

# BLUE SECURITY

## A MARITIME AFFAIRS SERIES

Handbook for Designing and Implementing Maritime  
Security Capacity-Building Activities in the Indo-Pacific

Annette Bradford, Scott Edwards, John Bradford





## BLUE SECURITY

**The Blue Security Program engages with and facilitates high quality research on issues of critical maritime security across the Indo-Pacific. Bringing together leading regional experts in politics, international law and strategic studies, Blue Security focuses on three key pillars of maritime security: order, law and power.**

Blue Security is a collaboration between La Trobe Asia, University of New South Wales Canberra (ADFA), University of Western Australia's Defence and Security Institute (DSI), United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney (USSC) and the Asia-Pacific Development, Diplomacy & Defence Dialogue (AP4D).

It produces working papers, commentaries, and scholarly publications related to maritime security for audiences across the Indo-Pacific.

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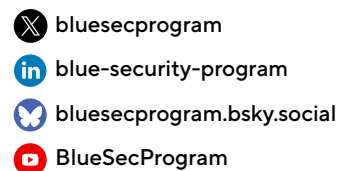
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The Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies (YCAPS) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting professional development and international collaboration. It strives to bridge the gap between policy discussions and the communities they affect, fostering a deeper understanding of the strategic issues facing our region through practical, grassroots

engagement. YCAPS compiled this handbook after completing a series of studies. YCAPS appreciates Blue Security's support with its publication and distribution.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING

This handbook lays out best practices for improving Indo-Pacific capacity-building activities (CBAs) and gives practical advice for policy makers, programme managers and trainers to follow. This advice is based on in-person observations of CBAs in the Indo-Pacific and is informed by an international education perspective.

The handbook also provides policy recommendations for those seeking to pursue a more coordinated approach to Indo-Pacific capacity building.

Much valuable maritime security capacity building in the Indo-Pacific takes the form of training and human capital development. However, these capacity-building activities (CBAs) are of varied quality, generally uncoordinated, and often poorly aligned with the recipient states' needs.

Key challenges that prevent the optimisation of capacity-building activities include:

- The term capacity building lacks a shared definition.
- Maritime security is diverse and complex.
- Political will and local CBA ownership are not guaranteed.
- States have varied organisational structures.
- Donors often lack knowledge of local contexts.
- CBAs are often not optimized for sustainability.
- Efforts are often duplicated and sometimes contradictory.

Small improvements in resourcing, planning, and delivery can have large impacts on the value CBAs bring, particularly if fundamental educational principles are taken into account.

Existing literature broadly identifies seven best practices for maritime security CBAs:

- Maritime Security CBAs must have clear, coordinated goals.
- Ongoing commitment from CBA implementers (provider state) is necessary.
- CBAs should be relevant to the local (recipient) context and there must be local ownership of the activities.
- Instructors should possess the relevant expertise.
- Information should be shared via robust structures.
- Informal networks or communities of practice should be created among CBA implementers and recipients.
- CBAs should be systematically evaluated.

CBAs are best designed with a 'training cycle' in mind. The training cycle encourages a systematic process comprising six stages: Define, Assess, Design, Deliver, Monitor, and Evaluate.

Taking the training cycle into account, CBA implementers should follow these best practices:

- **Define**
  - Determine Goals
  - Balance Resources, Provider and Recipient Priorities
- **Assess**
  - Engage with the Optimum Audience
  - Determine the Needs of the Audience and Share Them with the Instructor
- **Design**
  - Align Objectives with Goals
  - Select Trainers with Subject Matter Expertise and Teacher Training

