



Alaska Fisheries, Seafood and Maritime

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTION AGENDA

Towards a strong and sustainable fisheries, seafood, and maritime workforce in Alaska

October 31, 2013

*Developed by Representatives of*

- ::: Fisheries, Seafood, and Maritime Industry Sectors
- ::: Alaska State and Federal Agencies
- ::: University of Alaska

*Facilitated by*



# INTRODUCTION

Several years ago the University of Alaska began facilitating an effort between industry, education and training providers, and State agencies to define needs and create a workforce development plan for the Fisheries, Seafood, and Maritime (FSM) industry. The FSM Workforce Development Plan is nearly complete. A stakeholder meeting was held fall 2013 to determine the action steps that follow.

Because the number of occupations that comprise the FSM workforce is so large, stakeholders realized early on that not all areas of need could be addressed immediately. Therefore stakeholders determined that the following steps are the highest priority items to be addressed.

# FSM SECTOR STRATEGIES

## Fisheries Strategies

The Fisheries sector working group prioritized three occupations in the FSM Workforce Development Plan: fishermen, vessel repair and maintenance; and shellfish farmers.

At the October IAC meeting, they developed the following action steps and strategies for this sector.

### PROVIDE BETTER CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR FISHERMEN.

- Conduct an analysis/inventory of instructors for high priority skills training – certified technicians for warranty.
  - Problem with instructors – getting them, funding them, do you need adjunct? Needs to be worked on/addressed.
- Conduct a review of training centers' course offerings and develop more accessible classes and courses, perhaps shorter and/or more intensive in nature. A combination of two models would be most appropriate:
  - Continuing education that is mobile and short, in prioritized topics
  - Certified technicians/instructors for vessel repair and maintenance

#### **STRATEGICALLY DEVELOP UAS FISH TECH PROGRAM.**

- As this program gets up and running, it will be strategic to focus on it, adapt, adjust so that it works for the FSM Workforce Development Plan.

#### **FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS WITH TRAINING & EDUCATION PROVIDERS ON COURSE OFFERINGS.**

- Partner with RTCs to triangulate data sources to balance the knowledge of industry, ADOLWD, and others to represent the educational needs of the whole sector.
  - a. There is already some effort underway to foster “warm handoffs” between students at schools and the RTCs.

#### **DEVELOP OUTREACH PLAN AND MESSAGING.**

- Conduct outreach (PSA's, “Blue Collar, High Dollar”). Outreach strategies need to be continually refined and integrated.

## **Seafood Processing Strategies**

In the FSM Workforce Development Plan, the Seafood Processing sector prioritized nine occupations: engineers, refrigeration, production managers, electricians, can machinists, quality controls, Baader technicians, plant managers, and deckhands. At the October 31 IAC meeting, they clustered those into the two areas with most benefit and overlapping skills: refrigeration/electrician/engineer and production managers/plant managers. They identified the following action steps to address these occupational needs.

#### **FOSTER BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN INDUSTRY, TRAINING PROVIDERS, ADOLWD, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.**

- We need to create mechanisms that will facilitate that communication.

#### **EXPAND AVTEC'S ADVISORY BOARD TO INCLUDE INDUSTRY (ON AND OFF SHORE) TO ADDRESS SKILLS FOR REFRIGERATION/ELECTRICIAN/ENGINEER.**

- AVTEC is the best provider to customize training to encompass all of the components identified for refrigeration training.
  - Create on/offshore advisory processing group who could help provide training and students
- 6 month goal – develop curriculum and budget/funding plan.
  - AVTEC has a general program now but they do not have the ability to do onsite ammonia training; would need to acquire it or send people to locations where people work with them. Mat-Su has a simulator, but Seward has processors that allow students to be hands on, has lodging. Mat-Su will continue to include it in their commercial focus.

**Responsible party:** Fred Esposito

#### **BUILD LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR PRODUCTION MANAGERS/PLANT MANAGERS.**

- Alaska Seafood Processing Institute
  - Look into the curriculum and whether it can be adjusted to serve more of the industry (timing and length/schedule are some issues)
  - Explore expanding with industry/MAP
  - Different tracks would be helpful

**Responsible parties:** Paula Cullenberg, Gunnar Knapp, Kris Norosz

#### **EXPAND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM FOR QUALITY CONTROL AND QUALITY ASSURANCE EMPLOYEES.**

- ADOLWD provides funding for an apprenticeship program; it might be possible to expand this program and seek out others. There are some certification requirements, but the main goal is to find out what more the industry can do about it.

