



**MASSACHUSETTS MARINE TRADES
EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

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2019 Update on the Workforce – Executive Summary

August, 2019

In April 2016, the Massachusetts Marine Trades Educational Trust (MMTET), an affiliate of the Massachusetts Marine Trades Association (MMTA), commissioned a survey of member businesses to assess the current state of the industry workforce, and to attempt to define future requirements for training and recruiting. The results were shared with the survey respondents, and printed copies of the survey findings were made available to the MMTA general membership at the association's Annual Business Meeting.

At that time, there was industry-wide recognition of the workforce shortage issue affecting the operations of recreational boating businesses. Finding qualified workers, marine technicians in particular, presented a major challenge to business owners. Compounding the problem was aging of the existing workforce. The results of the 2016 survey showed the employment potential for the marine industry in Massachusetts. It also showed that delivering on that potential was being impeded due to lack of qualified personnel.

The original 2016 survey can be found here:

https://www.boatma.com/mmtet/pdf/Survey_Summary.pdf.

Fast forward three years to the present...

Significant progress has been made in providing resources for workforce development in Massachusetts. The MMTA made use of the 2016 Survey data when working with the state legislature to procure funding to focus on this goal. Working in a collaborative manner with state officials, boating industry businesses, schools, job seekers and others the focus on resolving the workforce challenges remains a top priority.

Part of the state funding received has been utilized to support workforce related initiatives including:

- Educational curriculum support and collaboration with three state vocational schools (Upper Cape Tech, Cape Cod Regional Tech & Greater New Bedford Tech) & ABYC.
- Training Funding and Tools of the trade funding for both recreational boating industry employees and educational partners. The focus on both funding opportunities is to help strengthen the recruitment and retention for employees and schools within the industry.
- Marketing and continued growth and focus of our Educational Trust Careers website www.massboatingcareers.com. This website continues to market job/career opportunities within the industry, provide additional information on the boating industry, information on our educational partners and scholarship opportunities for training within the industry.

The Educational Trust workforce survey completed in 2016 continues to be utilized as a point of reference indicating the current and future challenges within the boating industry in Massachusetts and has been a critical tool for distribution to our members, partner schools, state officials, job seekers and others.

Keeping the data up-to-date

In order to keep the momentum going, the MMTET board decided to go back to the respondents of the 2016 survey with a request to refresh the workforce data. Up-to-date data is a necessity when working with legislators, educational institutions, and industry partners. Having the latest data on hand adds credibility and urgency to the discussions that result in funding being made available and programs being established that help build tomorrow's workforce. The MMTET will use the findings of the survey refresh, along with other data, to

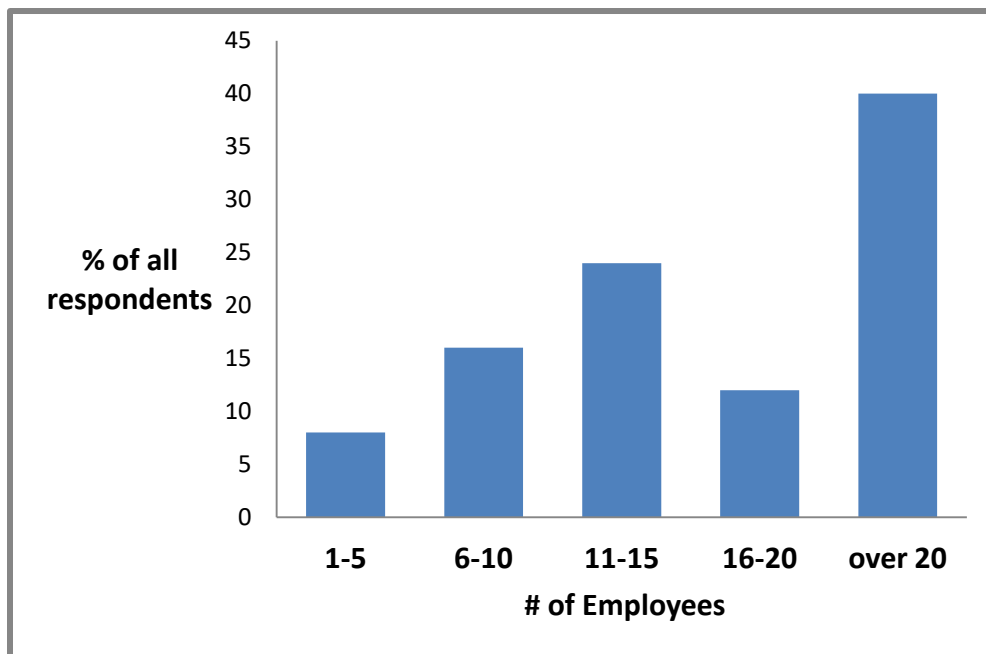
promote both the available jobs and careers in our industry and the training and education in the necessary areas in an attempt to alleviate our workforce issues.

