

Annex 2

Issue Two:

The present training and monitoring
of MCA examiners
and to consider whether there
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1. Possible Solution(s):

i. To develop the Surveyor Development Award to provide systematic and dedicated approach to the training for surveyors who conduct oral examinations including centralised training for trainees, followed by on-the-job training with at least three different surveyors and a final check by the Chief Examiner and/or nominated deputies before going solo.

ii. To provide dedicated centralised refresher training for all surveyors conducting oral examinations on an annual basis as part of the Examiners Seminar.

iii. To introduce a formal system for the Chief Examiner and/or nominated deputies to monitor and audit the examiners on a regular basis.

iv. To develop detailed guidance for the conduct of an oral examination for inclusion in the training and for use as reference following the training.

v. To provide sets of sample questions and answers with the intention of them forming the basis of an individual question and answer bank.

2. Benefits:

- i. Ensures consistency from the start whilst retaining the value of the individual emphasis of the experienced examiners and introduces a final independent assessment.
- ii. Ensures all examiners are kept up to date and provide a formal opportunity to share best practices and discuss any problems.
- iii. Ensures consistency of approach and enables any weak areas to be identified and addressed through refresher training
- iv. Procedure would be MCA wide and capable of being audited and would include best practices.
- v. Ensures all areas of the syllabus would be covered and a variety of sample questions and answers would be developed by examiners for their own use; ensures consistency of approach without repetition as individual question and answer banks are developed.

3. Benchmark

3.1. Driving Standards Agency (DSA) ~ All of the DSA examiners are supervised at least 12 times a year by both Centre and Sector Managers. During a supervised test, the accompanying officer completes a test report, which assesses the same faults as they occur and after the test the examiner is given verbal feedback on their assessment control and the completion of necessary paperwork. This forms part of the examiners personal development.

Test Centre Managers also monitor the performance of driving examiners by collating pass and fail statistical information. Comparisons are made between staff over a three-month period and rolling year, it is important to note that comparison of pass rates over shorter periods or where there is a low number of tests being carried out, is meaningless. All examiners will experience an unusual day; week or month, where they see an exceptionally high number of passes or fails. In order to compare information, Managers look at gender and overall pass rates.

If after analysing the information, a particular problem with the examiners performance is identified, Driving Standards Agency (DSA) will take remedial action, which may include coaching and mentoring by their test centre manager or senior member of staff. They may also be re-trained by the DSA.

A variance of 10% between the highest and lowest pass rates at any particular centre is felt to be acceptable.

DSA also carryout a "Benchmarking" exercise to establish and investigate the "natural" pass rates in individual driving test centres. This involves senior operational staff conduct a reasonable amount of tests, over a variety of different routes, at individual centres. This allows the senior officer to compare their pass rate against the permanent staff working at that centre. It also allows staff in their normal working environment to ask any questions or raise any queries with the senior officer.

3.2. Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) ~ AMSA have an internal audit and training programme in place so that it maintains quality control of the oral examination system. AMSA regularly audits the delivery by its Examiners of oral examinations of candidates for Australian issued certificates of competency (CoC) to maintain their continued compliance with relevant procedures. Each examiner is audited at least once in a three-year period.

There are two designated auditors for each discipline, the Principal Qualification Officer (Nautical), with one other senior deck examiner, the Principal Qualifications Officer (Engineering), and one other senior engineering examiner.

The senior examiner, audits the Principal Qualifications Officer of the same discipline. All auditors have industry standard auditing qualifications.

AMSA has a refresher-training program for marine surveyors/examiners so that they can update their knowledge in relation to examination techniques, which allows them to exchange opinions and views on best practices. For trainee examiners training is provided at the Head Office of AMSA concerning the internal procedures and processes. Additionally a trainee completes self-study exercises, which is completed in their own time and will sit in on oral examinations with local examiners. A trainee examiner must undergo a final audit before being allowed to conduct oral exams. Audits continue at each certificate level until the examiner reaches the highest level of their discipline (i.e. Master unlimited for Deck examiners or Engineer Class for Engineer examiners).