### **Maritime Strategies**

The maritime sector working group identified 11 priority skillsets (rather than occupations) in the FSM Workforce Development Plan: shipbuilding and repair; shoreside support; passenger service; management; unlicensed and licensed deck and engine personnel; licensed and unlicensed vessel engineers, including QMED; diesel mechanics, gasoline engine mechanics, port engineers, other equipment maintenance and repair specialists; marine-specific electronic and computer engineers and technicians; vessel captains, ship captains, ships officers, towboat captains, tour boat captains; and civil engineers, structural engineers, coastal engineers. They identified the following action items strategies related to those skillsets at the October 31 IAC meeting.

#### **PRIORITIZE READINESS SKILLSETS IDENTIFIED IN THE FSM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.**

#### **BUILD A CROSSWALK OF ANCILLARY SKILLSETS.**

- There are additional skills required for conducting an occupation (safety training, for example) beyond the skillsets identified in the plan that could be better identified and organized.

#### **IDENTIFY COMMON CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR OCCUPATIONS/EMPLOYERS.**

- Many employers and skillsets require the same certifications – an understanding of these crossovers would be beneficial to both employers and employees.

#### **IDENTIFY WHICH MARITIME SAFETY REQUIREMENTS APPLY BROADLY ACROSS SKILLSETS.**

# Research, Conservation and Management Strategies

The research, conservation and management sector identified 14 priority occupations in the FSM Workforce Development Plan: biometrists, fish and wildlife and hatchery technicians, fishery biologists, fish and game coordinators, fisheries scientists, analyst/programmer and database managers, engineers, environmental program managers, fisheries economists, fisheries analysts, fisheries management specialists, and hatchery managers. At the October 31 IAC meeting, they narrowed in on the following priority action steps for occupations within that list.

## IMPROVE FIELD READINESS OF FISHERY AND HATCHERY TECHNICIANS.

- Need for new employees to be “field ready” when they come to work, i.e. they come with critical skills such as operating a boat, bear awareness, boating safety, gun safety, data entry, able to operate sampling gear, motor repair etc.
- Currently there is no one class that is required by the Fisheries Biology degree or the Fish Tech Certificate or AAS that matches to the skills needed by the employer (ADF&G).
- Action: Identify these skills and develop training to match them at both the Fish Tech and BS level. Possible model is FRI hands-on program that UW does at Aleknagik. Maybe a May-mester class at UA.

**Responsible Party:** ADF&G will identify the skills; UA will develop course work in response.

## INCREASE CAREER AWARENESS OF BEING A FISHERIES BIOLOGIST.

- Since Fish Tech can be hired right out of high school and has to be an Alaska resident, consider using that as an entry level link back to high school.
- Join and participate in the career awareness FSM overall committee developing a plan over the next 6 months.
- Link FT AAS degree more fully to BA/BS in Fisheries. For example, you can take Math 105 to meet the requirements of Fish Tech, but that doesn't meet the requirements for Fisheries BS (requires Math 107). Fish Tech and Fisheries faculty work together to create feeder program.

## FOSTER SKILLS, BUILD READINESS, AND DEVELOP INCENTIVES FOR HIGHER LEVEL ADF&G EMPLOYEES.

- ADF&G has found it difficult to encourage mid-career employees to move into high stress management decisions.
- Action: within six months, convene discussion group in the department to consider no cost/low cost options – i.e. strategic mentoring, certified fisheries professional route, more creative linkages to advanced degrees and leadership training.

**Responsible:** ADF&G staff with UA support

# OVERALL STRATEGIES

## Strategies 1&2: Career Awareness/Career Pathways

- Create an inventory of existing career awareness programs – update existing list of training programs, add high school and middle school programs and make it more widely available (example includes Voyages to Excellence in Nome. Doug W. offered to work specifically on this)
- Explore approaches to increase awareness in middle/high schools.
- Evaluate AKCIS for accuracy and completeness.
- Increase public awareness of importance of FSM industry in AK's economy, communities
- Develop a marketing plan that includes branding and social media (for entire FSM industry)
- Current statewide effort to develop programs of studies – have FSM be one of their priority areas (UA working with DoE and DOL)
- Need to make sure that we include adults as well as K-12 (military populations, young adults, other Alaskans). Post-secondary is equally important.
  - Key focus – transferring from one career field to another.
- Entrepreneurship opportunities are great for self-sustainability in small communities, create other jobs, don't necessarily target youth.
- There are lessons to be learned from how other industries have done this (mining, healthcare).
- Create externships for teachers – teachers can go spend a week or two on the job and take that learning back to their classrooms (Teacher Industry Externships). DOE has an ongoing model that was developed with APICC and would adapt nicely to FSM. (would be nice if it could be broadened to include CTE – DOL developed a congruent model that includes CTE).