- Ensure the Training Venue is Optimized for the Activity
  - Use Seating Plans to Optimize Value
  - Establish Realistic and Practical Expectations for the Training Audience
  - Plan, Communicate and Stick to the Daily Schedule
  - Organize Meals and Snacks
  - Social Activities can be Important
- **Deliver**
    - Self-Introductions and Nametags
    - Use Slides to Reinforce, not Define Delivery
    - Ensure Student Engagement through Different Means
    - Facilitate Knowledge Sharing and Reinforce Learning
    - Provide Reference Materials and Take-Homes
    - Use Quality Interpreters
  - **Monitor**
    - Ensure Participant Feedback Tools are Well-Designed and Used
    - Tailor and Tend Alumni Networks to Maximize Participation
  - **Evaluate**
    - Ensure the Training is Evaluated by the Provider Organisation
    - Ensure the Evaluation Information is Available for the Next Iteration of the Course

In the Indo-Pacific, there is no fast-track toward improving maritime governance capacity. Instead, it requires a step-by-step approach that builds over time.

Much of the disconnect between the policy vision for and practical implementation of maritime security CBAs stems from poor communication and a lack of coordination—either within governments, across CBA provider governments or organisations, or between the CBA provider governments and partner nations.

A coordinated approach to CBAs is needed and coordinated activities with partner nations can be placed on a spectrum ranging from deconflicted, to compatible, to full integration.

Improved coordination among CBAs can be achieved at the working level if:

- working-level embassy-level coordination is treated as essential.
- implementers understand strategic priorities and share CBA feedback.
- coordination between maritime domain awareness centres is improved.

Establishing a maritime governance centre of excellence to serve as a hub for capacity building in the Indo-Pacific would be a wise investment.

▼ Members of the Philippine Coast Guard and the guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon's VBSS team members. Credit: U.S. Navy, Joshua Scott.



# INTRODUCTION

disasters, criminal activities, and interstate tensions endanger seafarers, undermine the well-being of coastal communities, and threaten regional calamity. In security circles, it is common knowledge that the Indo-Pacific suffers from a maritime security shortfall. While dangerous grey-zone operations, sea robbery and shadow fleet activities are constantly in the news and at the forefront of analytical discussion, those happen on top of baseline levels of danger and poverty.

Illustrating the scope of this problem, the Information Fusion Centre (IFC) in Singapore counted 1,266 individuals dead or missing in maritime incidents on the regional seas during 2025.<sup>1</sup> These tragedies are left under-discussed because the dangerous character of these seas is simply taken for granted. Some of the issues are relatively local, but others are more transnational in nature. All have meaningful international implications.

The region's maritime security shortcomings are directly related to its maritime governance weaknesses.<sup>2</sup> As a general definition, "maritime governance" refers to the capacity to establish and enforce the framework of laws, regulations, policies, and institutions generated both within the legal jurisdictions of states and the international community that establish and maintain "good order at sea."<sup>3</sup> International law puts the bulk of the burden for maritime governance responsibilities on states, and most of the region's maritime security problems relate directly to the fact that many regional states lack sufficient capacity to maintain the necessary levels of governance.

A lack of maritime governance effectively guarantees that commercial entities will dangerously cut corners while criminals and militants will quickly exploit any seams for their ends. The same gaps enable states to employ dangerous grey-zone tactics in their efforts to gain advantages over one another.<sup>4</sup> The practical manifestations of maritime governance include the enforcement of safety regulations, the management of natural resources, the safeguarding of the marine environment, the execution

of law enforcement operations, and deterring states from engaging in unlawful behaviour.

Acknowledging the nature of this problem, higher-capacity states, international organisations (IOs), and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) actively engage in activities to build regional maritime governance capacity. While hardware provision often makes headlines, much valuable capacity building takes the form of training and human capital development. However, these capacity-building activities (CBAs) are of varied quality, generally uncoordinated, and often poorly aligned with the recipient states' needs. They are under-optimized and small improvements in resourcing, planning, and delivery can have large impacts on the value they bring. Yet, published work about how to improve CBAs is often abstract or difficult for policy makers, programme managers and trainers to access.

