

SUPERYACHT CREW YOUR WAY OF THINKING



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WELCOME



In July and August 2017, specialist yachting recruiter Faststream and industry job board Yotspot surveyed over 1,200 superyacht crew to gain a unique insight into the views, thoughts and feelings that these individuals have about the industry they work in.

The yachting industry is an extraordinarily diverse and interesting sector to work in and the crew needed for the yachts of past, present and future have never been more important. The reliance of those on-board to meet the ever increasing demands of owners, managers and guests, and the ever increasing size and complexity of yachts that sail the open seas are more vital than ever.

There has been much talk over the last few years around crew recruitment and countless salary surveys published. However, there is limited coverage on the wider thoughts and feelings of crew and their views of the yachting industry as a whole. The data collected in this survey represents a huge cross-section of the marketplace. The aim of this report is to uncover the good and the bad of the industry, looking at yachting from an employment perspective and discovering where

the industry excels and where it falls short.

Are crew happy? Are they under excessive pressure to do their job? Are captains trusted and respected? Does the sector offer long-term career opportunities? And just how long do crew members plan to spend working in what has historically been an industry of short-term careers? These are just a few of the unanswered questions which are so unique to the industry and ones that only crew themselves will be able to answer.

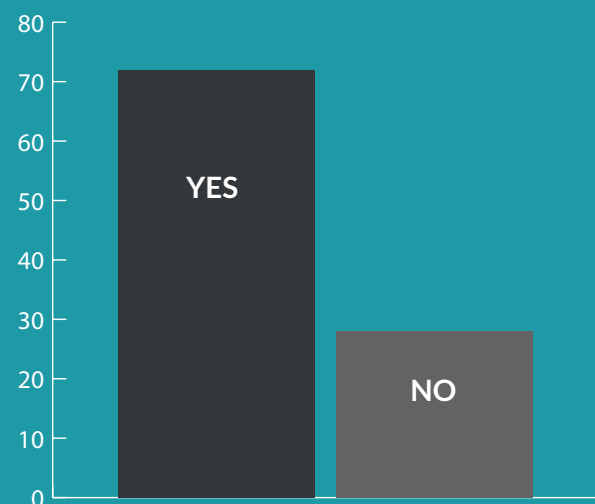
This report will cover Learning & Development, Health & Wellbeing, Career Performance & Pay, Job Seeking, Job Satisfaction & Engagement.

MARK CHARMAN
FASTSTREAM GROUP CEO

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

72% of yacht crew believed that their current captain is a good leader. As with any industry, leadership is vitally important to motivating the team around you, for staff happiness and for crew retention. Whether you are the boss in the office or the boss on-board, being seen as a good leader comes with many benefits, and yacht captains seem to be doing a good job.

IS YOUR CURRENT CAPTAIN A GOOD LEADER?



“THERE ARE TOO MANY COURSES WHICH ARE TOO EXPENSIVE AND GIVE TOO LITTLE”

“For the large majority of crew to say that their captain is a good leader in a completely anonymous survey speaks volumes.

Leadership is a big topic currently in the wider maritime sector and the advantages of having a good leader at the helm runs through the veins of a yacht. A good leader will have a good reputation and the challenges of attracting and retaining crew becomes far easier. The sector is such a close knit community that it is not unusual for our recruiters to be asked who the captain of the yacht is by candidates.”

So what is it that makes a captain great? The survey asked the same question to both the crew and the captains themselves, with both parties offering similar answers.

Communication, leading by example, fairness, empathy, patience, understanding and professionalism were all listed as important traits for a great captain to have in their DNA. The one main difference is that captain’s listed ‘crew’ as the most prominent aspect of what makes a great captain.

“It certainly shows some mutual respect in the industry. Not every captain is going to be great but to recognise their crew as the most

important aspect of being a good captain shows some transparency and understanding. Would the CEO of an office based job list his employees as the most important aspect of him being a great boss? Possibly not.”