### CHAMPION: TERRY JOHNSON

#### Strategy team members:

- Kathy LaComp (?) CTE at UAA – working on statewide pathways now
- Helen Mehrkens will find someone from K-12 at DOE
- Nathan Pitt (NACTEC)
- Industry rep
- Vince O'Shea

**Initial task:** Create a plan for developing an awareness/outreach plan based on the needs and tasks identified above.

## Strategy 3: Improve Workforce Readiness

- Workforce readiness in this industry needs to include math skills:
  - Develop some applied examples for curriculum that relate to these industries.  
The State is going to common core curriculum; would be helpful to provide them some examples.
    - Use construction math course as an example.
  - Need an adult-specific course to reengage some of their math skills that might have gone a bit “rusty” for people looking to enter the workforce when they are older than high school/college age.
- Barrier crimes are an issue for this industry
  - Strategy – improve awareness of this. AMHTA had put some effort into it, we should contact them and support that effort
- Career Readiness Skills
  - Develop online modules on safety training, basic workplace readiness for working in the various sectors. Ex: National training module that takes place pre-screening (Wanetta Ayers, ADOLWD)
- IAC could develop standards for work keys
- Companies that pay more for local hire as a way to increase access to Alaskans
- Bonuses and referrals as a retention strategy
- Encourage reinvigoration of Industry Advisory Committee – create network of sharing employees
- Difficulty in finding quality candidates
  - Strategy – Identify number of employees needed and ask CDQs to help fill them with local employees.
- Use employer tax credit to support training to meet needs of employees.
- Develop a successful Alaska Hire booklet (Nelson San Juan, ADOLWD) – promoting that the industry is doing local hire.
- Need to do a better job of placing people who have training/education with employers – connect employers with education/training providers.
- Develop a clearinghouse for jobs and internships available – a place to go for even faculty to place students.
- Idea – ask people in current occupations what they do to be used as tools for developing trainings, etc.

## CHAMPION: PAULA CULLENBERG

### Strategy team:

- Shirley Campbell (AVTEC, nominated by Fred E.) – works on outreach for them
- Terry Johnson
- Nelson San Juan
- Jeff Johnson
- Wanetta Ayers as a resource

**Initial task:** Create a workplan and timeframes for the tasks and strategies listed (what can/should be done first, by whom).

*Action steps from plan – added to them, and addressed a couple.*

## Strategy 4: Train Alaskans for FSM Employment

### SEVERAL VALUES STOOD OUT IN THE DISCUSSION AROUND DEVELOPING THIS STRATEGY:

- It is important for there to be an industry representative in any of what we are offering
  - have to make a long-term commitment to involving industry.
- Stewardship (Magnuson Stevens Act) – weave in hard core ethic of stewardship throughout curriculum and good management of resources. We know that good training protects our environment

### TASKS/ACTION ITEMS

- Identify gaps between workforce needs and training available
  - Has been done privately and in the WFD plan.
- Improve access to training and education both for the customer and the provider
  - Make training available mobile – taking it on the road, knowing there are limits to this.
  - Capitalizing on online and distance and delivery.
  - Target training into appropriate sections of the workforce.
  - Make it available at the right time of year to the industry.
  - Secure financial support that's needed to deliver training wherever/however it is needed.
- Identify internships, mentorships, apprenticeships, training opportunities
  - Very hands-on industry – have to make sure we go all the way through the “food chain” and place people who participate in them

- Overall goal is to establish standards and guidelines for any new training program for this industry. This strategy is the framework for some standards that will apply to whatever is developed so that they are relevant, innovative, and sustainable programs.
- Develop structured apprenticeship for shellfish farmers.
- Need to look at how we fund training.
  - Look at what funding sources exist, what strings are attached. (SEE WANETTA'S PRESENTATION)
- If FSM occupations are listed as priorities within the State's workforce plan, they are more eligible for funding
- Strategies to help people find their way to available training:
  - Targeted marketing, needs to be a network developed that taps into existing resources.
  - ALEXIS – state database to connect people to job. It used to not recognize credentials, but it does now.
  - This committee could look at ALEXIS to see if that's where some of this matching can occur. One of the challenges is search functions within it.