Recognising the need for research-based practical information to enable CBA policy makers, programme managers, and trainers to improve their performance, the Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies (YCAPS) undertook the development of a best practice guide for maritime security CBAs in the Indo-Pacific. This handbook presents the work of a team of researchers who

**MARITIME SECURITY  
SHORTCOMINGS ARE  
DIRECTLY RELATED  
TO MARITIME  
GOVERNANCE  
WEAKNESSES**

synthesized information, observed CBAs, and assessed best practices in various locations across the Indo-Pacific. It specifically identifies transferable actions that should be considered by CBA leaders when developing and implementing maritime security CBAs in the region and provides policy recommendations for those seeking to pursue a more coordinated approach to Indo-Pacific capacity building.

This handbook is divided into two parts. Part A lays the foundations for the subsequent observations and recommendations. Here, we synthesize information from published sources including academic reviews, practical guides, and government publications to provide an overview of the current state of maritime security CBAs. We discuss the challenges and limitations that prevent capacity-building optimisation. We then review previous studies of maritime security capacity-building to catalogue best practices.

Part B provides guidelines for implementing maritime

security CBAs. The guide looks to research from the fields of international education and training, intercultural communication, and programme evaluation to aid practitioners in developing educationally sound CBAs. Next, observations of current CBAs administered by a range of agencies in the Indo-Pacific inform detailed, pragmatic best practice strategies to implementing CBAs. The final section of the guide turns to policy-level CBA planning issues and examines how CBAs can be made more effective at the interface between policy and practice.

✓ *Brunei participates in SEACAT 2025, reinforcing maritime security efforts among Indo-Pacific partners*



# DEFINITIONS

## CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development provides a policy-oriented definition of capacity building:

...capacity-building encompasses the country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities. A fundamental goal of capacity-building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environmental potential and limits and needs as perceived by the people of the country concerned.<sup>5</sup>

In the maritime domain, this has been interpreted more simply as "activities which are directed at the empowerment of governments and coastal communities to efficiently and efficaciously govern and sustainably exploit the maritime domain, including territorial waters and exclusive economic zones."<sup>6</sup>

Japan's Ministry of Defense defines capacity building even more simply: capacity-building activities "help other [SIC] country improve its own capacity by utilizing Japan's capacity."<sup>7</sup>

CBAs can include the transfer of data, information, technology (including the transfer of equipment), as well as human resource development.<sup>8</sup> This handbook focuses on CBAs related to human resources development.

## TRAINING

CBAs related to human resources development can be also referred to as training. Training is a transformational activity that influences the skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes of a trainee. The purpose of training is to reduce the gap between a trainee's **current** and **desired competencies**. It differs from education in that it focuses specifically on practical or on-the-job applications.<sup>9</sup>

**Skills-based training** enables the training audience to acquire new competencies. Examples related to maritime governance include the conduct of visitation, boarding, search and seizure (VBSS) operations, and procedures for collecting, handling, and processing maritime domain awareness (MDA) data.

**Knowledge-based training** focuses on acquiring new information. Maritime security examples include the application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on maritime security operations and the difference between adversarial versus inquisitorial legal systems when prosecuting violations of maritime law.

**Attitudes-based training** aims to adjust values, motivation and emotional responses. Maritime security examples include expanding decision-makers' views regarding the merits of international cooperation and building trust and confidence in a particular partnership.

## BEST PRACTICES

Best practices are the strategies, approaches, and/or activities that have been shown through research and evaluation to be effective, efficient, sustainable, and/or transferable, and to reliably lead to a desired result.<sup>10</sup>

# **PART A THE STATE OF PLAY**

# MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING

## I. ACTORS IN MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

There are three broad categories of actors engaged in maritime security CBAs in the Indo-Pacific: states, IOs, and NGOs. All three share objectives related to advancing good order at sea by empowering littoral states to tackle illicit maritime activities through tailored technical assistance.

### States

States generally carry out maritime security CBAs with target recipient countries through their navies, coast guards, or international aid agencies.