When it comes to learning and development, qualifications are an obvious factor in the life-cycle of crew. Basic qualifications, those required for crew to get on-board and do their jobs, are still mostly being paid for by the crew themselves and not their employer. 56% of crew are paying for their own basic qualifications, 12% of employers are contributing to the cost and just 32% of employers are paying the whole cost.

“Crew working within commercial maritime, regardless of rank, are not paying for their own ‘workplace qualifications’ and it is standard practice for employers to cover the entire cost of their courses. The yachting industry is very different when it comes to making crew pay for their qualifications. We have begun to see changes with an increase in employer contributions towards qualifications and other initiatives such as reimbursing costs after one years’ service. The wider issue

is that yachting is disjointed in its approach to this which leaves it far too open to interpretation.”

So, does the industry need to make training more affordable? The survey asked respondents what the industry should do to improve the quality and availability of training courses. Affordability came out on top, followed by higher standards, relevancy of topics and availability.

“To summarise the feedback from yacht crew, there were too many courses which are too expensive and give too little. We had various comments from crew who believed that there was a lack of governance of crew training courses and a lack of industry information on what courses are really necessary and this should ring alarm bells for the industry. Many green crew we heard from had been caught out by paying and completing training courses which they either did not need to do, did not help them find a job or did not help them to develop their career. Professional cadetships and apprenticeships are a hot topic in the wider maritime sector at present and yachting should take a closer look at this for inspiration.”

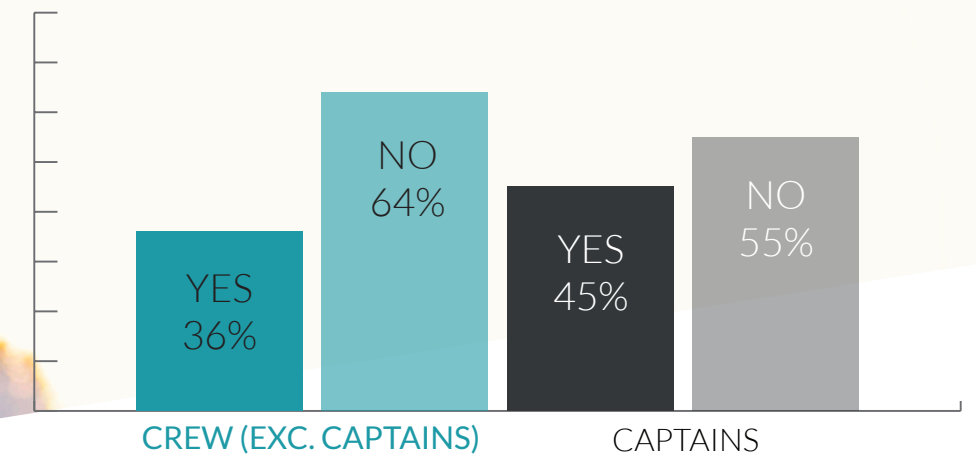
HEALTH & WELLBEING



Given the demands of crew and the pressures of the job it is not surprising that 36% of crew and 45% of captains feel that they are under excessive pressure in their current role. Is this the reality of working in the yachting industry, or is this a danger area that employers should take note of?



DO YOU FEEL UNDER EXCESSIVE PRESSURE?



"It may be a reality but it is not something that can be ignored. Excessive pressure in any job is going to lead to issues; whether it is happiness, bad decision making or looking for another job, there are knock-on effects. Perhaps the pressure point is being felt most by captains, given that a lower percentage of crew are feeling under excessive pressure. The data tells us that captains could be taking the bulk of the pressure so more needs to be done to reduce excessive pressure on captains."

So can pressure be directly related to a lack of sufficient leave? The survey asked whether yacht crew were satisfied with their current leave and the trend in crew vs. captain continued. 59% of crew were satisfied with their current leave whilst only 52% of captains were.

"Excessive pressure and insufficient downtime go hand-in-hand in any job, within any industry. If you take Scandinavia as an extreme example, employees take long summer holidays and work fewer hours each week. They

have the world's leading retention, health and wellbeing rates and the highest productivity globally. In yachting there needs to be a balance to ensure that crew are not overworked to the extent that they become pressurised, stressed and ultimately unproductive."

