

Annex 1

Issue One:

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1. Possible Solution(s): To continue with the MCA conducting oral examinations as the final part of the issue of the Certificate of Competency.

2. Benefits: Final independent check on candidate to confirm a satisfactory level of the overall knowledge of the seafarer; independent check on the effectiveness and quality of the training providers; maintenance of the internationally recognised credibility of the MCA's procedure for the issue of a Certificate of Competency; Opportunity of promoting good working relationships between the candidate and the MCA.

3. Benchmark:

3.1. Driving Standards Agency (DSA) ~ The main functions of DSA are to test drivers, motor cycle rider and driving instructors fairly to ensure they are up to the driving standards. Along with these main functions, the Agency carry out training of driving examiners; maintains the register of Approved Driving Instructors (ADI); supervising of compulsory basic training for learner motor cyclists (CBT); delivering the theory test; promoting road safety; produce range of publications and multi-media learning aids; monitoring of pass rates; supervision of DSA examiners.

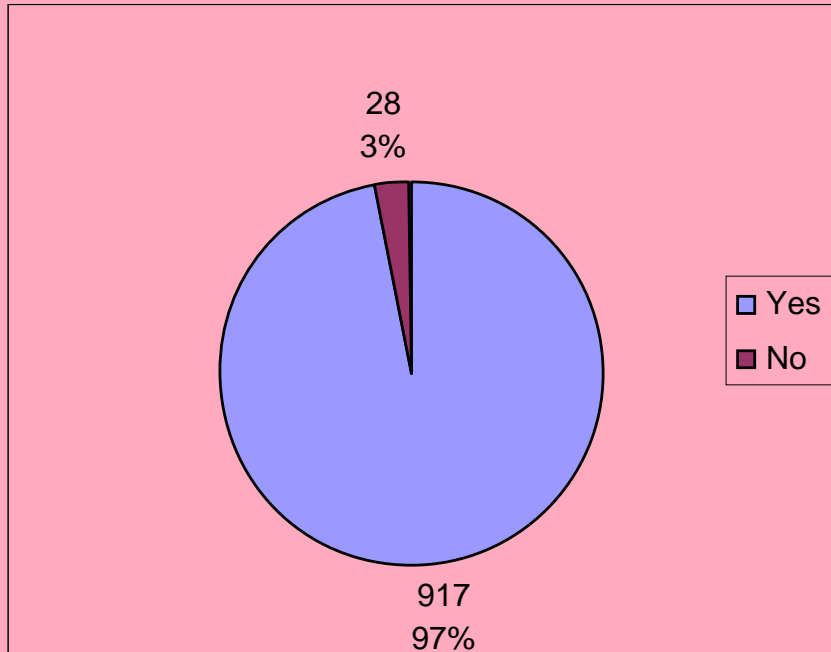
3.2. Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) ~ Final check on candidate to confirm level of the overall knowledge of the seafarer; examiners use their personal judgement based on technical content and an exam weighting guidance system to determine whether the candidate has met the required standard; actively exploring the use of software that can be used to screen candidates before entering the oral exam; fully auditable process in place.

3.3. Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) ~ The MPA carries out the conducting of an oral exam at their premises and there is only one exam centre available to candidates; oral exam process is split into two parts simulation and orals; simulation is carried out by the integrated simulation centre and candidates must pass this aspect before moving onto the oral examination; process is not auditable.

3.4. South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) ~ SAMSA operate in a rigid fashion and publish the venues for the completion of oral examinations in December prior to the new-year. Information relating to SAMSA is not easily obtained but it is clear that they operate under political pressure.

4. Data:

4.1. Results of Stakeholder and Candidate survey question 1 ~ Whether the MCA should continue to conduct these oral examinations?



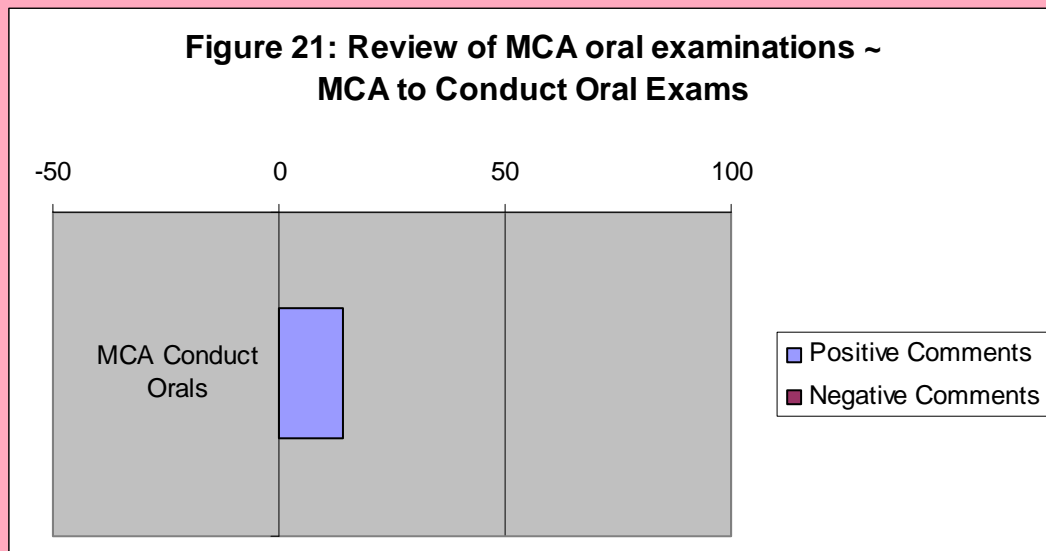
4.2. Results of Stakeholder and Candidate survey question 2 ~ If the answer was No to question 1, what alternative independent authority should conduct them?