3.3. Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) ~ MPA have difficulty in having an objective audit system for the actual conduct of oral exams. However, during some oral exams, members of the maritime industry (usually superintendents from shipping companies or lecturers from training institutes) are invited to sit in and observe whilst the orals are conducted. They are encouraged to provide feedback. The procedures for booking or Orals, allocation of examiners, check list used for exams are covered by documented procedures which are audited under ISO 9000:2000 standards.

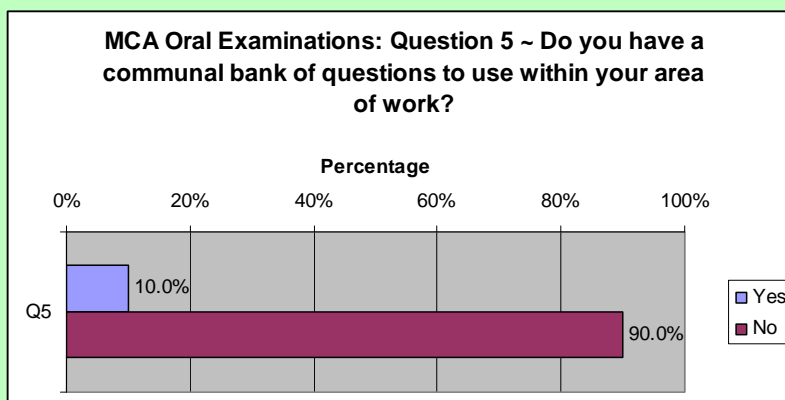
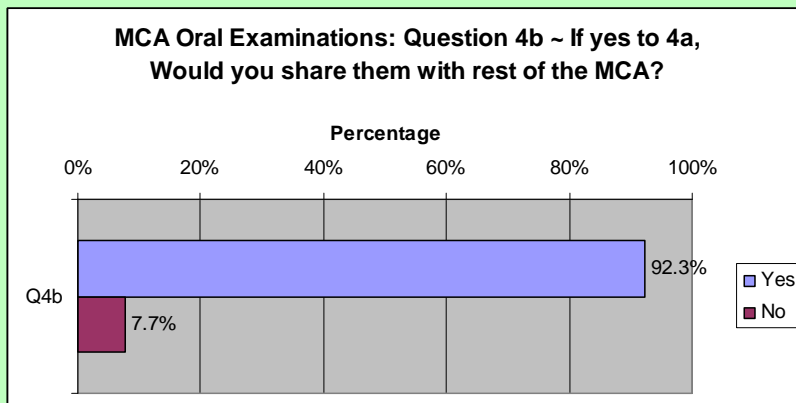
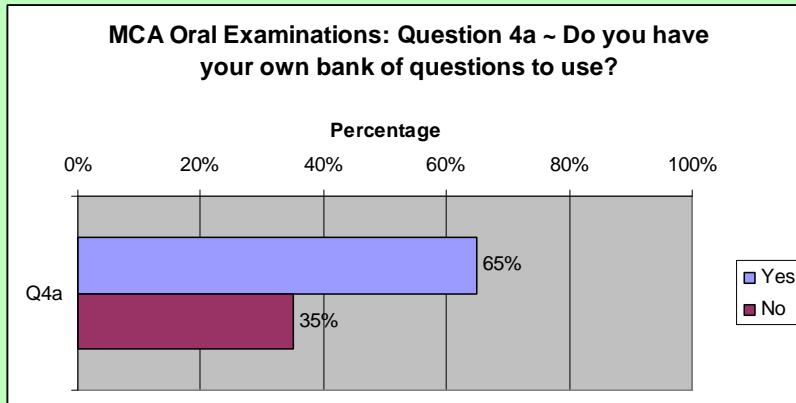
There are no internal documents, which provide guidance on the conduct of the oral exam. However, the MPA have regular departmental meetings amongst examiners where any issues relating to the oral exam can be raised. Dialogue sessions are also encouraged with the training providers.

