide detailed evidence of the seafarer shortage, they may encounter shortcomings in their data collection processes due to surveying methods, response rates or respondent bias. Therefore, the reliability on these sources must be recognised as a potential limitation of this study. Additionally, the limited scope of the current study, its analysis of the shortage of seafarer and its focus on the organisational perspectives of organisations employing seafarers, rather than maritime workers in general, limits the depth of knowledge. However, having explored the foundations of the employer of choice strategy and its applicability in shipping organisations, it may now be easier to conduct future studies of greater depth on this issue.

Other limitations to this study are its concentration on Australia seafarers employed in Australian shipping companies on Australian cargo vessels. This limitation reduced the sample size considerably. Additionally, it may have limited the data collection by not including those vessel owners and operators who employ seafarers in other sectors of the maritime industry, such as fishing and charter companies. Due to pragmatic reasons the inclusion of seafarers in this study was not possible. The inclusion of the seafarers union was however, an addition which provided some contribution from the seafarer perspective. However, the unions' perspective may possibly bias results given the possible difference in opinion shared by seafarers and their unions. Seafarers' contribution to the study would

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have greatly increased the understanding of how current employees perceive the industry and what should be done to increase recruitment and retention.

Importantly, the size of the sample used in this study reduced the strength of the results and questions the validity of the study. Given the small size of the sample however, it was determined that an exploratory study would best examine the practices of the sample participants, specifically selected for the study because of their knowledge. The collected data sought to evaluate the practices and opinions of those organisations participating, rather than trying to infer relationships or find correlations. The lack of statistical data may be seen as a limitation to the study however, as previously discussed qualitative and quantitative studies compliment each other. Therefore, the value of this research is in the findings which explore the current practices of Australian organisations in regard to the recruitment and retention of seafarers and the potential applicability of an employer of choice strategy.

### **5.3 Areas for future research**

Areas for future research include the collection and analysis of seafarer's opinions to determine whether the job satisfaction their employers were discussing corresponds with their own opinions. Additional research into their opinions of the industry's image and possible suggestions of how it can be improved to increase recruitment and retention would be valuable. This triangulation of data could provide additional directions in improving the standards of employment, in organisations, and as such the attractiveness of seafaring careers, depending on the areas with the greatest variation. Future research into the methods

for improving the image of shipping organisations would also be of value to shipping organisations regardless of their employer of choice status. Additionally, research into increasing and improving the image and awareness of the industry in the general public and to particular groups, like females and school leavers, may uncover pools of potential new recruits who had previously not considered careers in seafaring. Further research into other sectors of the maritime industry, such as fisheries, may also help in gaining a thorough understanding of the industry or developing additional sources of potential new recruits. There is also need to research the government's opinions and thoughts for the future sustainability of the maritime industry. Given the lack of involvement, it may be that the potential of the industry has not fully been realised by government bodies and leaders.

This research could also take a longitudinal approach and study the actual implementation of an employer of choice strategy into an organisation. This option would require many years of research and resources, observing the organisations application of the strategy, its implementation and results, and therefore may not be practical for researching without additional minor studies about the strategy. Future research may also be carried out to develop a model for the implementation of an employer of choice strategy into an organisation. This model could provide organisations guidance for implementing the foundation strategies and illustrate the relationships between the various components of this holistic strategy.

The current study could also be used as an indication that other organisations and industries faced with skills shortages may be able to implement an employer of choice strategy, such

as the defence force or certain trades such as builders or stonemasons. Finally, future research into an 'industry of choice' strategy, whereby the industry's image and reputation as a preferred employer is raised, could be of significant value to organisations implementing employer of choice strategies in poorly represented industries. As discussed in this study there are issues too large for a single organisation to manage. However, an industry of choice may be able to apply the foundation strategies identified in Chapter Two, to the national or international industry setting, involving parties at the organisational and political level to raise the standards of practices, as well as the profile of the industry as a good occupational choice for potential new recruits. Therefore, this research could be valuable to many organisations because of the global scale of the shortage and the potential benefits this strategy may have if it were applicable. It highlights the need to improve the industry's broader environment while also ensuring the internal environment is conducive of good practice so as to ensure a positive external representation to potential new recruits.

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## ***APPENDIX A: SURVEY INSTRUMENT***

Good Morning/Afternoon Mr/Mrs/Ms \_\_\_\_\_,  
my name is Natalie Kokoszko, I'm conducting a study for the  
Australian Maritime College about the recruitment and retention  
of Australian seafarers. I spoke to you recently and you indicated  
that now would be a convenient time to conduct the short  
telephone survey. Is that still the case?

