

Funding for cadets boosted to £43 million pounds over next two years to help build the maritime sector

Eligible seafarers will now get half of their training paid – providing a real investment in the future of maritime and securing future growth.

Previously, the subsidy was 30% but increases to 50% for all new and existing tonnage tax groups and Support for Maritime Training (SMarT) funding. This now means that maritime companies can take advantage of an extra £13m of funding to take on and train up cadets.

The DfT and HMT have increased the subsidy on training costs for cadets and ratings – which companies can obtain as part of their tonnage tax – to 50% from the current level of 30% for all new and existing tonnage tax groups and SMarT funded seafarers.

The new measures complement UK Government's commitment to protecting and supporting seafarers as announced in the seafarer protections nine-point plan, which commits to improving the longer-term working conditions of seafarers as part of a wider vision to boost seafarer protections and welfare. This includes the Seafarers' Wages Bill which will ensure that seafarers working on vessels that regularly use UK ports are paid at least an equivalent rate to the National Minimum Wage while in the UK's territorial waters.

This increase in training subsidies for cadets and ratings does this and emphasises UK Government's drive to grow and support the UK's highly skilled seafarer population to meet UK and global needs.

The extra money means there will be up for £20 million available this year increasing to £23 million next.

Funding for eligible seafarers is available this year and will be locked in until at least September 2024 providing an incentive and financial security for those looking to take up a career in maritime.

The increased subsidy rate will be available to any seafarer who meets the requirements and who is studying at a Maritime and Coastguard Agency approved college for an academic qualification that leads to the issue of an UK Unlimited Certificate of Competency.

Secretary of State Grant Shapps said:

Our incredible maritime sector is built by the thousands of workers who, every day, keep our shelves stacked and are responsible for 95% of all the UK's freight.

This funding will be critical to helping people upskill, take on a career in the sector, and help build a strong maritime sector for years to come.

Damien Oliver Commercial, Programmes & Maritime Business Development Director said:

This is an important milestone for investing in the future of maritime and our seafarers. These changes now mean that more funding is available to support seafarers with their training. We are also looking at additional support for those who have already attained a qualification so they can move onto the next one supported by further funding. We will do all we can to encourage and support people into this industry which does so much to support our every day life in the UK.

These changes will cover an interim period from April 2022 to September 2024. A new UK training system is then scheduled to be implemented, as recommended by the 2020 Maritime Skills Commission Report.