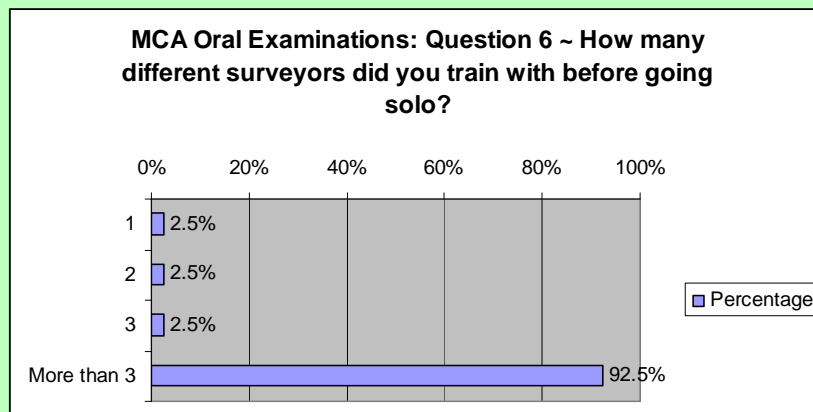
New examiners (who are holders of appropriate COCs) are required to undergo on the job training which includes observing an experienced examiner for a number of exams (4-6) and then a senior examiner checks them. All new examiners start taking lower grades of CoC and then after a period they are able to undertake oral exams for the higher grades of competency.

3.4. South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) ~ There are no publications available on SAMSA's website, which detail the monitoring of Oral Exams, therefore the monitoring of oral exams can not be defined.

4. Data:

4.1. Overview of the results of the MCA Examiner Survey that relates to the present training and monitoring of MCA examiners and considers whether there is a need for improvement.





Comments from examiners included:

"Examiners should be given every opportunity of updating their knowledge by attending relevant short courses"

"No oral guidance from MCA about what questions to ask"

"Introduction of feedback from the Chief Examiner to include trends, hot topics, new developments etc..."

"Need wider training – left largely up to individual examiners during their training to pick up as many questions from existing examiners as soon as possible before they go alone"

"One day a year to be set aside in local offices for staff to discuss examination strategies, questions, issues and moderation"

"Regular exchange of examiners between Marine Offices regionally and nationally"

5. Comments:

There is currently no systematic approach to training and it is not provided centrally. The training of new surveyors is on a one-to-one basis and provided locally. There are some extremely good practices at a local level where the initial training of new examiners is carried out with four or five different examiners before they go solo and even then they are monitored for the first few times to ensure consistency.

Dedicated refresher training is currently not available although there are some best practices locally that include peer reviews and regular discussions to address and resolve any problems. MCA have an examiner seminar that is usually held once a year although not all examiners attend. This provides a valuable opportunity to discuss issues and receive up to date briefings.

The results of the examiner survey indicated that over 80% had been involved in training other surveyors in conducting oral examinations and over 90% of these had been trained by more than three different surveyors before going solo. On an individual basis some surveyors/examiners encourage feedback from trainees regarding their opinion as to whether the performance is consistent with others they have trained with.

Best practices from the DSA are that they have a systematic approach to training of their driving examiners at a dedicated training centre and this includes the facility for any retraining that is required. The DSA examiners are supervised twelve times per year.

Best practices from AMSA include providing initial training for all their examiners at their headquarters and in addition trainees complete a self study exercise and sit in with local examiners to gain experience. A final audit of the trainee examiner is necessary before they are allowed to conduct oral examinations on a solo basis. There is a refresher training programme that ensures examiners update their knowledge and share best practices. Each examiner is audited at least once in a three year period.

Best practices from MPA include providing training centrally for their examiners and new examiners also need to observe experienced examiners for four to six examinations and are then checked by a senior examiner before they are allowed to undertake oral examinations on their own. Even after this they are only allowed to conduct examinations for the lower levels of competency until they have gained additional experience.

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