*If Yes, continue*

*If No, arrange  
another appointment*

**Begin here when interview participant agrees to immediate start**

Just a short introduction to the study before we begin.  
The primary aim of this research is to determine what companies  
are doing to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian  
seafarers. Additionally, I will be trying to determine if the  
application of employer of choice practices could increase the  
recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers.

I would like to stress that the information you provide will be  
kept strictly confidential. However, would you agree to have this  
conversation recorded to ensure the accurate transcription of the  
information you provide?

*Yes, turn on  
recorder*

*No, stress the  
importance of  
accurately  
transcribing  
information to  
ensure quality and  
validity*

Do you have any questions you may like to ask at this point?

**Allow time to ask questions**

Do you have the response card that was mailed with the  
preliminary notification letter in front of you?

*Yes, begin  
No, email, describe  
or fax new response  
card*

Okay then, let's begin the survey

**Section A – Establishing the context for this study**

The following questions relate to your organisation. They aim to classify your organisation’s position in the industry and employee selection preferences.

A1

Would you classify your organisation as a:

Ship Operator

Ship Manager

Maritime Association

Other .....

01

02

03

04

A2

Does your organisation employ seafarers?

Yes

No

01

02

Go to next question

Go to Section B

A3

Does your organisation prefer to employ Australian certified officers

Yes

No

Don't Know

01

02

03

A4

Does your organisation prefer to employ Australian certified ratings

Yes

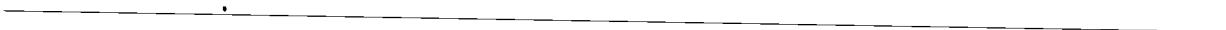
No

Don't Know

01

02

03



## Section B – The Maritime Industry

The following questions discuss the various **industry wide** conditions and factors impacting on an organisation's ability to recruit and retain seafarers. Additionally, they aim to gather opinions about various aspects of the maritime industry.

The following two questions are linked, please answer Yes or No for the following two questions.

B1 Do you believe there is a shortage of officers in the Australian maritime industry?

Yes	01
No	02
Don't know	03

B2 Do you believe there is a shortage of ratings in the Australian maritime industry?

Yes	01
No	02
Don't know	03

B3 Why do you believe there is/isn't a shortage of officers or ratings?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Is response go  
to B4

Isn't response  
go to B5

B4 What effect has the skills shortage had on your organisation, if any?

.....

.....

.....

.....



The next group of questions requires you to use the response card.

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
B5	The seafarer skills shortage is an issue the whole industry should be concerned about	5	4	3	2	1	0
B6	To satisfy its own needs the Australian maritime industry needs to increase the recruitment of Australian seafarers	5	4	3	2	1	0
B7	The use of mixed (nationality) crews could provide a solution to the shortage of Australian seafarers	5	4	3	2	1	0
B8	Greater public awareness of the maritime industry is required to increase applicant numbers	5	4	3	2	1	0
B9	The maritime industry has an image as a poor choice for employment	5	4	3	2	1	0
B10	Working in a potentially dangerous environment reduces the maritime industry's ability to retain employees	5	4	3	2	1	0
B11	The positive aspects of seafaring careers are not well known to prospective recruits	5	4	3	2	1	0

*Maritime Associations  
go to Section H*

*Ship managers and  
operators go to  
Section C*

## Section C – Strategy

Continuing with the response card, we now change our focus to questions about the strategic importance of your organisation's employees.

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
C1	All our seafarers are aware of the organisation's mission, vision, goals and values	5	4	3	2	1	0
C2	Attracting the best available recruits is one of our organisation's strategic goals	5	4	3	2	1	0
C3	Our organisation collects feedback from seafarers to improve the operational activities of the organisation	5	4	3	2	1	0
C4	How does your organisation encourage feedback from seafarers?						
	.....						
	.....						
	.....						
	.....						
C5	What are the various communication channels available for seafarers in your organisation?						
	.....						
	.....						
	.....						
	.....						

## Section D – Image and Recruiting

Earlier we were discussing the image of the maritime industry as a whole. Now we are focusing on your organisation's image as presented to potential new recruits and current employees. Please use the response card to answer these questions.