Japan has the strongest CBA implementation history in the region.<sup>11</sup> The agency most involved is the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) with support from the Japan Coast Guard (JCG), though the Ministry of Defense and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) have been organizing CBAs since 2009.<sup>12</sup>

The US has always been an important player but is gaining attention due to its intensification of maritime security CBA programming.<sup>13</sup> Compared to Japan, a wider range of US agencies conduct maritime security CBAs. These include the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Justice. However, the highest profile activities are those administered by the US Navy (USN) and Coast Guard (USCG). The USCG was relatively absent in the years following the September 11, 2001, terror attacks, but it has recently re-intensified its regional activity.<sup>14</sup>

Australia also engages in CBAs in the broader Indo-Pacific through the Australian Agency of International Development (AusAID), Australian Border Force, and Australian Defence Forces but at a scale smaller than Japan and US.<sup>15</sup>

Whereas the maritime security CBAs carried out by Japan, the US, and Australia include large-scale support in terms

of both equipment and training, other nations contribute less comprehensively. India, for example, has primarily engaged in equipment provision in the Indian Ocean but has been less involved with training and activities beyond the Indian Ocean.<sup>16</sup> The UK has provided little equipment but has been implementing training workshops and convening relevant actors through its Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Joint Maritime Security Centre, Department for Transport, and Royal Navy.<sup>17</sup> Other European states have a lot of experience with CBAs in the Indian Ocean Region and have begun small-scale campaigns in other areas of the Indo-Pacific.

### International Organisations

Some of the IOs more active in the Indo-Pacific are the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), and the European Union (EU).

The IMO provides CBAs primarily focused on regulatory compliance. CBAs in port and flag state inspections across Southeast Asia through Marine Environment Protection of the South-East Asian Seas (MEPSEAS) serve as a case in point as they are intended to ensure stakeholders can meet environmental obligations.<sup>18</sup> IMO-led maritime security CBAs are usually coordinated by the IMO's Maritime Security and Facilitation subdivision.<sup>19</sup>

In recent years, the UNODC GMCP has become a lead actor in CBAs supporting Southeast Asia's criminal justice sector as it relates to maritime security.<sup>20</sup> It provides a range of training and equipment to law enforcement agencies across the region, with VBSS training programmes delivered in Indonesia, the Seychelles, and Sri Lanka being a particular strength.<sup>21</sup>

The EU engages in collective maritime security CBAs. It has established the "Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia" (ESIWA) project (subsequently renamed ESIWA+), which is increasingly active in capacity-building efforts with Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.<sup>22</sup> The EU has also broadened the geographic scope of its Critical Maritime Routes Indian

Ocean project (CRIMARIO). In 2020 the project expanded to include Southeast Asia (CRIMARIO II). Now in its third phase, the programme works globally. CRIMARIO builds cooperative maritime governance communities by providing venues for cooperation, training and access to the Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing (IORIS) web-based collaboration tool.<sup>23</sup>

Other IOs focus on specific issue areas. For example, the EU-funded CBAs delivered by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to the fishery sector through its Ship to Shore Rights programme.<sup>24</sup> And, despite calls for capacity building to be undertaken by the diplomatic Quad partnership between Australia, India, Japan, and the United States, as well as statements by the Quad itself regarding maritime security CBAs, collective CBAs have so far been limited to MDA.<sup>25</sup>

### Non-Governmental Organisations

NGOs are increasingly involved in CBAs and tend to work at a smaller scale and fill specific niches. Much of this takes the form of advocacy, research, or data provision such as that provided by Stable Seas and Global Fishing Watch. These can bridge different stakeholder communities that may not have pre-existing avenues of communication.<sup>26</sup> Some NGOs also directly provide capacity itself, though this is more limited. Sea Shepherd, for example, partners with states to protect marine wildlife – particularly from illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing—through the provision of vessels and crew for shipriding patrols.<sup>27</sup>

## II. CHALLENGES TO MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Maritime security CBAs face several challenges that programme providers should consider in order to optimize their CBAs. While these interlink, they can be divided into themes with distinct implications.

