

MONACO MANAGEMENT MEETING

Monday 21st April 2008

THE CREW DEBATE: How the crew want to see the market change

Nick Simmons
Katrina Arens YCO
Frank Stockwell

**Chairman - Martin Redmayne
Tork Buckley**

Good afternoon. Session 2. You've had a restful lunch, cleared your head. This whole session is an interesting session, I think, because it's never really been done before, where the crew will actually sit on a panel and talk to the industry. So I'm hoping we actually get some interesting comment out of them, and feedback from the audience. We have a lot of feedback on a web basis and on a face to face basis with crew all the time about what issues they have, either that on this yacht I never got paid, I haven't got a contract, what are my repatriation rights, etc etc. But obviously it's deeper than that, there's a lot more issues at stake.

The panel is made of up Frank Stockwell, Katrina Arens and Nick Simmons. And they're all going to share their views and their thoughts on how the market should change from the crew's perspective. There's a few pointers up there of subjects that are worth discussing. We'll start off with ladies first, I think. Katrina?

Tork

Actually just before you start, we're also looking at recruitment, training and placement. It's a very broad subject - it also includes relationships not just with crew agents and managers, it's also owners. It's the whole gamut.

Katrina Arens YCO

So good afternoon. I presently work for YCO in their new build project management side of things. But prior to that, about a year ago, I was working on boats. I worked in the industry for 6-7 years, joined in the Caribbean, flew myself out there as a year out so I had a great first year working on a little 60 foot sailing boat which was my choice because I actually wanted to go sailing in the sea the Caribbean. And then - you get offered your next job. And I joined Hyperion. So I was on there for a year as second stewardess, I went from the smallest boat in the harbour to the largest sailboat in the harbour. And that's when you start treating it as a career. And there's no reason why you can't treat it as career because there are several stages you can go through, so during my 6-7 years I cooked, and then went back into stewardessing and my most recent project was as chief stewardess on board the Maltese Falcon. So I saw the boat through the last stages of the build and did the first couple of very busy seasons which is when I met these guys. So I spent quite a lot of time with them sort of talking and discussing the whole issue of training. And especially from the interior side of things. There isn't a whole heap of training or courses that you can send yourself on in order to prove that you are a

skilled individual. And the same when you're recruiting - I put together the interior team and it's really hard to know whether these girls you've never met before have the right skills that you want. And as you know, or may not know, but when you work on a boat you're working and living with these people so putting together the right team makes the boat either run effectively or it can be a nightmare from hell. So that's me, basically.

Tork

Admirably honest, I'd say.

Martin

Thank you Katrina. Frank?

Frank Stockwell

I'm an engineer, been in the business since the late 80s. And been on a lot of boats and seen a lot of different crew and actually had the opportunity to work with Rodney Hatch once. And for training of my seconds and thirds, I basically tell them as Rodney does his people, when you come in, I don't expect you to stay with me for longer than it takes you to move on to your next gig. If you're a Y3, I expect you to pull up to Y2 and then go and be chief engineer somewhere else. And I usually tell my people that I don't want them to stay too long, get too comfortable, move forward in the industry and if they don't then they kind of need to be moved on so they will be encouraged to move forward. I've got a few issues with the way training goes in the business and later on we'll get into that.

Nick Simmons

Nick Simmons, mate on a 65 metre. Came into the industry in 2000 from what I call a professional industry, Land Law & Surveying. Came into the yachting industry and found a very unprofessional set up. Basically I've seen a change from 2000 and it is getting more professional and I think it needs to get a lot more professional in training, in the people that we attract and generally the whole ball park.

I started off as deckhand coming from a firm of surveyors in Edinburgh, cleaning windows at 4 o'clock in the morning for someone on \$1,800, thinking what the hell have I done? But I could see the benefits of this industry and how you can actually climb the ladder and get to something that's quite substantial. And that's what I've been doing, I've been ticking the boxes with the MCA, ticking the boxes with the training and slowly but surely going through it. Now not zero to hero, not interested in that. Because it's not the professional way of doing it. And there's a lot of new crew now that I see coming and knocking on the back of the boat and saying I want to be a deckhand, and they've actually got STCW, they've been doing something before which is relevant to the job that they're wanting. Which has changed from a few years ago when Lonely Planet wrote *go to Antibes, make some easy money*. And we got a lot of rubbish down here. However, it can change - I don't know. But we're all open to changes. And from my eyes it has to get more professional.

Martin

Thank you Nick. Tork?

Tork

It has to get more professional but in every way, doesn't it? One of the great difficulties of a conference like this is that every session is related to every other. Because that's the way the industry is. And you need commitment from owners, managers, masters, heads of department, which you guys are, to make it actually fly. Do you think that the crew actually understand - I mean you clearly had a pretty clear view from your first window wash of what you saw - you saw the potential in the industry. Do you think that people coming in today are aware of that and the people not even trying to come in, but that could come in, are aware of it?

Nick

There's probably 10% that are aware of it. And these are the guys who come to the back of the boat and say I've got my training record book, I've got my STCW, I want to do this, and I want to be second officer bosun in three years' time. Yes, you can do that. There is structure for that. But then you get the backpackers coming and going - gi' us a job, mate - and you go sorry? And if someone says that to me I just don't even bother taking it any further. I just say sorry, we're fully crewed. And that's where the crew agents I think have to step in, because the crew agents are their first line of call. They go to a crew agent and they're dressed in flip flops, ripped shorts, whatever, T-shirts, and I think the crew agents have got to say smarten yourself up, we're a professional body, and then go to the backs of boats and start asking. If you want to go to the backs of boats, whatever. But just a whole smarter attitude to the industry.

Frank

I'd like to say something. You start at one end of the industry, the newcomers that are trying to break into the industry. But what I've seen in the industry over the years is the people that in the industry, that should be the management, that should be the captains, are not bringing themselves up to the level that they should be to run a 70metre, \$5million a year, something like that. And their training is lacking so consequently the training of the crew under them is lacking. I personally believe that every captain that's out there, every one of them, and everybody that's in here, should go take a course, wherever it may be, on personnel management. It's the hardest job you'll have on the boat. Driving the boat's easy, the accounts are easy, everything's easy - well it can be as hard as you want it to be - but the personnel management on the boat is the hardest thing. And that right there is important - when the leadership is failing, then these kids come into the industry and they take a look at it and say I'm out of here. They put in a year, they do their gap year, then they go back to university and you never see them again.

Tork

The interesting thing, Frank, is that there are training establishments that have put together non mandatory courses for what you might want to call continuing professional education and the uptake is absolutely next to zero.