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
D1	To increase exposure the organisation uses marketing techniques as a means of attracting more seafarers	5	4	3	2	1	0
D2	A negative incident in the industry impacts on the attractiveness of our organisation as a potential employer	5	4	3	2	1	0
D3	Seafarers are attracted to our organisation because we have a reputation of being a good employer	5	4	3	2	1	0
D4	Career paths for seafarers are provided to attract new recruits	5	4	3	2	1	0
D5	The image of our organisation as an employer needs improving to attract more seafarers	5	4	3	2	1	0
D6	The job expectations of new recruits are different from the reality of the job	5	4	3	2	1	0
D7	New seafarer recruit numbers are low	5	4	3	2	1	0
D8	Our recruitment process has been designed to select applicants which are most suitable to be employed as seafarers	5	4	3	2	1	0
D9	When recruiting seafarers we select those whom we believe will remain in the position for the long term	5	4	3	2	1	0
D10	The remuneration packages of seafarers are attractive to potential employees	5	4	3	2	1	0

The following questions require short answers about how your organisation attracts new employees

D11 How do you think **potential** seafarers view the industry as a preferred employer?

.....

.....

.....

.....

D12 How do you think **current** seafarers view the industry as a preferred employer?

.....

.....

.....

.....

D13 Could you please explain why your organisation's image in relation to attracting seafarers may/may not need improving?

.....

.....

.....

.....

D14 Could you please explain what marketing practices are used to attract potential new recruits?

.....

.....

.....

**D15** Is there any evidence to suggest whether these marketing efforts have been successful?

.....

.....

.....

.....

**D16** Are there any additional activities you would like your organisation to adopt to attract more applicants?

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Section E – Retention

Only a few sections to go, we have nearly finished. The next set of questions relate to the conditions of employment for seafarers at your organisation. Please use your response card.

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA																					
E1	Seafarers in our organisation are satisfied with their employment conditions	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E2	Our organisation uses remuneration as a competitive tool to retain our seafarers	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E3	Working conditions onboard our vessels are improved to attract seafarers away from our competition	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E4	Conditions onboard Australian vessels are of a high international standard	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E5	Career prospects are provided to retain seafarers in our organisation	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E6	Our organisation employs previously experienced seafarers in our land based positions	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E7	Seafarers are provided with access to facilities for personal ship-shore communication	5	4	3	2	1	0																					
E8	What facilities are provided for shore contact?	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mail</td> <td></td> <td>01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Telephone</td> <td></td> <td>02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Internet</td> <td></td> <td>03</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e-mail</td> <td></td> <td>04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fax</td> <td></td> <td>05</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td></td> <td>06</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Mail		01	Telephone		02	Internet		03	e-mail		04	Fax		05	Other		06			
Mail		01																										
Telephone		02																										
Internet		03																										
e-mail		04																										
Fax		05																										
Other		06																										
E9	How long are the sea-going periods of your ratings at any one time?	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>1-4 weeks</td> <td></td> <td>01</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5-6 weeks</td> <td></td> <td>02</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7-8 weeks</td> <td></td> <td>03</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9-10 weeks</td> <td></td> <td>04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 weeks to 3 months</td> <td></td> <td>05</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 months to 6 months</td> <td></td> <td>06</td> </tr> <tr> <td>More than 6 months</td> <td></td> <td>07</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						1-4 weeks		01	5-6 weeks		02	7-8 weeks		03	9-10 weeks		04	11 weeks to 3 months		05	4 months to 6 months		06	More than 6 months		07
1-4 weeks		01																										
5-6 weeks		02																										
7-8 weeks		03																										
9-10 weeks		04																										
11 weeks to 3 months		05																										
4 months to 6 months		06																										
More than 6 months		07																										

E10 How long are the sea-going periods of your officers at any one time?

1-4 weeks		01
5-6 weeks		02
7-8 weeks		03
9-10 weeks		04
11 weeks to 3 months		05
4 months to 6 months		06
More than 6 months		07

E11 Do you believe these periods are similar in other organisations in your industry?

.....

.....

.....

E12 How long are the shore breaks of your ratings?

1-4 weeks		01
5-6 weeks		02
7-8 weeks		03
9-10 weeks		04
11 weeks to 3 months		05
4 months to 6 months		06
More than 6 months		07

E13 How long are the shore breaks of your officers?

1-4 weeks		01
5-6 weeks		02
7-8 weeks		03
9-10 weeks		04
11 weeks to 3 months		05
4 months to 6 months		06
More than 6 months		07

E14 Do you believe these shore breaks are similar to those provided by other organisations in your industry?

.....

.....

.....

E15 I would just like to talk now about your seafarers' job satisfaction. Do you think there are improvements that you could make to increase their job satisfaction?

Yes
No
Don't know

01 Go to next question  
02 Go to E17  
03 Go to E17

E16 Could you please further explain what you could do to increase seafarer job satisfaction?

.....

.....

.....

.....

E17 How do you assess seafarer's job satisfaction?

.....

.....

.....

.....



Section F – Training and development

Now I would like to discuss the opportunities for training and development provided by your organisation.