Realizing that survey fatigue may be an issue, the 2019 follow-up was kept brief and to the point. The update survey was trimmed back to 7 questions, compared to the 27 separate data points from the original survey.

The 2019 Results

48% of the respondents to the 2016 survey participated in this year's update. The majority of business responding focus on boat sales, service, maintenance and repairs, boatyards, dealers, marinas, and service shops.

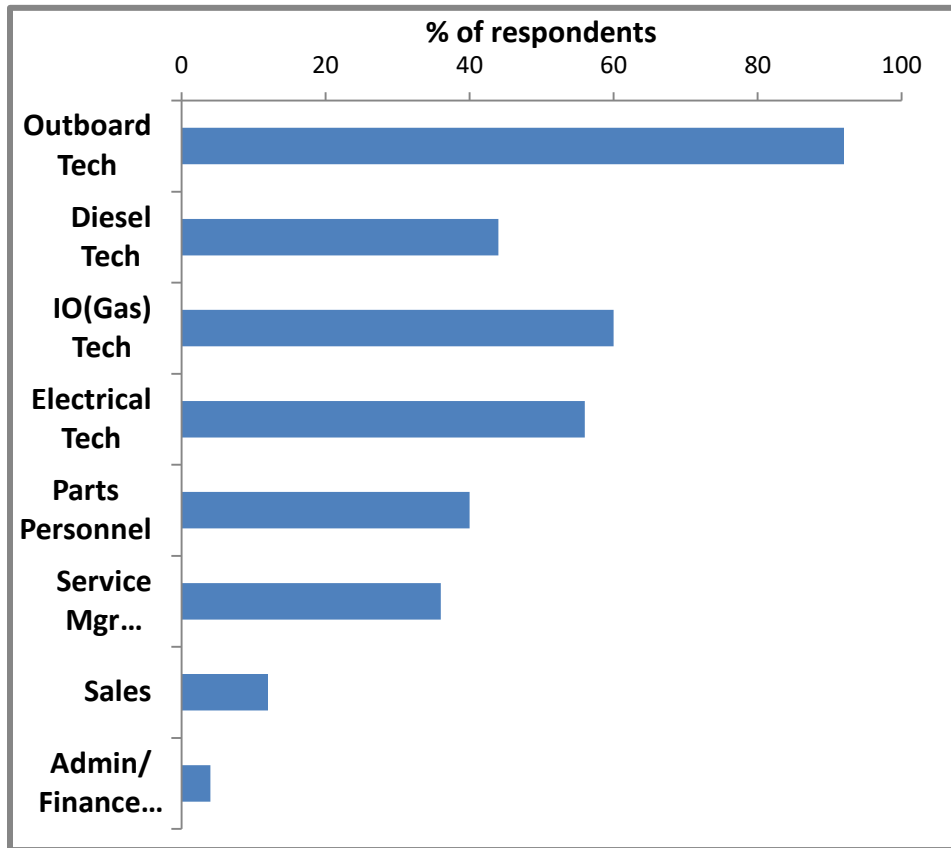
Q1. Number of employees in business:



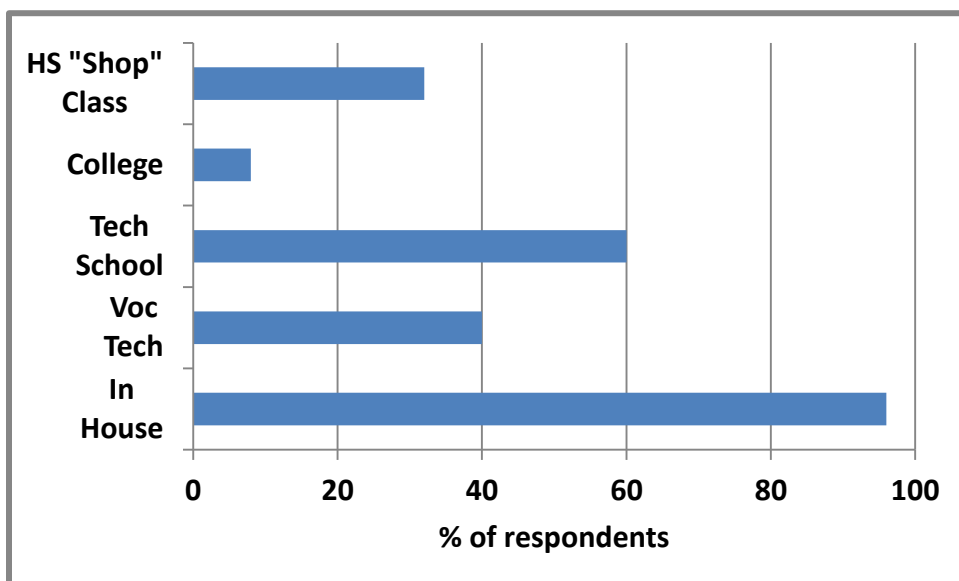
Q2. Hiring Forecast over next 5 years

The average response was 4.5 hires per business over the next 5 years.

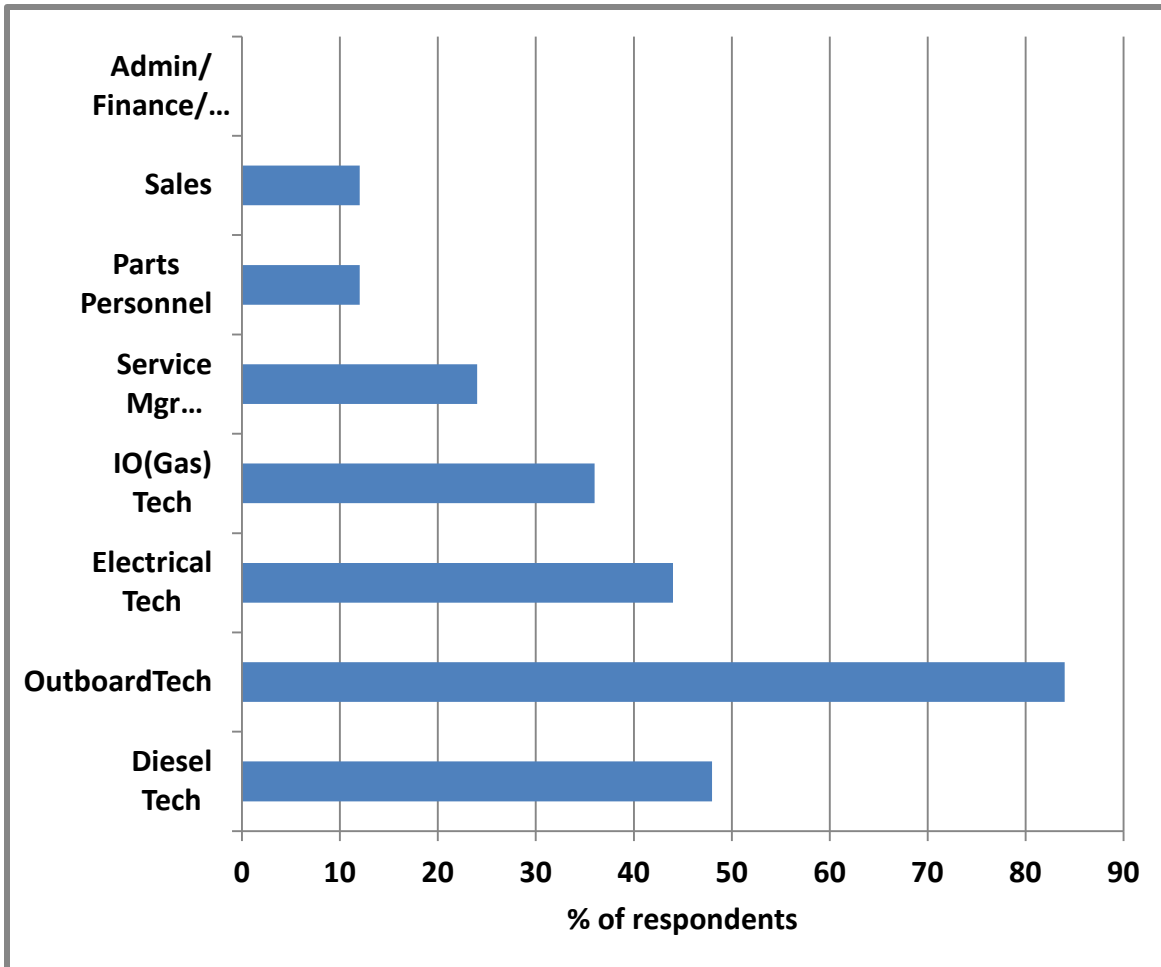
Q3. Most difficult position to fill (choose up to 4)