Frank

Nothing, nothing at all. And the thing about it is, like myself, I'm holding 3 engineering tickets, unlimited, and I'm leaving tomorrow for South Shields to get my Y1 and this is

continuous training. Every time I turn around some bureaucrat signs a piece of paper and I've got to go and get another certificate and that's going to cost me money, and it's going to cost me time and I realise that in order to do my job properly I need to know this and I need to know how to tear an engine down and put it back together. And how to keep the air conditioning going, etc etc. And how to get that PVD to work. But what happens on the other end of the industry, in the management side of it, is they rock up to the zero to hero, as Nick said, and as soon as they're hero then there's nothing else anybody can teach them. And kids are coming in saying but I want to be a hero, but I don't want to be that man, so I'm out of here. And we're losing good people that way. Some of these kids that are coming into the industry that are working on the deck and would like to stay and talk to you about it and everything and say I really want to be moving forward, what do I need to do next, what do I have to do - they're just saying this is enough for me, I just can't do it. And as John was saying earlier, there needs to be enforcement, and it has to be done by the people in the industry, because there's no police force or anything, some set of rules for the way people are treated on these boats. There was a mention earlier about the colour barrier. I've seen Philipinos working for \$500 a month working beside girls who are making \$4,000 a month, doing the exact same job. One poor little girl was making \$750 a month on one boat I was on - she'd been in the business for 5 years as a stewardess. Hired through a Philipino crew agency. There is no parity in this organisation. One boat will pay a fortune, the next one will pay nothing.

Tork

Phil - I mean earlier on we were talking and you were saying that the majority of times that you've seen Philipino crew used, they were earning the same as western crew? That seems to kind of contradict that?

Phil Rose IYC/Trinity (representing PYA)

We all have different experiences of what is a very huge and diverse industry. Personally I've worked with Nepalese crew, Sri Lankan crew, Philipino crew and now I employ a mixture of all. I personally have never seen that sort of discrimination - but I know it goes on. We all know it goes on. I've never actually seen it and personally I wouldn't tolerate it.

Tork

Katrina, let me ask you something. Working in the interior, large amounts of the people that you get are untrained because the training currently doesn't exist, as you said. Generally though within the industry do you think that there is enough taking on board of newbie crew. Have you not noticed that there's a tendency that everybody wants an 18 year old deckhand with 10 years experience?

Katrina

I'm not so sure about that, having not really been around for the past year or so. Maybe Hatty who works for a crew office may be more able to talk on that subject. But with regard to experience for one, there is a case of wanting to pay for what you have, so for example if you've got 4 years in the industry and have worked your way up the crew ladder like most of us, which we'd hope you would do, if you'd basically decided to work

on boats, there is a ladder and you want to climb it. In terms of seeing newbie crew who - and I think what you're trying to say is, demanding top whack salaries and thinking -

Tork

Not at all, no. What I'm actually saying is that I've noticed in the industry that the captains, the owners and to some extent the managers, want highly experienced crew. Nobody wants a newbie. Not necessarily, but nevertheless speaking to a lot of crew - I had one particular person that was trying for 3 months to find a job. Good personality, very keen, STCW95 but it was early in the season and all the agents were saying oh I'm sorry, but you've got no experience.

Katrina

I think it's an attitude thing. When I was looking for crew for the last boat I worked on, it was really easy to get hold of the guys but really hard to find the good girls.

Tork

Why do you think that is?

Katrina

Maybe because the guys were knocking on the back of the boat, kind of scenario. And we were talking earlier about how people find jobs. And from my experience I've never actually used a crew agent to get myself a job, it's always been contacts. So obviously it depends on who your contacts are. So most of the crew that we ended up getting on the new build were all friends of friends, so you automatically checked those references because they would have been recommended to you or you know them personally. But I didn't actually know that many stewardesses at the time - well I knew quite a lot of chief stewardesses but there wasn't the same employment pool for the girls.

Nick

I could be completely wrong here, but the way I look at it is that on deck you have a career path and you can get to captain and you've got that career and you're the captain for the next X amount of years until you retire. Stewardesses that I've spoken to say well, it's only a short-term job. Being the chief stewardess is a short term job.

Tork

That's what you were saying earlier on, wasn't it Katrina?

Katrina

Yes, basically that there's an age limit in some regards - we were discussing over lunchtime that there are rotation jobs for engineers and rotation jobs for captains, which means that you can be a captain well into your 40s and for the rest of your career. But as a female, if you want a life, you know that in your early 30s or mid 30s you can't wait to put it on hold.

Tork

Would rotation for interior crew increase not only the crew pool of actual warm bodies but the crew pool of experienced people that could stay in the industry even twice as long?

Katrina

To some degree it would. But as I mentioned earlier, you can't have a family if you're still working on a boat. Unless the boat is located somewhere -

Tork

Which is not unheard of?

Katrina

Those jobs do exist but they're very few and far between.

Barbara Tambani Floating Life International SA

Actually my company manages about 13 boats, which means about 180 people and I do this job since 15 years more or less and I saw a little bit what is the change between 10 years ago and now. We have always suggested to our owners to propose a long term contract and to try to keep the same people in the same team all over the year. It came up now that they always complain about the fact that we are making them pay people all year long and in the middle of Spring time, March/April/May, people leave just for €100 more and they come up and say, "Well you are my manager, you paid these people all winter, this doesn't mean that they didn't work, of course, but they say I kept what you suggested me, I paid these people and now they leave for nothing." On the other side we have our captains, we try to always ask them to keep people updated and trained and have people grow up so that we can even move them from one boat to the other as boats are becoming more and more bigger. So we had a deckhand 10 years ago that now is the captain of a 40metre boat. And we are proud that he's still working with us, and we allowed him to do this career.

Tork

What degree of success are you having with owners in persuading them of the value of giving time off to do courses?

Barbara

Owners understand. What they complain is that - they're 'just starting this season, and I do not have my people that I paid for, paid also the training for them, and now they just leave for nothing'. And this upsets also the captains, because the captain helps them to grow, to become more and more professional and then just one month before the boat is leaving they just leave. You try to be a good manager, you try to be their correspondent person, any time they have a problem you are there, 24 hours a day. You don't suddenly tell your - you know, I have another job. But you sign a contract, so up to when, if you are not reliable, how can the industry help you to grow up. And going back to the

Philippino, the Sri Lankan, whatever, this is what owners say. I pay these people a little bit less because now I mean they are not stupid so they know very well how much they could earn in this industry, I pay them a little bit less, but what is the main difference? I do not have the problem to pay them more, is that they are more reliable. They tell me, they sign a contract and they stay on board for one year, at least I know. And going back to what you said in the morning - sorry, I came late - but the problem of the owners is that they never know in which situation they are. And people just say - it's like a game, you know - be careful I can leave tomorrow, I give you notice but I can leave tomorrow. And the captains too, they would like to give notice to people, but they don't allow you to find a new person. They just quit off in 24 hours a day even if you had paid always their salaries, if you have treated them well, because we, as Floating Life, we go on board, two times per week, so we know very well what happens on board, and they are very well treated. I also paid to have a menu for all my crew members because they had told me they were not eating very well. We had on board a chef that is paid €5,000 per month to cook all Winter time for his crew. So you do everything, but it seems your work is not appreciated. And even if you are there, you just lose the person for €200.

Tork

But I find that quite surprising because the majority of problems that I hear of from crew are to do with not getting any of the things that you're offering. Money is important but it's not generally cited to me by crew as the most important, unless they're not on particularly good salaries in the first place. If they have a good salary they tend to be more concerned with career opportunity and the opportunity to increase their qualifications.