Please use the response card to answer the first group of questions.

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
F1	Our seafarers are provided with opportunities to <b>acquire</b> new skills	5	4	3	2	1	0
F2	Our seafarers are provided with opportunities to <b>develop</b> their skills	5	4	3	2	1	0
F3	Supporting employees with training and development is important for seafarer retention	5	4	3	2	1	0
F4	Ratings are encouraged to qualify as officers	5	4	3	2	1	0
F5	Our organisation has developed succession plans onboard our vessels	5	4	3	2	1	0
F6	Our organisation has developed succession plans in the organisation's land based operations	5	4	3	2	1	0
F7	Experienced seafarers are valuable assets who should be employed in the industry's land based operations	5	4	3	2	1	0
F8	Our organisation offers career paths for seafarers to follow	5	4	3	2	1	0

Responses 4 or more answer  
next question

Responses 0-3  
go to Section G

F9    Could you please explain the types of career paths your organisation offers for seafarers?

.....

.....

.....

## Section G – Leadership and culture

This is the last section requiring the response card and it asks questions about the culture and leadership style of the organisation.

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
G1	Performance management is used to improve seafarer job satisfaction	5	4	3	2	1	0
G2	The organisation aims to provide employee satisfaction while achieving organisational goals	5	4	3	2	1	0
G3	The impacts on seafarers are considered when making organisational decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
G4	Financial considerations are more important than employee considerations when making major organisational decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0

That is the last of the questions using the response card

G5 Are you familiar with the term 'Employer of Choice'?

Yes	01
No	02
Don't know	03

*Go to G6*

*Go to Section H*

*Go to Section H*

G6 Do you believe you are an employer of choice?

Yes	01
No	02
Don't know	03

G7 Could you please further explain why/ why you may not be an employer of choice?

.....

.....

.....

**G8    What would you like to be able to do to improve your image as an employer of choice?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**G9    Is being an employer of choice important in the maritime industry?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Section H – Respondent Information

We have now reached the final section of this survey, thank you for your patience. Please answer the following questions, which are designed to develop a profile of the respondents participating in this survey.

H1 Have you had seafaring experience?

Yes	01
No	02

*Next question*

*Go to H5*

H2 Are you still active as a seafarer?

Yes	01
No	02

*Next question*

*Next question*

H3 How long have/did you work(ed) as a seafarer?

Less than 12 months  
1-2 years  
3-5 years  
6-10 years  
11-15 years  
More than 15 years

	01
	02
	03
	04
	05
	06

H4 (If applicable) How long has it been since you stopped working as a seafarer?

Less than 12 months  
1-2 years  
3-5 years  
6-10 years  
11-15 years  
More than 15 years

	01
	02
	03
	04
	05
	06

H5 How long have you been in your current position?

Less than 12 months  
1-2 years  
3-5 years  
6-10 years  
11-15 years  
More than 15 years

	01
	02
	03
	04
	05
	06

H6 How long have you worked in your current organisation?

Less than 12 months  
1-2 years  
3-5 years  
6-10 years  
11-15 years  
More than 15 years

	01
	02
	03
	04
	05
	06

H7    Thank you for your participation in  
this survey. Would you like a copy  
of this study?

Yes	01
No	02

Thank you again for your valuable time.

***APPENDIX B: PRE-NOTIFICATION LETTER***



Reference.

<Date>

<Title> <Christian name> <Surname>

<Position>

<Street>

<Suburb>

<State> <Postcode>

Dear <Title><Surname>,

**Re: Study on the Recruitment and Retention of Australian Seafarers**

The Australian Maritime College is conducting a study to determine what shipping companies can do to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers. At a time where the skills shortage is affecting many industries and businesses, it seems appropriate to undertake a study on the impact this is having on the shipping industry. With automation still in the distant future, the shipping industry relies on the knowledge and expertise of its seafarers for the safe navigation of vessels to satisfy the global demand for goods.

You were selected to participate in this survey because of your knowledge and experience of working closely with seafarers in the Australian shipping industry. Your contribution will greatly enhance the quality of the study given your understanding of the current recruitment and retention practices in the industry.

The aims of the survey are to determine what various organisations are doing to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers, and specifically to assess whether the application of employer of choice practices could increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers. The valuable information you contribute to this study will add to its validity and may be useful in informing organisations of the importance of taking a 'softer' approach when managing their seafaring human resources.

