



NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN MARITIME COLLEGE

Media Release

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From Canada to the Torres Strait: investigating maritime training in indigenous communities

A Tasmanian vocational education expert has been awarded an international fellowship to investigate the similarities of delivering maritime training to the indigenous people of Australia and the coastal Inuit populations of Canada.

Jarrod Weaving, Vocational Education and Training Manager at the University of Tasmania's Australian Maritime College, received one of two \$12,500 scholarships offered annually through the Transport and Logistics Skills Council in partnership with the International Specialised Skills Institute. The fellowships aim to bring international best practice and innovative approaches back to benefit Australian industry.

Mr Weaving will spend three weeks in the Nunavut region of Canada investigating barriers to learning including language, literacy and numeracy; cultural differences; and remote indigenous locations. During that time he will observe a maritime training voyage, exchange information with local providers and record best practice methodologies for training and assessment.

“Although the indigenous communities of Canada and the Torres Strait are literally on opposite sides of the globe, the safety and training of seafarers from both regions is compromised by a range of almost identical cultural and socio-economic issues. It’s important that training organisations address these common cultural differences,” he said.

Over the last year, Mr Weaving has led his team in delivering navigational, engineering and safety training to indigenous students from the Torres Strait region. While cultural barriers presented challenges to both the trainers and students they did not stand in the way of some very successful outcomes. Of the 200 students enrolled, 87 per cent completed their training and received nationally-recognised qualifications.

“Remote geography, a range of languages and dialects and a mixture of cultures are common challenges between Canada and Australia. My main goal is to apply what I

learn in Canada to enhance the maritime training we deliver to indigenous Australian students, not only in the Torres Strait but elsewhere in remote and regional Australia.”

Mr Weaving said the fellowship would provide a range of personal and professional benefits, including the opportunity to develop new skills, pass this knowledge on to his team, and implement a wider range of programs and pathways not currently developed in the Australian maritime sector. He leaves for Canada within the next 12 months.

Information released by:

Communications and Media Office, University of Tasmania

Phone: 61 3 6324 9874 or 0438 408 314

Email: nicole.mayne@utas.edu.au