Barbara

I brought up an example. I have to say that me and my company we are quite lucky. We have people working for us and working with us, because they work with us since many many years, so this is I think my policy is something that is bringing back a result. But unfortunately an owner doesn't think about the whole team - he thinks about the guy that left the year before.

Tork

If you have 14 vessels what sort of percentage of your crew are you losing in that way, roughly?

Barbara

About 30%.

Tork

So 30% of your crew are leaving without notice at the beginning of the season. I'm amazed.

Barbara

It's quite a lot, and really most of the time it's just a question of salary. But the salary is good for the whole Winter time. It's not good in Springtime because you have a lot of boats asking for crew members.

Nick

What's the boat doing over Winter?

Barbara

They are in the shipyard or they are sailing, if they are in the shipyard we usually supply to the crew a list of works we would like the crew to carry on –

Nick

But the reason that I found most crew leave the boats I'm on is that they just want more time. The first boat that I was on was going round the world - we had 5 days off in 9 months.

Tork

Did you mean more sea time, Nick?

Nick

No, they need more time off from the job. Holiday.

Barbara

We also have a couple of boats that do unpaid leave so they stay away for 2-3 months more than their one month holiday they are due, just because they want to go back home. Which is fine, I just organise myself but of course if you are paid all the year long and you just go away for 4 months the owner is not happy to pay you annual salary and then - so they go away as unpaid leave.

Nick

They get fed quite well, they get looked after on holidays - they get paid quite well - so I see no problem!

Tork

So you want to go and work for her as well!!

Barbara

But this is the situation. Unfortunately.

Martin

Have you analysed if people leave, as to what their career path has then been afterwards. Have they ever come back to you?

Barbara

Yes, most of the time. Every time after one year time because you know, Floating Life is there, and Floating Life on the 27th of the month pays you the salary. And when you go on a private boat the owner pays you at the end of the Summer if he wishes. So at least you have enough there.

Tork

That's an interesting point, because one of the things that has come up quite frequently in our Forum has been people not being paid for whatever reason. One of the things that I find particularly curious is that, OK, it's an online Forum, so what you get there are people that are whingeing. People rarely come on the Forum to say - you know I had a really great day today. But nevertheless I tend to get the feeling that most of these complaints are relatively genuine. What I'm surprised at is how little support the people in those circumstances are getting from the owner, he's not paying them, the master, the manager and the crew agent. In almost every case they have no support from one or all of those parties. And I find that really strange.

Katrina

But that was a question that was posed in the last session. As a crew agent, you're not an agent for the crew at all, it sounds like.

Frank

That's a big problem there. Because who does represent that crew member other than that crew member. He walks off the job because somebody else is going to give him €200 more a month, but the agency that placed him on the job, and I've got to tell you from personal experience, an agency that I won't mention sent me to a job that they'd already placed somebody on and that crew had not been paid for 4 months. Now where was the due diligence of that agency? I heard all these people saying they check references, they do this, they check the licences, they do this, but did nobody in this group - where was the due diligence on that agency's part at that time? We want to bring people into this business. And these kids come rocking up here to these boats and they go - I want to work on boats, look how beautiful it is, and I'm going to lie on the beach in the Seychelles, you know. And when they see the reality of it, the reality of the fact that you're working your butt off all the time and you're going places where you don't know anybody and most of the time you don't even speak the language. And then they say this is not for me, and they bail on it, and go and do something else, find other jobs. But these agencies that are putting the people on the boats - there should be screening on both sides of the fence. Instead of just saying oh look, I can make a month's pay off that guy, I'll send him there. There's a CV, go over there, bud.

Tork

Let's have a comment from a crew agent on that.

Martin

Chloe's put her head down to hide from the question!

Chloe Collet Peter Insull's Yacht Marketing

It simply isn't very often that if an agent has been paid, crew sent by an agent hasn't been paid.

Frank

That's true. As a matter of fact that agent hadn't been paid for the first person -

Tork

Take the microphone so that we can hear what you've said. But in the case of a crew member not being paid, granted the agent may not have been paid, but would you actually send good after bad? If you had somebody on a yacht who hadn't been paid for 3 months, would you send another candidate to that yacht?

Chloe

I don't think so at all. But we also have to have all the elements on hand, and very often it's very difficult to have all the elements on hand. Because sometimes we actually won't know why the person has left.

Tork

But they hadn't left in this case, they were still there. They didn't have the money to go home.

Chloe

But left and not been paid, they actually haven't come back to us to say they left because they weren't being paid.

Frank

Let me finish the scenario. The poor kid that was placed on that boat was still on the boat working because he couldn't afford to get a plane ticket to get out of there and the boat would not repatriate him. OK. And I was sent after that, by that same agency, who hadn't actually been paid either. Where's that protection?

Tork

So in general terms how can an agent act in that manner?

Frank

Where's the protection for those crew members? The agencies have all said we work for the owners, right? The kids who want to come in the industry, and they're looking at this industry and saying like wow, this is really great. But then all of a sudden this guy had to

pay his own plane ticket home. This guy here didn't get paid for 4 months. These people didn't have any food. We've got to work for Barbara!! But you see what I'm saying here. And you want to attract people into this industry - the rules in the United States just changed a few years back that you have to have 4 years of engineering degree, university level, it doesn't matter if you're a marine engineer or civil engineer or whatever - before you can actually start on the ladder to become an engineer with a US ticket. Now after 4 years of university there's very very few kids who are going to run up and say hey, I'm going to sea now. I'm going to trade the wife and the kids and the car and the dog and go on a boat and sail round the world and work for people. We have to make this industry attractive. And I got to tell you, with the personnel problems, the lack of training at management level, people are looking at this industry going like no, I think I'll go and work at Micky Doo. And not bother with it. So we need to change our image, we need to get out there into universities, as Rod was saying earlier, and promote ourselves. The unions in the United States, the shipping unions, go to the universities, they offer further training for the people there, they have job seminars, and they pull people out into the merchant or the professional end of the business as opposed to the yachting business as this gentleman here was saying earlier. But we need to widen that pool and get more trainees in here.

Tork

And to do that you have to enhance your reputation and forgetting to pay people definitely doesn't.

Frank

These horror stories that we keep seeing on the Forum and we keep hearing about at the Blue Lady and whatever, are happening all too often in the industry. All too often is the lack of training at the top affecting the rest of them.

Tork

Would someone from a management company care to comment on the role of the yacht manager in that sort of scenario?

Phil

When I first joined IYC one of the first problems that I had to deal with was in fact was a boat that hadn't paid us and hadn't paid the crew. And our only recourse was immediately to walk away from the owner, walk away from the boat. And we actually assisted the crew in taking the owner to court. And eventually they got paid. I think everybody has to stand back and take a certain level of responsibility. We can't always make owners come up with the money but I think your obligation then has to change.

Tork

In the cases that we've got here, why is it that in every case they weren't getting anybody to step up and help them, from the crew agent, the manager, they keep coming back and saying well I contacted them but they just won't help.