The survey will be administered through a short telephone interview over the next two weeks at a time most convenient to you. Attached is a response card that will be used during the survey to measure your opinion on various issues, could you please keep this nearby. Your identity and all information obtained will be kept confidential. If you have any questions regarding any aspects of the study, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0418 177 368 or [natalie\\_kokoszko@yahoo.com.au](mailto:natalie_kokoszko@yahoo.com.au). Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Kokoszko  
Research Associate

Dr Stephen Cahoon  
Research Co-ordinator

***APPENDIX C: RESPONSE CARD***



**Response Card A**

Please select the response that best reflects your opinion on the statement presented by the interviewer

**There is no right or wrong answer, please select the most honest response**

**Strongly  
Agree**

**Agree**

**Unsure**

**Disagree**

**Strongly  
Disagree**

**Study on the Recruitment and Retention  
of Australian Seafarers**

***APPENDIX D: APPOINTMENT REQUEST FORM***

<div>Statement A</div> <div>Yes (now)</div>	<p>Thank you for agreeing to participate.</p> <p>Just a few questions before we begin.</p> <p>Could you please confirm the title of your position?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Is now a convenient time for you to participate, or would you like me to call you back at a more convenient time?</p>	<p>Yes – Start Survey</p> <p>Call back – Go to Statement B</p>
<div>Statement B</div> <div>Appointment</div>	<p>When would be a more convenient time for me to contact you?</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Time: _____</p> <p>Phone no.: _____</p> <p>Thank you for your time, I will contact you on &lt;date, time of new appointment&gt;</p> <p>Have a nice day</p>	
<div>Statement C</div> <div>No</div>	<p>Would you be able to recommend the contact details of a more suitable person</p>	<p>Yes –</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Position: _____</p> <p>Phone no.: _____</p> <p>Thank you for your time</p> <p>No – Thank you for your time</p>

***APPENDIX E: PRE-TESTING LETTER***



Reference:

<Date>

<Title> <Christian name> <Surname>

<Position>

<Street>

<Suburb>

<State> <Postcode>

Dear <Title><Surname>,

**Re: Survey Pre-test of a Study on the Recruitment and Retention of Australian Seafarers**

Thank you for taking the time to pre-test the following documents which will be used in a telephone interview to human resource managers of ship operators, ship managers and various maritime organisation in Australia. The aims of the survey are to determine what these organisations are doing to increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers, and specifically to assess whether the application of employer of choice theory could increase the recruitment and retention of Australian seafarers.

The purpose of pre-testing will determine whether the questions are understandable, relevant to the current study and whether instructions are clear to the respondent. Your honest feedback will assist in improving the survey before it is administered. Attached is a list of questions that cover the main concerns about the design of the survey instrument.

It would be appreciated if you could complete the survey by Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2006 if possible. Once complete please leave them in Dr. Stephen Cahoon's pigeonhole in the submissions office. If you have any questions regarding any aspects of the study, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0418 177 368 or [natalie\\_kokoszko@yahoo.com.au](mailto:natalie_kokoszko@yahoo.com.au). Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Kokoszko  
Research Associate

Dr Stephen Cahoon  
Research Co-ordinator

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the pre-testing of this survey. When reading through the survey please consider the following issues.

When answering the questions did you find the questions:

- Easy to understand?
- Relevant to the study?
- Difficult to answer?
- To be leading or biased in any way?

When completing the questionnaire

- Did the questions have a logical flow?
- Was the routing easy to follow?
- Was there enough spacing for answers?
- Did you come across any spelling or grammatical errors?
- Was the language appropriate for the selected sample?
- Was the introduction to the study clear as to the purpose of the study?
- Were the instructions clear and easy to understand?
- Did you think some questions were difficult to answer?
- How long did the questionnaire take to complete?
- Did you think the survey was too long?
- Were there any areas you considered irrelevant?
- Did you find any other concerns you may like to comment on?

***APPENDIX F: RESULTS***

SECTION A - Establishing the context for this study

Code no.	Survey Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4
		Fixed Choice	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
1	Participant 01	Ship operator	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Participant 02	Ship operator	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Participant 03	Ship op and manager	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Participant 04	Ship operator	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Participant 05	Maritime association	No		
6	Participant 06	Maritime association	No		
7	Participant 07	Ship manager	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Participant 08	Ship operator	Yes	Yes	Yes
9	Participant 09	Ship operator	Yes	Yes	Yes
10	Participant 10	Ship operator	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	Participant 11	Maritime association	No		
	Yes		8	8	8
	No		3		
	Yes %		72.72%	100%	100%
	No %		27.27%	0%	0%
	Likert Scale				
	Strongly agree				
	Agree				
	Unsure				
	Disagree				
	Strongly disagree				
	Not applicable				
	Strongly agree %				
	Agree %				
	Unsure %				
	Disagree %				
	Strongly disagree %				
	Not applicable %				
	Total	11	11	8	8
	Percentage	84.61%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean				
	Mode				
	Median				
	Standard Deviation				
	Range				