When asked what the yachting industry can do to improve employee wellbeing, answers followed a similar theme. More rotational jobs, rotations for every crew member and structured working hours were popular comments. But is this realistic?

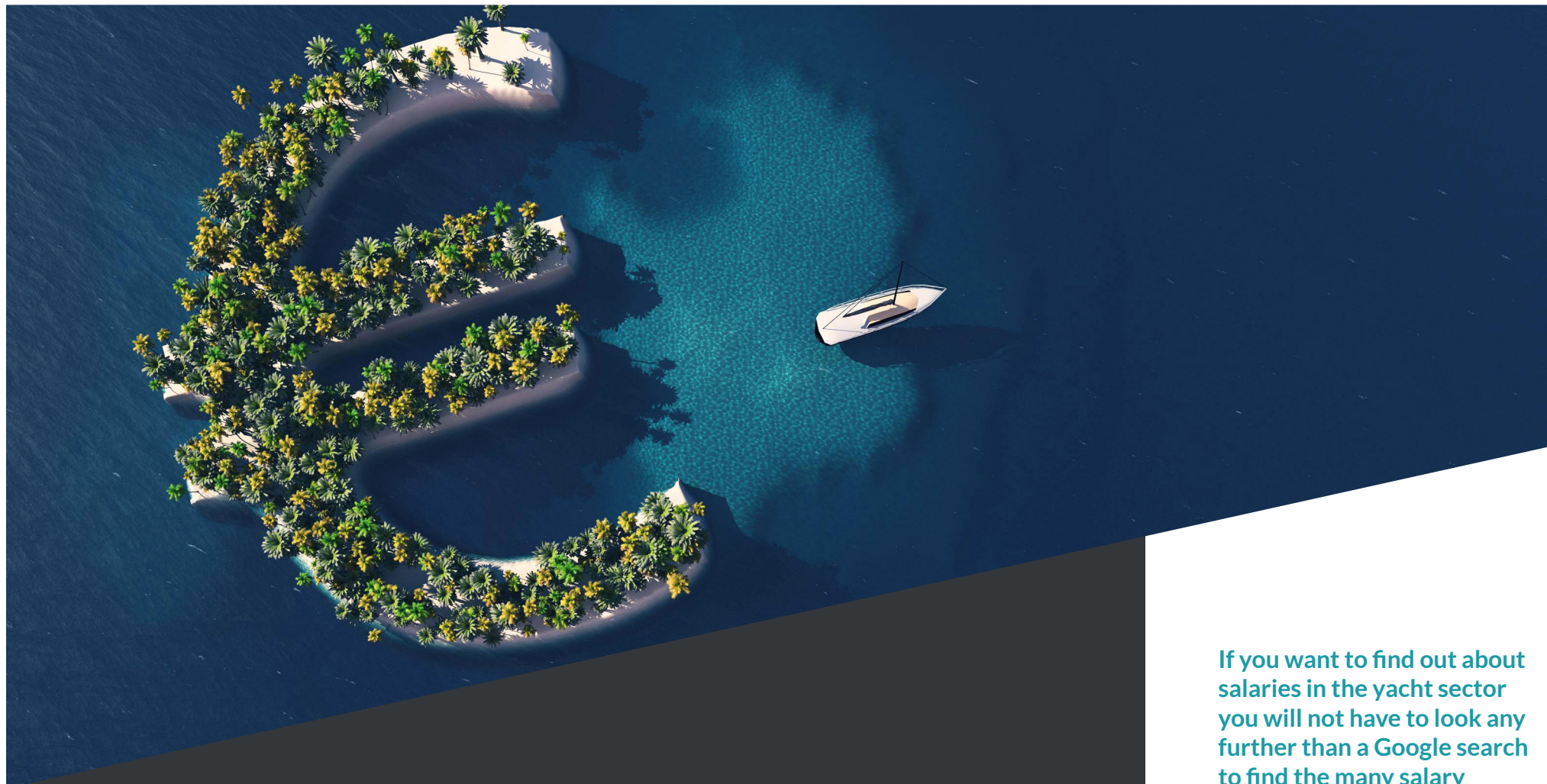
"Having two identical teams on rotation or more rotational roles would make crew happier but the increased cost that owners would bear makes this unrealistic. The question is whether the industry standards set by the MLC are enough."