### The term ‘capacity building’ lacks a shared definition.

The concept of capacity building means different things to different stakeholders, especially in the maritime field where the activity is relatively novel. Several studies have argued that capacity building is a ‘buzzword’ or that the term is not used consistently.<sup>28</sup> While ambiguity can be positive as it allows different actors to flexibly engage in a broad set of activities, a lack of guidance can mean that assumptions about capacity building shape maritime security CBAs in formulaic ways that simply do not add value. Without the clear guidance that comes with specific definitions, implementers often default to recycling pre-existing ‘off-the-shelf’ materials that are poorly suited to specific goals or audiences. At the same time, implementers may not recognize that CBAs can be deeply political processes and incorrectly assume they are depoliticized and technocratic.<sup>29</sup>

**Maritime security is diverse and complex.** The various issues that constitute maritime insecurity are diverse, interlinked, continuously evolving, often transnational, and intertwined with developments and challenges ashore.<sup>30</sup> The complexity of the Indo-Pacific maritime space means that responses need to engage with a range of stakeholders, such as states and their maritime agencies (including navies, coast guards, and law enforcement), NGOs, IOs, commercial industries (including fishing, shipping, extractive), port management, local communities, and academics.<sup>31</sup> Maritime security CBAs are consequently difficult to implement. Multiple examples highlight that there are significant difficulties in translating the potential for comprehensiveness into practice. The failure of the European Union Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) Nestor—the EU’s mission to tackle piracy off of the coast of Somalia through capacity building—was partly due to its overambitious nature.<sup>32</sup> In the Indo-Pacific, Bradford argues that bureaucratic arrangements have created disconnects between policy vision and practical implementation.<sup>33</sup>

### Political will and local CBA ownership are not guaranteed.

Some littoral states have traditionally prioritized issues on land, leading to political legacies of ‘seablindness’; this has resulted in an organisational under-capacity in their maritime security sectors.<sup>34</sup> Seablindness also has implications for the extent to which recipient states take ownership of maritime security CBAs, as they may be unwilling to commit attention and resources.<sup>35</sup> Other reasons for lack of ownership or political will can result from geopolitical contestation or top-down approaches enforced by donors.<sup>36</sup> For example, the Philippines has been a generally flexible beneficiary of maritime security CBAs because of its political willingness to be associated with the donors, whereas other states have been more cautious due to concerns related to getting drawn into security dilemmas with major powers, desire to safeguard foreign policy flexibility, and national pride.<sup>37</sup> In other examples, the EUCAP Nestor mission faced difficulties in courting local ownership because the mission was designed by the EU to suit its own needs rather than in consultation with local agents, and CRIMARIO faced challenges in earning the buy-in of the shipping industry.<sup>38</sup>

**States have varied organisational structures.** States operate different organisational models for their maritime security sectors, with varying degrees of concentration or fragmentation among agencies. Furthermore, these agencies and approaches may also compete with one another. As such, various organisations, agencies, and other actors have roles in national maritime security efforts: depending on the state, these might include navies, coastguards, marine police units, paramilitary forces, border guards, fisheries agencies, marine environmental management bodies, and others.<sup>39</sup> This has significant implications for maritime security CBAs. The first is that CBA actors need to navigate this complex space to best target their efforts in a context of competition and contestation. The second is that ‘one-size-fits-all’ approaches are rarely applicable in the maritime domain, meaning that interventions need to be tailored in ways that they are often not.