#### **CHAMPION: BONNIE NYGARD**

##### **Strategy Team:**

- Aggie Fouts
- Jeff Johnson (TAACCT)
- Fred Villa
- Kris Norosz
- Fred Esposito

**Initial Task:** Develop a workplan/timeline for the tasks and strategies listed. Figure out if there are ways the value statements need to be incorporated to this strategy's workplan and any other components of the WFD Plan.

## **Strategy 5: Improve Industry Engagement and Accountability**

- What kind of organizational structure do we create to carry this kind of work forward?
  - Everyone has a responsibility in this effort. Ultimately, it is the industry's responsibility to identify and convey that need.
    - Need to also include people/organizations from industry who are specifically involved in workforce development.

- Training providers need to do their jobs more effectively to form groups that can interact with industry effectively, communicate needs and roles, etc.
    - Within UA, need to move closer to figuring out who can effectively speak for and represent the University in this effort. Similar with DOL, DOE.
- We can learn from examples of other industries – what have Healthcare, Mining, Oil and Gas done? How have they organized themselves and worked with government?
  - Have had guests from those organizations, but might be more ready for their examples now that FSM is at this stage of planning.
- Need more effective methods of communication among us on the details of the kinds of things we're talking about.
  - University is operating FSM website, but it may be that and other websites could be expanded to be a place for all the relevant information
- Room for improvement for accuracy of data in WFD collection
  - DOL data can definitely take it farther (**Responsible parties:** DOL and University representatives who work with it)
- Thinking about WFD and recruitment, is about more than just the K-12 group – we need to think broadly and imaginatively.
- Regional Native Corporations could be involved – they train and hire lots of oil and gas workers, could be a relevant model here. CDQ groups are already active here.
- **6 month action step:** Establish a baseline data set to define the workforce so that we could take a snapshot of what has happened. Maybe choose some indicators that will help us measure progress.
  - Need to measure dollars spent, people trained,
  - This topic needs a lot of thought – can look to healthcare
- There are opportunities to better use resources that have already been developed.
- DOL produces training evaluation report every year. Primarily measure number of people who complete programs, increase in income.
- Embedded in this is better communication back and forth
  - Develop a one (or two) pager from Wanetta based on the presentation she gave on funding sources.
- Need to make sure that industry supports the programs developed out of the WFD plan, and that programs continue to be relevant to employer needs

#### **CHAMPION: RICK CAULFIELD**

##### **Strategy Team:**

- Gunnar Knapp will work on data piece
- Julie Decker will work on working with industry groups

- Captain Scott Hamilton (AVTEC)
- Steve Reifenstuhl
- Vince O'Shea

**Initial Task:** Create a workplan and timeline for the action items and strategies above.

## MOVING FORWARD: NEXT STEPS FOR THE IAC

### **Next Meeting**

The Industry Advisory Committee agreed to meet again in six months (leadership will coordinate), aiming for May, and that the strategy teams would need to meet and develop their work plan and complete initial tasks two months before then. Attendees will be contacted to solicit dates for the spring meeting.

### **Staff Support**

In discussing best approaches for supporting the FSM Workforce Development efforts with staff and/or contractors, UA Leadership confirmed they are working on exploring funding possibilities. Fred Villa asked the IAC to contact him with thoughts on how staff/contract support would best be structured going forward.

### **How to organize the IAC**

There are other industries in Alaska (healthcare, mining, etc.) that have undertaken similar initiatives, and FSM should look to them for ideas of how they have organized that might be able to help facilitate and move this effort (or sectors within it) forward.

There was also discussion on whether this is an initiative that is primarily dependent on UA resources, or if it is an initiative to find more resources and bring them in. The conversation centered on it being both. Internally, UA is always looking to assess programs and needs, yet the conversation around this plan is much bigger than UA. To succeed, it requires all of the groups represented at the IAC to work together. UA may have started out thinking about this as an inward focus, but it is a much bigger, more statewide focus.

### **The FSM Name**

There was conversation around whether FSM is the right title for this industry – several IAC members proposed that it is no longer a good fit. Ideas included “Seafood Harvesting, Seafood Processing, Maritime, and Resource Management” and the “Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan.” It was suggested that “Maritime” might be a positive title because it doesn’t pit fishing against other industries and thus could be a good way to change the conversation.

### **The FSM Workforce Development Plan**

Any conflict among suggested global changes to the WFD Plan and the potential title change will be decided by Paula, Fred, and Kris. Any conflicting suggestions for sector specific sections will be decided by the relevant workgroup with the conflicting suggestions included.

Attendees were reminded of the broad audience for the WFD Plan and the critical importance of reviewing it and providing feedback.