Phil

The problem is, who was there to actually help at the end of the day? You know as well as I do, ourselves at the PYA - we frequently get asked the question - all we can do is put the people in contact with the local consulate or appropriate lawyers.

Tork

But I guess what I'm asking you is if you acted that way in the case of that one particular bad apple yacht, why do I hear of so many other management companies that aren't?

Phil

I can't answer for the management companies.

Katrina

But how often do these cases come up, Tork?

Frank

They come up too often. I'll tell you, if you read the Forum you'd be surprised at how many cases like this are out there, and it can be nothing more than the fact that the captain got mad at the chief steward and said you're fired, get off the boat, and I refuse to pay you your repatriation, or I'm not going to pay you last month's pay, or whatever. And this decision is left, on that management level, this management level may not actually know about it at the end of the day or they may not actually be full managers anyway. Because as you are aware all the management companies offer different management packages - might be just a DPA, or that management level or that company -

Tork

I think you said, because it's not that common - was that right? Because it's an interesting metaphor for trying to professionalise our industry, that when incidents like that happen, we should be -

Katrina

But don't you think it's changing now that more boats are increasingly being managed by -

Tork

Funnily enough, it doesn't actually seem to be the case.

Frank

No. As Charlie said before, there are so many boats coming in, and so many that need qualified captains, that people are being put in these positions that should never be there. They just should never be driving a boat. They should never be in a position where they're managing personnel. I take that back to my first comment, that these

captains should really take some type of training course in personnel management and the mates, and chief engineers, and everybody that has to deal with people that are working under them, should take some type of personnel 101, whatever. Just some type of basic course so they know how to treat people.

Phil

Can I just say, I don't think any more this happens as often as it used to happen. I think it used to be a bigger problem than it is today. It still shouldn't happen at all but I think it used to be a bigger problem than it is now. But I have personally been in that situation where I ended up seizing a yacht after we hadn't been paid for 6 months and I seized the yacht. And eventually we did get paid. But out of 9 crew there was only myself prepared - or perhaps bolshie enough, most people would say - to actually stand up and say this has to stop. We're not tolerating this any longer. And the moment the boat was seized, we actually got our money. So you have to stand up for yourself sometimes. But we're such a diverse and split industry, who out there is there, to stand up for crew, or owners in reverse cases?

John Leonida Clyde & Co

Yes, that was going to be my point. I've been fortunate over the years that I've never had an owner go bankrupt or not pay. However, as soon as the crew is not paid, then I'm not being paid either because obviously the bank account is empty. And I'd be the first one, after discussing it with the owner, if I could track him down, to put a chain on the boat and start the legal process so that the crew ultimately gets paid.

Tork

But I think there are some cases - normally where management isn't involved, but not always, where the master is acting on his own. And it may never get passed up the level to management, it's not that the owner's gone bankrupt, or the owner isn't paying, the owner may not even know about it.

Frank

I find that probably true more than not.

John

With private, non managed, non commercial yachts.

Frank

Commercial yachts that are non managed, there are many of those also, right? The main thing is back to where we were trying to go here, is how do we attract people into this industry? And we need to straighten up the industry. There was an article in one of the magazines a while back about the ILO. And in that same magazine on the back page was an article about a stewardess who worked 16 hours a day in the laundry. So you have this one article from the ILO about hours worked etc etc and in the same magazine there's a 16 hour day for this girl. The industry in order to attract people - you have to pay them well, feed them well, house them well and treat them well, and if you don't do

any of those four, and if you miss anywhere in there, you'll lose crew. And every time you lose a crew member you call one of the placement agencies. So you paid a crew member \$2,000 a month instead of \$2,500. As soon as someone offers him \$2,500 he's gone. Now you go, you give the agency \$2,000 a month, to give you somebody else for \$2,000 a month. Now where's the maths in that? Why didn't you just give the guy \$2,500 so you wouldn't lose him, forget the agency altogether, and train him and bring him up through the ranks, and keep him within there. Lock him in with training programmes that require him to be obligated to the vessel to pay back for his courses, or to pay back for his whatever he needs to advance in the industry. And what you'll end up with then is somebody that sees the future of it. But these kids that are coming into the industry now are looking at it going yeh, OK, we'll let's see I was living under a tree in Goa and now I'm working on a boat and this is great and next year I'll be in a ski chalet. It's what we can expect from children, if they come into things like this.

Tork

It's all about package, isn't it. It isn't just about salary, it's not just about conditions. And at the end of the day that's to the owner's benefit because happy well paid crew that are enjoying their job give better service. And the owners want to see the same faces year in and year out and the only way to do that is to have a real programme.

Nick

A structured programme for training. I mean I've been in the industry now - I've never had a boat pay for my training. That doesn't bother me. I wanted to do it when I wanted to do it. Not when a boat told me. So I went off and did it.

Tork

Sorry to interrupt - but did you get time off to do it?

Nick

No I left the boat.

Tork

Because that's the normal way to do it.

Frank

Yes, go to school, get your licence, come back.

Tork

But that's never going to be a professional industry, when you have to do that, is it?

Nick

Well this is it. So if you can as you say, offer the package, and the package is salary, how many hours working whatever - we all know that we've got to work more than

expected but as long as there's some rough idea then that's not a problem. I'm on a boat with 18 crew. I don't think we work excessively hard when the owner's on board. We're not pulling 17 hour days. If you're pulling 17 hour days I think you've got to look and think there's something wrong. Something's not happening correctly. So that's not a major problem.

Tork

Well actually what you've just said, is one of the major problems in the industry. It's because it's so diverse - what happens is that a charter boat will be doing back to back charters which basically are just so out with the law that it's just hilarious. But the brokers who have sold this week, or that week, aren't talking to each other because they're not obliged to, and although actually - John may correct me if I'm wrong - but if something goes wrong I suspect that they're within the scope of liability, but nevertheless that crew is now doing a 24 hour turnaround and -

Yes, please, just break in - but wait for the mike!

Stacy Geddis Crew4Crew

I still think there needs to be some type of support and guidance for the crew because they don't know what the standards are and they don't have anyone to turn to and the industry is so political, nobody wants to make the other person angry. So if the crew member's not getting paid and it's not the captain's fault, then he's not going to say anything to the owner because he doesn't want to get fired and lose his job, and of course the agency isn't going to say anything to the captain, because they don't want the captains to not use them the next time that they need crew and everybody just keeps skirting the issues instead of someone taking a stand saying look, this isn't right, just like you said with the boat - and say we're going to seize it until everybody gets paid. And everybody keeps doing the dance.

Frank

But that's standard in the industry that we always get - if you walk off this job without notice you'll never work in the industry again. If you seize this ship your name will be mud in the industry, you'll never work again. And it's the same thing - if you go to the owner and say why haven't I been paid - you'll never work in the industry again. I mean how many times have I heard that in the years I've been in the industry. But there is a line that you have to draw and everybody has to be responsible for their actions. We're not going to attract new people until we can straighten up the management and start at the top and straighten this out. The management of the vessels, who's responsible for what? Is the owner's choice that he only wants blondes instead of Philipinos good for the industry, are we going to be able to spread out if we only go to Sweden to hire all our stewardesses or can we educate the owners along at the same time that we're educating our crew so that the whole profession comes up more professional?