# SECTION B - The Maritime Industry

Code no.	Survey Participant	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11
		Yes/No	Yes/No	Qualitative	Qualitative	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert
1	Participant 01	Yes	Yes			4	4	3	4	4	2	4
2	Participant 02	Yes	Yes			4	3	4	2	2	1	4
3	Participant 03	Yes	Yes			4	4	2	3	2	2	2
4	Participant 04	Yes	Yes			4	4	4	5	4	2	5
5	Participant 05	Yes	No			5	4	5	5	2	2	4
6	Participant 06	Yes	Yes			5	4	3	5	4	2	4
7	Participant 07	Yes	Yes			5	4	2	2	1	2	2
8	Participant 08	Yes	Yes			4	4	4	3	1	2	3
9	Participant 09	Yes	Yes			5	4	4	4	2	3	3
10	Participant 10	Yes	No			5	4	4	5	2	2	3
11	Participant 11	Yes	Yes			5	5	2	5	4	2	5
	Yes	11	9									
	No		2									
	Yes %	100%	81.81%									
	No %		18.18%									
	Likert Scale											
	Strongly agree					6	1	1	5			2
	Agree					5	9	5	2	4		4
	Unsure						1	2	2		1	3
	Disagree							3	2	5	9	2
	Strongly disagree									2	1	
	Not applicable											
	Strongly agree %					54.54%	9.09%	9.09%	45.45%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%
	Agree %					45.45%	81.81%	45.45%	18.18%	36.36%	0.00%	36.36%
	Unsure %					0.00%	9.09%	18.18%	18.18%	0.00%	9.09%	27.27%
	Disagree %					0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	18.18%	45.45%	81.81%	18.18%
	Strongly disagree %					0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	18.18%	9.09%	0.00%
	Not applicable %											
	Total	11	11			11	11	11	11	11	11	11
	Percentage	100%	100%			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean					4.55	4.00	3.38	3.91	2.55	2.00	3.55
	Mode					5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	4.00
	Median					5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	4.00
	Standard Deviation					0.52	0.45	1.03	1.22	1.21	0.45	1.04
	Range					4 to 5	3 to 5	2 to 5	2 to 5	1 to 4	3 to 1	2 to 5

SECTION C - Strategy

Code no.	Survey Participant	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
		Likert	Likert	Likert	Qualitative	Qualitative
1	Participant 01	4	4	4		
2	Participant 02	3	4	4		
3	Participant 03	2	5	4		
4	Participant 04	4	4	4		
5	Participant 05					
6	Participant 06					
7	Participant 07	4	4	4		
8	Participant 08	4	5	4		
9	Participant 09	4	4	4		
10	Participant 10	2	4	4		
11	Participant 11					
	Yes					
	No					
	Yes %					
	No %					
	Likert Scale					
	Stongly agree		2			
	Agree	5	6	8		
	Unsure	1				
	Disagree	2				
	Stongly disagree					
	Not applicable					
	Strongly agree %	0.00%	25.00%	0.00%		
	Agree %	62.50%	75.00%	100%		
	Unsure %	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%		
	Disagree %	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%		
	Stongly disagree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		
	Not applicable %					
	Total	8	8	8		
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%		
	Mean	3.38	4.25	4.00		
	Mode	4.00	4.00	4.00		
	Median	4.00	4.00	4.00		
	Standard Deviation	0.92	0.46	0.00		
	Range	2 to 4	4 to 5	4		

## SECTION D - Image and Recruitment

Code no.	Survey Participant	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
		Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert
1	Participant 01	4	3	4	4	2	2	4
2	Participant 02	2	4	4	4	2	4	2
3	Participant 03	3	2	4	4	2	4	3
4	Participant 04	4	2	5	4	2	2	4
5	Participant 05							
6	Participant 06							
7	Participant 07	4	4	5	4	1	2	1
8	Participant 08	4	2	4	4	1	2	3
9	Participant 09	2	2	4	5	3	2	3
10	Participant 10	3	4	4	4	2	4	2
11	Participant 11							
	Yes							
	No							
	Yes %							
	No %							
	Likert Scale							
	Strongly agree			2	1			
	Agree	4	3	6	7		3	2
	Unsure	2	1			1		3
	Disagree	2	4			5	5	2
	Strongly disagree					2		1
	Not applicable							
	Strongly agree %	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	Agree %	50.00%	37.50%	75.00%	87.50%	0.00%	37.50%	25.00%
	Unsure %	25.00%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	37.50%
	Disagree %	25.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	62.50%	62.50%	25.00%
	Strongly disagree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	0.00%	12.50%
	Not applicable %							
	Total	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Mean	3.25	2.88	4.25	4.13	1.88	2.75	2.75
	Mode	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
	Median	3.50	2.50	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
	Standard Deviation	0.89	0.99	0.46	0.35	0.64	1.04	1.04
	Range	2 to 4	2 to 4	4 to 5	4 to 5	1 to 3	2 to 4	1 to 4