Of the 28 who considered the MCA should not continue to undertake the oral examinations.

21 (74%) considered they should be undertaken by Maritime Colleges.

4.3. Additional comments were also received for this key issue and these represented 2.3% of the Consistency category.

There were 14 comments in this category grouping. 14 (100%) were in favour of having the MCA continue to conduct the oral examinations.



In favour

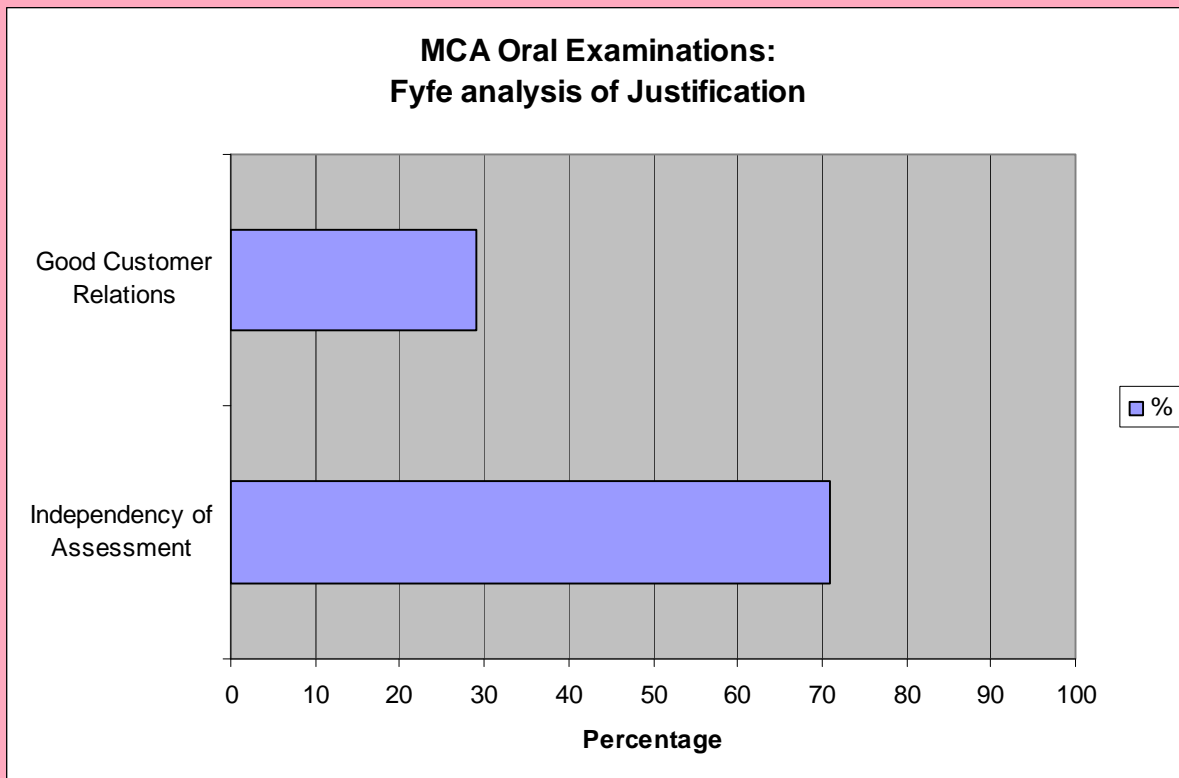
"The MCA should not lose control of the oral examinations; it is examination of competency by peers"

"It is imperative for the whole MCA to maintain its powers to give the 'final say' regarding a candidate's competency"

"I feel strongly that the MCA must remain the final arbiter as to a candidate's suitability to hold a certificate of competency"

"I believe that if the MCA no longer conducts the oral examinations that the result will be devaluing of the certification obtained by the candidates"

"The MCA is doing a good job; please maintain this standard that will keep the MCA on top of others"



The overriding justification for the MCA Oral Examinations was the independency of the assessment and this accounted for 71% of those surveyed. The remaining 29% was the need to maintain good customer relations.

Comments received from examiners included:

"This is the only face to face contact we have with a candidate – the true quality of the candidate can be assessed against written exams whereby the candidate could be taught to pass a [written] exam."

"We occasionally see oral examination candidates who have passed all written exams, training courses etc and only have to pass the oral exam before being certificated, and they fail, sometimes more than once. This situation would indicate the final MCA check on competence is important."

"A candidate needs to reach a high standard to pass the exam and this sets our CoC apart from many other countries who do not require this final check."

"Many foreign nationals apparently spend vast amounts of money in trying to obtain one of our CoC's as it is seen in the industry as one of the top CoC's."

"Our oral exams are the envy of the seafaring world – do not underestimate the esteem in which they are held – nor the sense of satisfaction and pride felt by candidates on passing the MCA Oral."

"The standard of basic knowledge of some candidates is sometimes very poor, which comes to light when an examiner can probe face to face."

5. Comments:

Over 97% considered the MCA should continue to conduct oral examinations and of the remaining 3% it was considered that Maritime Colleges would be best placed to conduct the examinations.