Tork

But this is part of the reason why I was so interested in finding out the attitude of the crew agents, because aside from any promotion that we do of the idea of yachting which we have to of course in the broader educational world and the broader job world, the first

point of contact if you come up all wet behind the ears looking for a job on a yacht with an STCW freshly printed in your paw, the first person you talk to is a crew agent. That's why I think it's really important that they do the job of just giving them some groundwork. Yes, I know they're all over 18, but even so, they're complete naives when it comes to the industry. So I believe they should be given a little bit of help and advice.

Stacy

They need to be supported and educated. I mean crew are their product that they're selling.

Frank

But that's the thing though. They're not supported or educated by the crew agencies. I'm going to generalise like crazy here but it does appear to me sometimes that the crew agencies are only just looking for the fee and I've asked agencies for staff and had them send people to me that weren't even close to qualified. You get a pile of resumes, or CVs and you're just going - what the heck is all this about?

Martin

Is this from big companies or -

Frank

Yes.

Tork

Nick - what do you think? Is it perhaps a question of too many crew agents so the competition is too great, and there's too broad a spread from the very professional to the not?

Nick

Well I don't think it's a problem of too many crew agents, you can select which crew agent you want to use. And most of the crew that I know, when you ask for CVs from crew agents most of the crew have registered with every crew agent anyway. So it doesn't really matter who you use. It's who you're happy to use and who you've got a relationship with.

Tork

I was thinking more of some of the failure in standards which we're hearing about - is that because there are too many therefore the competition is too strong for a limited number of placement possibilities? Especially since everybody's registered with the same agencies.

Nick

I don't really know.

[From the floor]

Wouldn't it be the other way around, where with more agencies the ones that were doing a better job should rise up to the top. The ones that basically have a formal contract, or have better idea of what the job is and match the resumes up better so the CVs match with the core competencies along with the job description and that basically instruct their clientele that this is a contract that you should be looking to try - and this is the average salaries for this type of position etc. So to me - I think if you have fewer agencies then there's only so many places to go to. If there's more of them then I would tend, if I were looking for a job, I'd tend to look for the better agency that can give me better guidance and give me better information.

Tork

But how would you judge that - from an owner's perspective this time?

[From the floor]

I think what you're doing with the magazine - there could be more articles, and coming up with some of the standard contracts - I think you talked about earlier today with the agencies about getting together and starting to develop some standards for one another.

Frank

You should see some of the contracts out there. As John said earlier, some of them are just flatly illegal. And I think people write them on the back of a kitchen roll sometimes, that have been thrown in front of me, saying well here sign this or you don't get the job. And of course everybody signs it because you want the job. And the next thing you know is the fine print that wasn't in the contract comes in, and you say well I don't remember signing on that. And this is the way they manage it.

[From the floor]

I hear what you're saying but I think the bottom line is, that's how you basically start to get things moving forward is by publishing some of these things and circulating some of these things in the industry.

Frank

I think what we should do is - there's an article, as I said, about the ILO in one of the magazines - I'd like to see that moved up, forward - it's saying by 2011 that might be enforced for the private yachting. I'd like to see that moved forward.

Martin

Rod, please. Jump in.

Rod Hatch Vectis Maritime

On this subjects of contracts and the word that Nick used, which is a significant word. Package. One of my old bosses, with whom I ran a - and I say with him - we ran a 50metre yacht for 6 years - he's just started to build a 55 metre. We're looking at 18 months to 2 years down the road before we put a crew on board. We are already working on the details of their package. Salary, salary scales, how we gather in data from the rest of the industry so that we can keep our salary just above the average, we don't want to be at the top, just above average, on leave, on what's required by our probable flag state, what we want to give extra, how we're going to operate that leave, how we're going to pay crew to come and go for their leave, what we're going to do to pay for their training courses. Now the crew that we had on the yacht with whom we sailed for 6 years, we still stay in touch with them, we're part of each other's lives to this day. This man is an exceptional person - he's not the exception in the industry - but he is providing the kind of ideal package that we'd like to see. How can we legislate for such packages? The only leverage we've got is going to come from John and his ilk because now we do have legislation either in place or about to come into place so if we don't have very very fair minded people who are willing to give us a fair treatment then we can apply pressure from another quarter. I think we're going to need to go forward as an industry, not only with all the constructive things that we're coming up with today in terms of how to recruit new crew but how to retain them and how to give them a fair deal, we're going to have to work a lot more closely with the Johns of this world.

John Leonida Clyde & Co

From a legal perspective the yachting industry is caught in an odd position. Most of the maritime legislation that deals with crew is designed for commercial ships which are what we call peripatetic. They're sailing around the world all the time. Yachts tend to be in one place most of the time. So notwithstanding that we are ships and have crew on ships effectively yachts are places of business in the country in which they're permanently based. That may be France, Italy, Spain. And the employment law that applies for Spanish nationals or French nationals or Italians is the law that applies to that crew. So notwithstanding that the contracts that Frank described and I've described as being frankly illegal, crew - and we've seen it on a number of occasions, are taking action against their employers using the local courts in France etc. In fact we had a client of mine last year where his captain filed a claim in Paris because his yacht was based in France, notwithstanding it carried a British flag - and the Parisian courts decided they had jurisdiction to hear employment matters relating to that yacht because it was in France. French employment law applied. And crew would be - notwithstanding that they were given poor contracts, if they are mistreated they have a right of recourse through the local national courts. And they would be well minded to use that if they feel they're being mistreated.

Frank

That all sounds really good but it doesn't quite work that way in the industry, I'm sorry to say. There's no regulation that any crew member comes back with, unless of course you didn't get paid for 4 or 5 months and then you've got to do something - but most of the time as this lady here was saying before, crew members won't do it, they'll just walk off and get another job, and it continues. A flag state like Cayman requires a contract. But the contracts are not standard for Cayman and the management companies that give contracts have only the interests of the owner and the boat in mind, not the interests of the crew member in mind. And if you look at some of the management company

contracts and or if you look at some of the ones written by the captains or owners or something, you'd be surprised how vague they are on anything but what the crew member is going to do for the boat.

John

With respect Frank, the Cayman contract, even if it's on a Cayman boat, if the boat for example is in France, the Rome convention takes precedence over that contract. The Rome convention will afford to the crew member the employment rights of the jurisdiction of which that boat is in regardless of what the contract says. And the owner cannot rely on that contract to say well I can do whatever I like with a crew member. Within Europe we have some of the strongest employment laws in the world but they're only as strong as the people who seek to rely upon them and we know, not just in yachting, but in every walk of life, people are more likely to walk off a job and put that down to experience than sue their employer. But we have seen increasingly crew members suing employers for mistreatment, for lost pay and so forth.

Tork

There is a problem there, though, isn't there John, in the truly pragmatic sense, that while the right exists to do it and I know you know what you're talking about, but it's a very brave crew member who actually does it - or one who's preparing to leave the industry.