SECTION D - Image and Recruitment continued

D8	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	D14	D15	D16
Likert	Likert	Likert	Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative
4	4	4						
4	4	4						
4	4	4						
4	4	4						
4	4	5						
4	4	4						
4	4	4						
4	4	4						
8	8	1 7						
0.00%	0.00%	12.50%						
100%	100%	87.50%						
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%						
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%						
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%						
8	8	8						
100%	100%	100%						
4.00	4.00	4.13						
4.00	4.00	4.00						
4.00	4.00	4.00						
0.00	0.00	0.35						
4	4	4 to 5						

# SECTION E - Retention

Code no.	Survey Participant	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
		Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert
1	Participant 01	3	4	4	4	4	4
2	Participant 02	3	4	4	5	2	4
3	Participant 03	3	2	3	4	4	4
4	Participant 04	4	2	2	4	4	4
5	Participant 05						
6	Participant 06						
7	Participant 07	4	4	4	4	5	5
8	Participant 08	4	4	4	4	2	4
9	Participant 09	4	4	4	5	4	4
10	Participant 10	2	4	4	3	2	4
11	Participant 11						
	Yes						
	No						
	Yes %						
	No %						
	Likert Scale						
	Strongly agree				2	1	1
	Agree	4	6	6	5	4	7
	Unsure	3		1	1		
	Disagree	1	2	1		3	
	Strongly disagree						
	Not applicable						
	Strongly agree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	12.50%
	Agree %	50.00%	75.00%	75.00%	82.50%	50.00%	87.50%
	Unsure %	37.50%	0.00%	12.50%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%
	Disagree %	12.50%	25.00%	12.50%	0.00%	37.50%	0.00%
	Strongly disagree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	Not applicable %						
	Total	8	8	8	8	0	0
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%	100%	0.00%	0.00%
	Mean	3.38	3.50	3.63	4.13	3.38	4.13
	Mode	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
	Median	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
	Standard Deviation	0.74	0.93	0.74	0.64	1.19	0.35
	Range	2 to 4	2 to 4	2 to 4	3 to 5	2 to 5	4 to 5

SECTION E - Retention coninued

E7					E8						
Available communication methods					Ratings periods at sea						
Mail	Internet	e-mail	Fax	Other	1-4 weeks	5-6 weeks	7-8 weeks	9-10 weeks	11 wks to 3 mths	mths to 6 mth	< 6 months
1		1	1		1			1			
1		1	1				1				
		1									
1		1	1			1					
1		1	1			1					
		1	1		1						
4	0	8	5	0	3	3	1	1	0	0	0
23.52%	0.00%	47.05%	29.41%	0.00%	37.50%	37.50%	12.50%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

SECTION E - Retention coninued

E9							E10	E11						
Officers periods at sea							Qualitative	Ratings shore based periods						
1-4 weeks	5-6 weeks	7-8 weeks	9-10 weeks	11 wks to 3 mth	mths to 6 mth	< 6 months		1-4 weeks	5-6 weeks	7-8 weeks	9-10 weeks	11 wks to 3 mth	mths to 6 mth	< 6 months
1 1		1	1					1 1		1	1			
	1 1 1								1 1 1					
1								1						
3 37.50%	3 37.50%	1 12.50%	1 12.50%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%		3 37.50%	3 37.50%	1 12.50%	1 12.50%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%

SECTION E - Retention coninued

E12							E13	E14	E15	E16
Officer shore based periods										
1-4 weeks	5-8 weeks	7-8 weeks	9-10 weeks	1 wks to 3 mth	mlths to 6 mth	< 6 months	Qualitative	Yes/No	Qualitative	Qualitative
1 1		1 1						Yes Yes Yes Yes		
	1 1 1							No No No Yes		
1										
								5 3		
								62.50% 37.50%		
3 37.50%	3 37.50%	2 25.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%		8 100%		



