Exposing fresh grads to maritime industry

Attachment plan to lend experience while firms benefit from fresh blood

BY ALVIN FOO

A SCHEME allowing fresh graduates to work in maritime companies while earning an allowance will soon be launched – the latest addition to a list of schemes to boost the industry’s talent pool.

The programme was announced by Transport Minister Raymond Lim last night during the Singapore International Maritime Awards Ceremony at the Suntec convention centre.

Mr Lim, who is also the Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, said the programme is meant to give newly minted graduates the chance to work in the maritime industry.

“Even during this period of economic downturn, it is important that the industry continues to be infused with new blood who can be developed to be its future leaders,” he said.

The programme will give fresh graduates opportunities to be attached to maritime companies and earn a monthly allowance, and provide participating maritime companies with “an extra hand” at the same time.

Mr Lim added: “What we expect from the companies is that they ensure the graduates attached to them gain useful learning and work experience. They can go on to employ the graduates later if they are found suitable.”

Similar programmes for graduates involving other sectors have also been announced in recent months.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore announced a $15 million scheme last month to encourage banks and other financial institutions to take on new graduates.

Details of the maritime scheme, which will be administered by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), are expected to be finalised by next month.

Industry leaders have welcomed the programme. “It ensures that the industry will continue to have a steady pool of talent,” said Singapore Maritime Foundation chairman S. S. Teo.

“This close partnership between the Government and maritime businesses is especially relevant during the current economic climate.”

Other MPA-administered initiatives to enhance talent include a programme which helps firms defray costs of sending promising local employees for overseas attachments to gain international experience, and a postgraduate scholarship scheme.

Mr Lim also said the Government remained committed to Singapore’s growth as a maritime centre even during “these tough times”.

The local industry is still attracting new entrants. These include Rolls-Royce’s global headquarters for marine business and British-based maritime law firm Hill Dickinson.

“These companies have assessed that Singapore is where they must be, notwithstanding the shipping downturn,” added Mr Lim.

Last night, the Minister presented awards to six companies and one individual in recognition of their significant contributions to Singapore’s development as a major global hub port and international maritime centre.

Mr Lim says the Government is committed to Singapore’s growth as a maritime hub. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHEIN

2009 Maritime Awards winners

- Bunker Award: Global Energy
  Trading
- Excellence in Training Development Award: Nanyang Technological
  University
- Singapore Registry of Ships Ship
  Owner of the Year Award: Ocean
  Tankers
- Maritime Service Provider Award: Standard Asia
- Offshore and Marine Engineering
  Award: Keppel Offshore & Marine
- International Maritime Centre
  (Corporate) Award: BW Group
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