John

Oh Tork I completely agree with you and as I said, in every walk of life - in a sense we as lawyers ought to be supporting crew more vigorously and I have no doubt that there'll be a law firm out there who will establish themselves to represent crew. Because there'll be a lot of money in it for them. But in a sense it may be that our industry needs unionising. I mean the ITF might be the right way forward.

Frank

It might be. I've heard a lot of talk about the unions, and the idea of it, and was approached by the union in the Union States to go commercial and get out of the yachting anyway but the idea of this industry is, can't we fix it ourselves. If we don't fix it ourselves, then we're not going to attract more people into the business. And they'll go off and do something else and we're losing a good pool of people at the universities that are saying well I'm not going to go and bother with that because this guy -

Tork

Well I think it's two levels, isn't it. It's relatively easy to attract people in, because that's just advertising, but once they come in at the early stages it's retaining them. I think we've got a point in the middle? From the good food - I'm sorry, Floating Life - it's Italian, it's normal, I understand!

Barbara

We are based in Switzerland! What worries me a little bit is that there is a main difference between managers and managers. I worked previously for a management company and I think what is the main difference is now I don't feel like I work for the owner. I work for the owner but I work also for my crew members. If I don't have a good team on board I would never get a good result for my owner. So this is the main difference - and this is something I tried to transmit to my crew members. I know all of them personally so I work also for them. And this is very important. What worries me is that unfortunately they come from other realities -

Tork

Ain't that the truth!

Barbara

- and the first thing they say is that you work for the owner, you are paid by the owner so you don't care about me. And this worries me, because everything falls down, because you can make a big effort but it doesn't get to a point. We prepared our own crew contracts with our lawyers. The contracts are very balanced and I never had any concern by any crew member concerning our crew contracts. I paid for them because I thought it was correct to have a good document they could easily understand and clear. When owners tell me I'm not going to pay for their transfer back home I just go back to him and say forget about it. I'm your manager, I have a reputation, this is what says the law and you pay the trip back. You're not going to pay it? OK, Floating Life is going to pay it, because it's my reputation. But we will not go on with you in this way. And he changes the attitude. I think it's our responsibility to also make owners understand how they have to treat people. This is not their company, this is not their home, this is the boat managed by my company and this is how it has to be. And it should be like this. And if everybody would work in this way, what I usually say is, positive philosophy. When you have a positive philosophy, crew members respect you. But sometimes you have a situation where you have paid the training during the Winter time, they wait for their salaries, and they quit on the 5th of the month because their salary has arrived in their bank account. And you cannot ask them the training money back, they just left. So it's not only the owners you don't know where they are, also the crew member doesn't have a real home. And he doesn't collect the registered letters, so he can forget about it -

Tork

But you touched on what should be the proper role of the manager. Which seems to be between the two parties and make them behave.

Barbara

Exactly.

Frank

If you restructure your training, more in the way this gentleman did his, so that the crew member doesn't get a lump sum in the bank as soon as he walks out of the school with

his new officer of the watch, he gets it over a period of time, then he'll stay with the vessel. OK. And I've found both scenarios, where a crew member, as soon as he's got his officer of the watch, he's been paid by the boat - he's got him a new job because he knows he can go and make more money. But the better way to do it is to give him an incentive by giving him a little bit of a raise, it'll mean over a period of time that this extra \$50 a month is going to pay for that course. And if that's made clear to the crew member then he knows he can go and take another course and he'll get another raise and it'll increase his ability to stay with the boat and pay back the courses. But if you hand him the money, you're asking for trouble, I promise you.

Barbara

But the rise of salary is quite automatic. Because the first thing he tells you, I have my ticket. You want me on board, you give me a rise of salary. Or I just leave. I have 50 boats of 50metres that can think about me so - there is no solution if you want to keep your crew members.

Mike Jess Nautilus UK

Comment from the unions. Yes I waited all day until someone mentioned the unions. Just a point - we've got 27,000 members of the union, obviously apart from a couple of hundred of them they're all in the commercial side. So there must be some benefit to that, and there's nothing I have heard today that doesn't reinforce that to me. Because all the things that have been mentioned about who is around to help, but it won't be the crew agents or it won't be the management companies. Well, you know, I think Frank mentioned the trade unions in the States and the ITF - but this is not a sales pitch. What we actually do, we have things called partnership agreements, within the merchant navy with the management companies, where we will agree with that company what the terms and conditions should be, and it goes through everything. It's just like a crew agreement or contract. And that actually then means that there is some way, not particularly policing it, but we are actually saying that we feel that company actually meet the correct standards and we are very happy to promote that company for our members. And vice versa. And the company will want the crew and the captains and masters to be members of the union, to protect other things such as their ticket and so on. So there are models around - perhaps not exactly that, but may be food for thought. But maybe that's for tomorrow.

Katrina

To me that sounds like you're looking after the crew members who are informed, who have been around for a while. And want to stay in the industry - you mentioned chief engineers, masters. What we were talking about earlier was more the newbies who don't really know, and so they're the ones who seem to be the ones that are more maltreated.

Tork

The big problem also is that when they're newbies they tend not to be, and yachties never have been great joiners of things. Including unions and the PYA! But they need to be helped perhaps in a more direct way, at least initially. It's a sort of mentoring thing, because they just haven't got the mindset to join a whatever, at first.

Nick

They need something structured. In any industry when you come into something new you don't know whether you're going to stay in there or not. I went into law, I didn't stay in it. But I still had a structured path to get me so far. And if you can do that with the new guys that yes, three years' time you've done this and this, jumped through so many hoops, then people can start looking at what they're getting involved in and say yes, I'm interested in this, I'm going to stay in it. But many people have been in this industry for 2 years and said I've had enough and I'm going, because they don't know what else it can offer them.

Frank

The big problem with the industry now is that the trainers of the people are the people that are making the money off the training. They are the schools. And if you go through the MCA - they actually sent me a letter, I should have brought it with me, telling me I could go to Bluewater to learn how to be a chief engineer. Now after all the years of schooling and everything I sent them a letter back telling them how much I appreciated that. But the union in the United States for the commercial is the trainer. They do the training. You walk up there and say here I am, I want to work on boats, and they say OK here's the first course you're going to take and then you're going to go and work this much and then you're going to take this course and then you're going to do this. Is that how you guys operate? No? So your structure that Nick is mentioning goes through the union, in the United States. Maybe it would be better to do it that way here? But we need to bring some people in here, we need to train them, and what we're seeing coming up nowadays is just kids that are going to mess round for a couple of years and go off and get a job at a factory.

Jorg Wendt

D & B Services

I wanted to come back to the point when it came to newbies in the industry and that they shall ask for contracts and do not work under dodgy conditions and things like that. I think it's the wrong way to look at that. I think a responsible captain or a responsible management company would come up with a contract and get the guys to sign it, and not be happy if nobody's asking about signing a contract or getting trained on board or things like that. A lot of people are pretty happy having guys on board without any knowledge or without asking for a couple of things and I think it should be the way around that the captain says, this is our contract, these are our working conditions here, this is how we work. That would avoid at the end of the day when it comes to clashes by chasing paid leave or things like that, a lot of problems -

Tork

I think also there's an important point in there, which is that this is not just about protecting the crew member. It's also protecting the captain and the manager. Because if you suddenly need to have somebody in place because the owner's coming next week and the period of notice extends beyond that, then you just get yourself a chef for that period. I mean it's a two way street.

