

THE PLIGHT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SEAFARER

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ABSTRACT

The issue of seafarer placement has been continually raised, in the context of South African seafarers. Because of the limited domestic shipping reach, South African seafarers have had to rely upon the international merchant navy for jobs and practical training. Given that the global supply of seafarers is close to 2million strong, the pool of South African cadets and seafarers has to compete with the global supply pool for jobs and training. While the issue of training berths has been published, the sector has been shrouded in mystery, as very little has been reported about their experiences globally, their struggles and the opportunities available to them. In this study, the global backdrop has been provided, together with insights about their struggles and challenges. The paper ends with an assessment of their placement within the changing global shipping environment and the interventions required if they are to thrive and prosper in the changing global context.