Will rotations have an impact on attracting captains from the commercial maritime sector? *"Without a doubt yes. The larger yachts are trying to attract commercial captains who are used to working on rotation. It is*

going to be hard for yachting to attract this talent and this topic represents a huge barrier to entry in bringing commercial captains across to yachting."

So when it comes to crew with wellbeing issues, how considerate is a captain? According to the survey results 72% of crew believed that their current captain is considerate about their wellbeing and 68% would feel either very confident or confident about disclosing a personal issue with their captain.

"What we know is that captains are doing a good job using the softer skills required to run a successful yacht and team of crew. They are taking the bulk of the pressure off crew, being considerate about the teams wellbeing and crew feel comfortable discussing personal issues with them. Of course this will not be the case for everyone working on a yacht but for the large majority it is. The question is whether money alone, and the love of the job, is enough to keep the best captains in yachting?"



CAREER PERFORMANCE & PAY

“54% OF CREW ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR PAY”

If you want to find out about salaries in the yacht sector you will not have to look any further than a Google search to find the many salary surveys which are available online for all to see. These salary reports are often seen by prospective crew looking to enter the industry or for crew already on yachts looking to see if they are paid more or less than their counterparts. But are people in the yacht sector generally satisfied with their current level of pay? The good news is that 54% are, the bad news is that 46% are not.

“The results are encouraging. Whether it is in the wider maritime sector or another industry altogether, people generally think they are underpaid. 54% being satisfied with their pay is a good result, and generally they are right; salaries in the yacht sector are good.”

But is the yachting industry only there for crew to make a quick buck? This is a perception that most outside the industry may be led to believe? According to the survey data a surprising 83% believe that they can fulfil their long-term career aspirations within yachting, whether it is at sea or ashore.

“It is a positive result for the industry but the question is whether the yacht sector can provide enough opportunities for crew to spend their working life within. Most crew will not want to stay at sea forever, and there is a limit to the jobs that are available within yachting ashore. Nevertheless, yachting businesses ashore will benefit from those looking to make the transition ashore which is unlike commercial areas of the maritime sector where hiring ex-seafarers ashore remains a huge challenge.”

Whilst the sector is clearly being seen as a long-term career option, does it need to adopt the career development and performance processes that are so prevalent ashore? The survey asked respondents whether they

have had a performance review in the last six months, within only 36% answering yes, leaving a large majority without a performance review over a significant period of time.

“Performance reviews are an important part of working life, both for the employee and the employer. They provide an opportunity to recognise and discuss development areas, listen to people’s worries or frustrations and ultimately help with engagement and retention. We are starting to see the larger yachts adopting a more formal approach to performance reviews, which has become possible given the amount of resource they have available to do so. Smaller yachts with less resource will need to think creatively around how they can adopt a similar approach. Small companies ashore can do it, so there is no reason that it cannot happen on smaller yachts at sea, if the desire is there.”



JOBSEEKING

66% of captains and 71% of crew surveyed revealed that they are currently looking for a new role which will lead to potentially significant retention issues in the industry.

As the majority of crew and captains plan to stay in the yacht industry long term, the survey also revealed that 60% of respondents plan to spend at least the next 3 years as crew which would lead to a huge shift in talent between yachts rather than crew moving outside of the sector.

“It is a worrying statistic and if it becomes a reality then there will be huge movements of talent between yachts which will be great for those with a good reputation and bad for others. Yachting has always been highly active when it comes to jobseeking. Owners and managers need to be thinking about many of the areas highlighted in this report to ensure that they can retain staff. In many cases it will be far easier to retain than it will be to hire.”

52% of crew have been worried about the security of their job at some point in the last 6 months. The knock-on effect of concerns over job security is that the employee will become a more active jobseeker, even if they would be otherwise happy in their current role; if they were doing it on another yacht. Access to jobs in the sector continues to expand with the survey revealing an equal spread between social media, referrals, agencies and job boards listed as the places that crew found their current position. Jobs are everywhere and for all to see.