[From the floor]

One of the things that seem quite apparent is that it's difficult to legislate for things because of the fractured nature of the industry itself and a union would be a powerful tool to put everything under one umbrella, with regard to training and professionalism. I've just been thinking how about incorporating a part of the STCW to get - like you're a newbie into the industry, you get a freebie membership for a year or two, you get to reap the benefits of a union, and perhaps use that as an introduction for new crew coming into the industry so they're all under one umbrella which is a standard practice.

Katrina

That might be a good way around it but it's information, and how it's provided, as Tork was saying. I think having a union would only protect those who have already decided that they've got a yachting future. Who may already have started thinking about a pension. You know we're talking about quite a few people who rock on up and have taken their STCW because they know they have to, but they aren't thinking at all about their future, really. It takes a couple of years before you start doing something with your money other than spending it at the bars. So you have to think that it would be a great idea, but who are you really protecting?

Tork

But how would you make a sort of mechanism for that? Because I mean apart from talking to people who are experienced within the business who'd give you good, not stupid, advice could you think of a method for that? I admit I can't.

Katrina

I think information would have to start at the top. So it could be one of those things that information is given to captains, and if they think it's a good idea then they'll introduce their crew to it. That could be one method of dissemination. Maybe management companies too? Maybe it comes through that route. If your boat has a management company maybe the management companies get involved in a union somehow.

Tork

It's sort of analogous to what you would expect in a corporate structure where there are meetings, you inform your employees because you want informed employees, you don't want ignorant employees because it doesn't benefit you in any way. I've got one at the back and one in the middle. Can we start with you?

Pamela Carpani Floating Life International

I just wanted to say - I'm sorry if I can't express myself correctly - but I've been working for them for just a week now and I've been taken here to see more or less what it's about. So I didn't know anything, I'm like from outside. And I'm telling you that I've been living in London for ten years. And to tell you the truth, now that I know a bit more about it, the general perception of working on a ship to answer Mr Stockwell is a place where you go if you can't find another kind of job, so you go there and you go around and you see the world. That's the general perception. That's what I've been thinking when I was in London. I didn't know what to do. I thought maybe I'll just go. And I used to read this advert which is always there every week. So it doesn't feel safe, and it doesn't feel like a

career path but, now that I know there is a career path I think OK, if I wasn't 32 and I was younger and didn't have a child, then I might have had a different life now. I might have seen the world, had a career. So I think it starts from the beginning. If the general perception is the job where you work a lot of hours, but you see the world, you just do it when you're young. And then if you get into the industry maybe by mistake and you don't find a structure, then you lose yourself there and you come out and your experience will be yes, you go there, you work plenty hours, you get paid money, you do it as a gap year. Because that is what it becomes. And that's where it starts going wrong, because basically you don't see a career, you don't see where you're going and you don't see it as something that you can actually do it as a passion. It's just something that you do for money and to take some time off. That's what I think from outside.

Frank

It kind of used to be that way but it's getting more and more professional now. The idea - you know, I've been drunk at Peter's Sports Bar 50 times so I've got enough sea time to become a captain. Those days are gone. There's still a few of them in the industry out there and they're not enhancing what we're having here - I've read in the Forum about people that are cheated out of pay or repatriation - every time something like that happens, some new kid in the industry says I'm out of it. And every time a crew member leaves a boat, the placement agency makes more money. And every time that happens an owner gets more upset with the business. And if we lose one owner we've lost another dozen jobs. And we don't want to alienate the owners, and we need to bring more people into the industry and this idea that it's just a bunch of drunks travelling round the world has kind of gone by now because the boats are getting bigger and the professional responsibilities are so much more, and the licences that we're required to have and our actual liability is so much more than it used to be. To the point where I've actually got insurance on my licence. Simply because it is my livelihood.

Pamela

Can I just say something quickly. I just wanted to ask - what I meant is, I don't know, in general, if there would be a way of a different kind of advertisement. Because it seems, from the outsider's point of view, that it is like a clique, a club. If you are in, you're in and you know how it works. If you're out, you don't know anything about it. I mean I'm starting to know it now because I'm in, so I'm being taught the way. But from the outside it's like a world in itself. I don't know how to explain. It's not a world that - other jobs have more or less been talked about. But maybe you have to buy a special magazine to know certain things about it - and I read a lot but I never really knew this situation. I never really knew all these things that I'm discovering now. So I think that maybe like me there will be lots of people that might be interested but they don't know how to get there.

Tork

Yes, the industry needs some PR. But it's very interesting to hear your view on that actually because we're all too close and we can't see the wood for the trees.

John

The responsibility on the professional advisers to the owners is important, because there is no stereotypical owner, in the way that there's no stereotypical yacht. And each owner

treats his crew, his captain, in a particular way depending on perhaps what he's been told by his yacht broker, perhaps what he's been told by a yacht manager, how a ship or a yacht should be run. And it should be the job of all of us in the industry to guide our owners on best practice and I have many many owners, some of whom treat their crew with utmost respect, they want to know about their crew, they want to know how their crew is fed, how their crew sleeps, they want to know everything about their crew in a positive way. Then you have other owners who are more interested in the jet skis and having fun and they leave it all to the captain and they're frankly not interested. What I try to do with my owners is to encourage them in best practice. It doesn't always work but if we all take it upon ourselves the next time we speak to owners that we know to talk to them about the relationship between the crew and themselves, between the crew themselves, the power of the master on a yacht and to in a sense put them in a position that they know what goes on in their boat, because often they really don't know what goes on, and when you tell them they're frankly horrified.

Tork

John, one of the great reasons for that probably and I'm going to ask you a question that's worthy of being dedicated to all of GSF one year - how do you manage to control or mitigate the hidden agendas of many that have the ears of the owner and whose purpose is not the owner's well being or the crew's well being but their well being. I know that's an extremely big question but the problem is that the ears of many owners are had by those whose motivations may not be entirely philanthropic.

Frank

I think that's a big problem in the whole industry.

John

I mean we touched upon it at the last GSF. The secret commissions which we spoke about at GSF, the vested interests that we spoke about.

Tork

The vested interests are even harder, because at least the commission comes in a brown paper bag. The vested interests are much more diffuse.

John

But there are people like myself who do have the ears of the owners in a way that others don't. Because we have nothing to gain, as professional advisers, whether he listens to me or doesn't listen to me. I don't gain anything from it. If I encourage him to employ the crew properly - apart from drafting the crew contracts I don't earn a bunch of cash out of it. It has to be a dispassionate opinion. And having best practice is I think the way we should go forward.