Q4. Source of current employees training, education, or certification



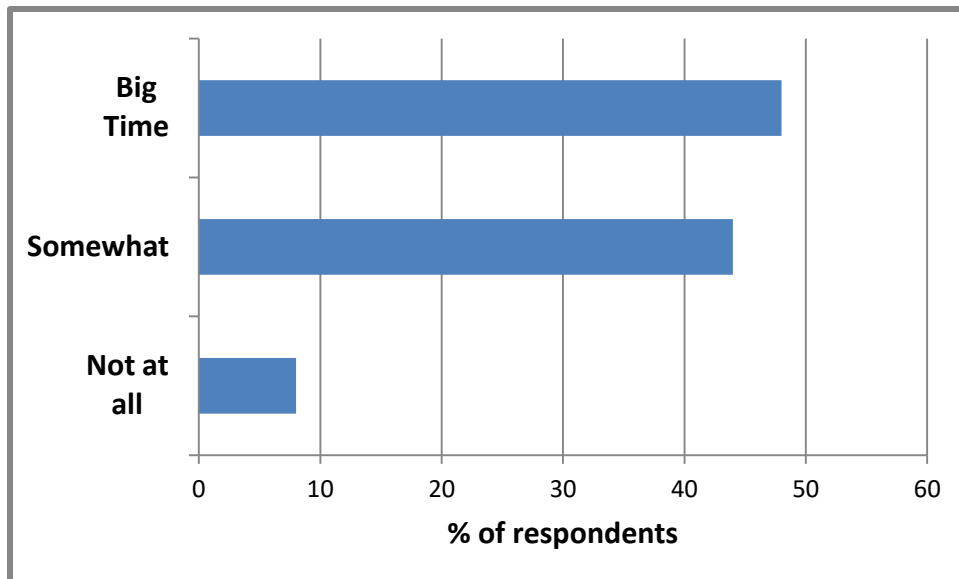
Q5. Which skill sets require that a new hire have appropriate qualifications (choose up to 3):



Q6. Do you see the need for local educational centers offering training/certification in multiple marine trades?

100% of respondents replied YES.

Q7. How has the current workforce shortage impacted your business?



Q8. Free-form Comments

- It may be time to get the unions involved. That would standardize wages and benefits and give us a pool of seasonal employees that we are not spending time and money training only to have them leave. The Voc. schools are not the answer.
- You didn't ask about non-mechanical specialized skills - such as fiberglass repair, carpentry/cabinet making, and varnish work - or aspects of boat repair and maintenance for which there are also shortages to the extent that there are not people aware of or interested in marine trades. There is demand.
- The workforce now consists of non-English as primary language thoughts: too many college educated youths with no technical/mechanical skills, lack of work ethic suggestions: high school career counselors should encourage more young people to look at "blue collar" job and not college
- The crisis continues and is affecting our industry's ability to take proper care of the boating consumer.

- We need to communicate to the High School students that the marine industry is a place to make a good living.
- A lack of talented, caring, educated, experienced people creates stress within the company. The pool of candidates to hire is desperately low. We have skipped a whole generation from people that understand the elements and demands of the boat business. We are such a small industry. We get no respect.
- I am a firm believer in the need for Vo-Tech in high schools to be re-implemented & be mandatory in every high school. Kids coming out of high school (which is the start of a career) are subsequently lacking in simple skills.
- Employees have to like boats. The better and more diverse their skills the more useful they are and the more they earn. Get people out in boats.

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Trustees, Massachusetts Marine Trades Education Trust