## SECTION F - Training and Development

Code no.	Survey Participant	F1 Likert	F2 Likert	F3 Likert	F4 Likert	F5 Likert	F6 Likert	F7 Likert	F8 Likert	F9 Qualitative
1	Participant 01	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
2	Participant 02	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	
3	Participant 03	3	3	5	4	4	3	5	4	
4	Participant 04	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
5	Participant 05									
6	Participant 06									
7	Participant 07	5	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	
8	Participant 08	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	
9	Participant 09	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	
10	Participant 10	5	5	5	5	2	2	4	4	
11	Participant 11									
	Yes									
	No									
	Yes %									
	No %									
	Likert Scale									
	Strongly agree	2	1	2	1			1	8	
	Agree	4	6	5	6	5	3	7		
	Unsure	2	1	1	1	1	3			
	Disagree					2	2			
	Strongly disagree									
	Not applicable									
	Strongly agree %	25.00%	12.50%	25.00%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	
	Agree %	50.00%	75.00%	62.50%	75.00%	62.50%	37.50%	87.50%	100%	
	Unsure %	25.00%	12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	37.50%	0.00%	0.00%	
	Disagree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
	Strongly disagree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
	Not applicable %									
	Total	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Mean	4.00	4.00	4.13	4.00	3.38	3.13	4.13	4.00	
	Mode	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	
	Median	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	
	Standard Deviation	0.76	0.53	0.64	0.53	0.92	0.83	0.35	0.00	
	Range	3 to 5	3 to 5	3 to 5	3 to 5	2 to 4	2 to 4	4 to 5	5	

# SECTION G - Leadership and Culture

Code no.	Survey Participant	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	G7	G8	G9
		Likert	Likert	Likert	Likert	Yes/No	Yes/No	Qualitative	Qualitative	Qualitative
1	Participant 01	4	4	4	4	No				
2	Participant 02	2	4	4	2	No				
3	Participant 03	3	4	2	3	Yes	Yes			
4	Participant 04	4	4	4	4	Yes	Yes			
5	Participant 05									
6	Participant 06									
7	Participant 07	4	4	4	3	Yes	Yes			
8	Participant 08	4	4	4	2	No				
9	Participant 09	4	4	4	3	No				
10	Participant 10	4	4	2	4	Yes	Yes			
11	Participant 11									
	Yes					4	4			
	No					4				
	Yes %					50.00%	100%			
	No %					50.00%				
	Likert Scale									
	Strongly agree									
	Agree	6	8	6	3					
	Unsure	1			3					
	Disagree	1		2	2					
	Strongly disagree									
	Not applicable									
	Strongly agree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%					
	Agree %	75.00%	100%	75.00%	37.50%					
	Unsure %	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%					
	Disagree %	12.50%	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%					
	Strongly disagree %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%					
	Not applicable %									
	Total	8	8	8	8	8	4			
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			
	Mean	3.625	4	3.5	3.125					
	Mode	4	4	4	4					
	Median	4	4	4	3					
	Standard Deviation	0.7440	0.0000	0.9258	0.8345					
	Range	2 to 4	4	2 to 4	2 to 4					

## SECTION H - Respondent Information

Code no.	Survey Participant	H1	H2	H3					
				< 12 months	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	> 15 years
1	Participant 01	Yes	No						1
2	Participant 02	Yes	No						1
3	Participant 03	Yes	Yes						1
4	Participant 04	Yes	No						1
5	Participant 05	No							
6	Participant 06	No							
7	Participant 07	Yes	No	1					
8	Participant 08	No							
9	Participant 09	No							
10	Participant 10	No							
11	Participant 11	Yes	No			1			
	Yes	6	1						
	No	5	5						
	Yes %	54.54%	16.66%						
	No %	45.45%	83.33%						
	Likert Scale								
	Strongly agree								
	Agree								
	Unsure								
	Disagree								
	Strongly disagree								
	Not applicable								
	Strongly agree %								
	Agree %								
	Unsure %								
	Disagree %								
	Strongly disagree %								
	Not applicable %								
	Total	11	6	1	0	1	0	0.00%	4
	Percentage	100%	54.54%	16.66%	0.00%	16.66%	0.00%	0.00%	66.66%
	Mean								
	Mode								
	Median								
	Standard Deviation								
	Range								

H4						H5					
< 12 months	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	> 15 years	< 12 months	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	> 15 years
			1	1	1		1	1	1	1	
0	0	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	4	1	0
0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	20.00%	20.00%	40.00%	9.09%	27.27%	18.18%	36.36%	9.09%	0.00%

H6						H7
< 12 months	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	> 15 years	
			1		1	Yes
			1			Yes
		1				Yes
	1					Yes
				1		Yes
	1				1	No
				1		Yes
	1					No
		1				No
						Yes
						8
						3
						72.72%
						27.27%
0	3	2	2	2	2	11
0.00%	27.27%	18.18%	18.18%	18.18%	18.18%	100%