Rod

Katrina has talked several times about, not so much about long term crew, what do we do with the new crew that come in and that we want to keep. Now not only is it captains

who are facing a labour shortage, I think management companies have got a labour shortage as well. And the last big management company that I worked with I approached on a couple of occasions, I said you don't have enough people on your staff to come and visit my yacht regularly - because we're paying you for management, and I think I should see more of you. Also, apart from everything else you do, you've got human resources people, I would like to see them come down and I've got a fairly young crew, I would like them to be given some advice on organising their lives. Because they don't know much about bank accounts, they don't much about saving to buy a house, or investments - I don't want any proprietorial advertising going on, I'd just like some general guidance on life. Sometimes they come to me with a specific question and find I won't bite their head off, I'll give them an answer, and they'll realise that there are a lot of things out there that maybe their school teachers never told them, their parents never told them, but they need to know, to find their way through life. And I think if we can give them some guidance in that, as well as in everything else we teach them about their specific career paths on board, we're going to make them feel they've got a home and somewhere that they can commit to because they belong there.

Katrina

More of the life skills. You know in every other job or profession you get continuous training. Before I went to work on boats I worked for a big multinational publishing company and every week if you wanted to there was a workshop that you could go and attend, either to improve your computer skills or a session on presentation skills, or stress management, all of these kind of skills which I think are really important for everybody, no matter what their walk of life is. And I did a bit of homework before I came here, just looking at courses that you could do if you were a stewardess. Because we're talking about a career path - for the guys it's very clear. You start off as a deckhand and either you go down the deck route and become a captain, same for engineering. But there's nothing really available for people who want to prove themselves and who are ambitious, who want to have a career path, in the interior side. So having looked on line, there is a butler's course, which can teach you the basics about wine tasting, all those kind of things, which are quite useful. You have training for newbies - how to learn to be a stewardess, and I know Bluewater does those but I would never have done that. Because every single boat is different and you get onboard training more like an apprenticeship, every single chief stewardess has her own way of cleaning a cabin, for example. Or their own way of making a bed. So in that way those beginner's skills could be useful but you don't employ a stewardess - if she's got a course that helps, but you have your own way of doing it. Where I think training would be more useful is later on in the game. One of the hardest things I think to do on a boat is manage people. You're not only managing your own crew, you're also managing the expectations of your owners and your charter guests and you're also managing other people around you, so for example your management company or the shipyard etc. And you're actually given quite a large responsibility in terms of money and peoples' expectations. And you're not necessarily given the skills to be able to do it effectively. We were speaking at lunchtime about people - they can either do it or they can't. And what advantage would training give? And I said well, training would also give you the suitcase of skills, the confidence that you can do it and also maybe give you some pointers of how to do things better. We're talking about this industry not being professional, but it can be. And we're all -

Tork

But Katrina you would obviously have used a course like that had it been available to you.

Katrina

For sure I would, I actually looked for one.

Tork

But do the people you know, working in the industry still, at that particular level - do you think they would be interested? Because I'm sure John who is taking notes and thinking yes, we could do that - do you think they really would pay the money, take the time, do the course? I mean any form of continued professional education for the mid level interior staff, though. In this case.

Katrina

It's not just the interior staff. The owner that I worked for was very fair. So if you wanted to go and do courses he paid half your course, you paid the other half. Half came out of your holiday, half was boat time. So you were encouraged to do courses and you didn't feel that you were taking advantage of them either. He kept staff and quite a few of the people that he had working for him had been working for him for 13 years and you think why do people stay? Because he was an experienced owner so you never felt that anything was impossible. Training was very accessible. He had nice boats too which always helps.

Tork

But I think you've just described what we were talking about. The package. You keep people because you give them something that actually turns it into a career. And that will winnow out some of the ones that don't want a career but hey, what the hell.

Phil

Can I come back to the point that Tork was making earlier? Which is that the influence on the industry from perhaps people working on the verge of the industry in the brown envelopes and a lot of even the way the boats are built and designed, I spent a lot of Saturday on a fairly new charter boat, 40 metres with 6 guest cabins and 5 crew. Very nice, super people, but this morning the first thing I said to my charter broker was under no circumstances book people onto that boat. Because of our relationship now with one of the big shipbuilders I get an awful lot of specs fall on my desk. Owners send them to say what do you think - we're thinking of building this in Russia or China or wherever. And the other day I reviewed one for a potential owner coming into the industry, it was nothing to do with Trinity Yachts but he wanted our opinion on his spec. And the one page I sent back with - don't be so bloody silly - written across it. Because the guy wants to build a 75 metre boat with 16 crew and when you actually look at the crew layout, unless the captain's married and the engineer's married you're down to 14 crew straight off. And these are some of the influences that are creating problems within our industry. And it's something that I certainly see as a manager more and more, and I've seen boats which we've refused to take into management because people are buying a boat and

want to charter it and I say you can physically not put enough crew on that boat to charter it.

Tork

Yes, 45 metre, 12 guests, 6 crew.

Phil

But this comes back on all of us. I get all this sort of rubbish fall on my desk on a regular basis. But I'm sure a lot of people -

Tork

So do we. It's called Press releases!

Phil

But I'm sure a lot of people in this room do. And unless people are prepared to say don't be so bloody silly, you can't do that - to these owners, the owners don't necessarily realise it. They've been sold a package by somebody, you can operate this 80 metre boat for €1 million a year -

Tork

Do you think more management companies are saying don't be so bloody silly, don't do it?

Phil

I think some of the responsible ones are. I think management companies, and recruitment companies, and everybody else - there's an awful lot of cowboys out there but there's an awful lot of good people out there. And I think there are a lot more responsible people coming into this side of the industry who are prepared to say, don't be silly, you can't do that.

Tork

And are the new generation of owners beginning to take notice of that? Because we have newbie owners as well, that need training?

Phil

Well, coming back to the training, as we've said all the way along, one of the big problems we have is, there are so many new owners we don't have enough people left to train the new owners. And a lot of the inexperienced captains are now struggling to train their new owners because they don't have the experience or confidence to do it. It is a big problem. But in general the industry is becoming more serious, more professional, and we're going down the right lines. But we also do have this very silly influence of - you can run this big boat for 1/3 of the money that it's actually going to cost him to run, and you can run it with 5 crew when you really need 15.

Tork

Well that's the hidden agendas I'm talking about.

Phil

But it's people at our level, people that have some influence in the industry but don't necessarily have their fingers on the pulse at the top that have to be prepared to stand up and say you can't do this, this is silly, let's do it properly.

Frank

This is where we lose the newbies. They come on a boat, they're new, so they get themselves a job on a 40 metre or a 30 metre and the next thing you know is they're working 20 hours a day, they're dead, and the next thing is - I'm not working in this industry any more and off they go. They don't even bother to go any further than the STCW. There's new boats coming out all the time, and I can tell you two of them right now that are putting 4 bunks in each room, crews of 26 and one TV, no internet for the crew, and then on the other side stewardesses that won't even walk out of the crew house for less than three grand and full time internet on the boat.

Tork

We're talking a bunch of very unrealistic expectations.

But I'd like to say thank you to the panel and thank you to yourselves for a very very good session. It's coffee time.

Martin

Yes, ½hr coffee, back for more training.
