

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Evaluation of the Canadian Coast Guard College

The Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) College provides the only CCG-specific marine professional training in Canada. The College's training programs support the CCG's operational mandate in marine safety, security and environmental protection, as dictated by the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the *Oceans Act*. The College provides national, bilingual and degree-conferring or certificated education programs related to: CCG officer training; marine communication and traffic services; marine maintenance and equipment; and rescue, safety and environmental response. Graduates of the Officer Training Program earn a Bachelor's degree from Cape Breton University, in addition to preparation for marine certifications set by Transport Canada that are the focus of all of the College's training programs. The College also provides training and expertise to DFO and the Department of National Defence.

WHAT THE EVALUATION FOUND

Canadian Coast Guard College – Key Findings

- As the unique provider of CCG- specific marine training in Canada, the College continues to address an important need for the CCG. The College supports the standardized production of seafarers and marine professionals in response to Canada's obligations to various international treaties, conventions and agreements and government priorities related to the sector.
- The College supports the development of knowledgeable marine professionals with the skills and experience to work successfully for the CCG. Evidence shows that, overall, graduates are satisfied with their program and that their College training provides them with the competencies they need to advance in their CCG careers.

Potential for further improvement of the performance of the College exists in several aspects, as follows:

- The College could take up the role as the CCG's Centre for Expertise in marine training. This would require strengthening the College's governance model by adding senior-level regional representation to the current Academic Council, and ensuring appropriate strategic perspective. Furthermore, it would require recognition of the College as the holders of the CCG training curriculum, offering career management and counselling, expanding the scope of training offerings, and modernizing the learning technology and service delivery models utilized for training.
- The Quality Assurance Framework is improving the teaching process at the College but an expanded implementation is needed to address gaps in the current content, instruction and assessment. In particular, the post-training assessment tool needs to be implemented to collect feedback to inform continuous improvement towards effective, needs-responsive training.
- Recruitment continues to be a significant challenge. This is hampered by insufficient dedicated resources for recruitment, a lack of visibility and exposure of the College, and challenges of the current enrollment process for training programs. The College has a recruitment plan to address some of these obstacles; however, the plan has not been fully funded yet. Challenges related to

recruitment that still persist include resource limitations (especially at the regions), lack of authority for social media outreach, and lack of media/advertising plan.

- Evidence indicates that the practical and sea-based components of training are highly valued by graduates, as well as training equipment and technology. Clarity on expectations and procedures related to at-sea phases would improve the training experience for both trainees and ships' crew. The evaluation found that strengthening the CCG-focus in program content and providing additional leadership development opportunities may enhance the College's programs.
- The lack of flexibility in the execution of the programs offered at the College is a barrier for achieving its full potential. Alternate course delivery options, options for academic credit, and a review of the timing and sequencing of at-sea phases may increase the reach of training opportunities while mitigating some resource constraints at the College. In particular, the MCTS training may need to be revised to meet the growing demand for trained MCTS officers in the CCG.
- There is a need for an increased focus on the trainees and the trainee experience at the College. Greater transparency and open communication with the College administration is needed to resolve the dissatisfaction expressed in the officer-cadet population. A perceived lack of sufficient mental health support was identified in the evaluation, despite the availability of support resources and services at the College. Additional efforts to promote how trainees can access all available resources would better support them during a demanding experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the Deputy Commissioner, Operations ensure that the role of the College be strengthened to allow its recognition as the Centre of Expertise for marine training for the CCG. This requires the governance model of the College to be strengthened to ensure that the College has appropriate strategic direction and guidance, including senior-level regional representation. This would allow the College to explore various learning platforms and service delivery models to be utilized for training for the CCG.
2. It is recommended that the Deputy Commissioner, Operations ensure the College puts in place the post-training assessment tool and its data repository, to regularly collect performance feedback from trainees and CCG operations' officers/managers, and to utilize the feedback for continuous improvement of the quality of the training.
3. It is recommended that the Deputy Commissioner, Operations strengthen the recruitment of both Officer Training Program cadets and MCTS trainees, and ensure appropriate links of collaboration between the College and the CCG regions with regards to recruitment and associated activities.
4. It is recommended that the Deputy Commissioner, Operations review the ab-initio and the on-the-job training and course material for MCTS to determine if changes of the content and/or alternative delivery of the training are feasible and beneficial. The review and the potential implementation of the alternatives should contribute to a shorter certification time period.

5. It is recommended that the Deputy Commissioner, Operations ensure the College establishes reliable communication practice with officer cadets/trainees and internal staff so that all internal policies and procedures are understood and information related to training and campus life is shared in an effective, transparent and timely manner.
6. It is recommended that the Deputy Commissioner, Operations ensure that (i) all officer-cadets/trainees at the College have access to consulting and support resources related to mental health; (ii) the College initiate a promotion and outreach campaign to draw awareness to mental health support resources currently available at the College.

ABOUT THIS EVALUATION

The evaluation covers the five-year period from 2011-12 through 2015-16 and was conducted by Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Evaluation Directorate. The College was last evaluated in 2012. In 2015-16, total spending by the College was \$14 271 700.

For more information about this evaluation and its findings, please consult the Evaluation of the Canadian Coast Guard College report, including the Management Action Plan accessible online at <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ae-ve/evaluations-eng.htm>