“Job security is clearly a problem and with over half of the crew we surveyed revealing that they have had recent concerns over the safety of their job, the

issue is real and the issue is now. There could be a multitude of reasons for this; concerns over the owners finances, a new captain or change in management are common causes for concern. Owners and managers should do all they can to limit or address concerns over job security. Could a more regular review process help? It would certainly provide the opportunity to minimise concerns and open dialogue with crew.”

SATISFACTION & ENGAGEMENT

Just how satisfied are crew in their current role?
It is a mixed bag with 68% either satisfied or very satisfied in their current role.



“THE INDUSTRY MUST LOOK AT OTHER AREAS OF MARITIME AND ADOPT THE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED TO KEEP PEOPLE HAPPY”

“The results show that although the majority of crew are satisfied with their current role, the 32% which are not are likely to be considering changing their job and will be more active as a jobseeker. You would not be wrong to assume that these crew will be disengaged within their current position.”

For the proportion of crew who do have the job satisfaction that they desire there will likely be a link between this satisfaction and their day-to-day role. 77% of the crew we surveyed said that they are able to use the knowledge and skills that they have in their current role.

When it comes to motivation, 58% of the crew which we surveyed feel motivated in their current role. But what does this data tell us?

“The superyacht industry is perhaps the most intimate place to work throughout the entire maritime sector and is unlike most other jobs no matter what your field of expertise. The close proximity of your work colleagues and the amount of time you spend with them when you are on-board, the responsibility to the owners, guests, their children, well-being,

belongings and everything else in-between. There are so many factors, often over-looked, which contribute to crew wellbeing, happiness, job satisfaction and engagement. Somebody may love their job, but not the yacht, the living conditions, the rotation they are on, the owners they work for, the itinerary; the list goes on. All the factors large and small will ultimately lead to a crew member either leaving a yacht or staying. It may be the captain or it may be the purser; the point is that all crew are active as a jobseeker and can / will leave for something better.”

So what needs to change?

“The industry must look at other areas of the maritime industry and adopt the tools and techniques used to keep people happy, to address issues quickly, to recognise development opportunities with crew and to ultimately ensure that staff turnover is not at an unsustainable level. The cruise sector is a good example of how to do things properly. There is much talk around captains from the cruise sector entering the superyacht market. Yes, this happens, but captains of a cruise ship are used to a much more

structured approach to their career and wellbeing. It’s likely that we will see captains who have moved over to superyachts returning to cruise because they are not getting the ‘softer touch’ which they are used to. There are many positives to take away from this report, but there is an equal amount of areas for development and yachting must act quickly to ensure that it continues to be career of choice from both green and experienced crew. When all is said and done, it is the crew who are the lifeblood of the industry.”

THIS REPORT IS PRODUCED BY FASTSTREAM YACHT CREW AND YOTSPOT.



Faststream Yacht Crew is part of the Faststream Recruitment Group, the world's largest maritime recruiter. The group was established in 1999 and now employs over 100 consultants throughout a network of offices in the UK, Singapore and North America. Faststream Yacht Crew brings together the group's professional recruitment expertise and compliance with hands-on yachting expertise.

www.faststreamyachtcrew.com



Steve Crawford entered the yachting industry in 2008 and would spend 6 years at sea on a variety of boats working his way up to 1st Mate. It was early in 2010 when Steve, frustrated by the experience of finding work in Yachting founded Yotspot and set out to change the way the industry connected with Crew, Jobs and Training forever. It was 2 years later when a chance encounter in La Ciotat led to Steve bumping into an old University friend who was looking for a company to invest in. Daryl Bradley had entered the industry 2 years prior after the offer of 6 weeks day work turned into a Bosun's position on a 56m. Daryl moved ashore to set up Yotspot HQ from the kitchen of his flat 2 years later. The experiment worked and Steve followed shortly after. They moved into their offices in Ocean Village in 2014 and 3 and a half years on... haven't looked back.

www.yotspot.com