**Donors often lack knowledge of local contexts.** A lack of understanding of the maritime security needs, political situations, and strategic cultures of recipient countries has been identified as a challenge to maritime security CBAs.<sup>40</sup> SafeSeas, a network of researchers who investigate maritime security issues, argues that CBA donors often have “limited abilities to gather such knowledge”.<sup>41</sup> This poses a significant barrier to CBAs, especially in the context of the maritime security complexity discussed above. An absence of knowledge regarding the local context consequently prevents the implementation of tailored activities. A concrete example is given by Gowan and Korski, who point to the failure of law enforcement training in Somalia as European experts were not reflective of the basic lack of security on the ground.<sup>42</sup>

**CBAs are often not optimized for sustainability.** Maritime security CBAs are often short-term and follow donor timelines rather than recipient needs.<sup>43</sup> This primarily comes about due to how donor projects are measured and managed but also due to turnover among staff and experts.<sup>44</sup> A preference for one-shot workshops can exacerbate the lack of sustainability.<sup>45</sup> This creates

significant difficulties for maritime security CBAs because long-term responsive training is often required to develop sustainable capacity, the ongoing costs of provision (such as equipment maintenance) are not considered, and there is often little in the way of institutional memory from which to develop and evolve.<sup>46</sup>

**Efforts are often duplicated.** The relatively ad hoc manner in which maritime security CBAs have been conducted has created issues with duplicative activities, especially when various states and agencies are involved. This is primarily because donors often lack sufficient knowledge of the existing CBAs being delivered by other agencies.<sup>47</sup> Duplication is not only inefficient for donors but can also actually reduce capacity on the ground—for example, by creating multiple and perhaps contradictory training on the same issue.<sup>48</sup> This is a noted pattern in European-led programmes in the Western Indian Ocean in particular, but a lack of coordination amongst like-minded partners is leading to similar issues in the Indo-Pacific.<sup>49</sup>

▼ Lt Peter Johnson, Cmdr. Greg Adams, and Lt Taylor Hamilton discuss exercise drills during the ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting (ADMM) Plus Maritime Security and Counterterrorism field training Exercise 2016. Credit: U.S. Navy, Joshua Fulton.



# PREVIOUS STUDIES ABOUT MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING

Previous studies about maritime security CBAs are limited in their utility for establishing programmes based on best practices. Specifically, there is very little work that focuses on the micro-practices of maritime security training programme delivery. Instead, the literature either describes key activities of maritime security capacity building (of which training is one), delineates overarching macro best practices for maritime security CBA provision, maps contemporary CBAs with little in-depth analysis, or identifies challenges with little in the way of actionable solutions.

This summary of studies of maritime security capacity building reviews them for best practices. It groups the literature into three loosely defined strands: studies by government and IOs; studies by non-governmental research networks focused on improved capacity building; and other academic work.

## I. GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION DOCUMENTS

The US Government has released several documents that attempt to organize or guide maritime security CBAs. The US *Maritime Security Sector Reform (MSSR) Guide* was released in 2010<sup>50</sup> and *Building Partner Capacity: Key Practices to Effectively Manage Department of Defense Efforts to Promote Security Cooperation* in 2013.<sup>51</sup> Despite the potential promise of both, neither offers a set of comprehensive best practices. Instead, both set out vague definitions and proposed activities.

The 2010 guide establishes six functions—Governance, Civil and Criminal Authority, Defense, Safety, Response and Recovery, and Economy—and establishes a list of activities for each but stops short of offering actual best practices. The 2013 document goes a bit further in defining activities, but the best practices remain limited to “setting clear goals and terminology, coordinating activities and sharing information, and sustaining efforts and evaluating progress”. The United States Institute for Peace (USIP) has also developed its own approach, which promotes the strengthening of local security structures and the institutions through which they are governed. USIP states clearly that “MSSR is not the imposition of external organisations, plans, or processes. Any MSSR process should begin with a multidisciplinary needs assessment carried out by “representatives from private and public institutions”. This assessment must “take into account a country’s history, culture, and the aspirations of its citizens and government”. Some macro-best practices have also been identified in the newer *Building Sustainable Maritime Capacity* document released by the Institute for Security Governance.<sup>52</sup> These include a risk assessment, planning and developing, detecting and monitoring, and responding. As can be seen by the categories, however, while referred to as best practices they more closely reflect overarching guiding principles.

Canada has also produced a maritime security capacity-building document for the Royal Canadian Navy.<sup>53</sup> It draws lessons from Canada’s as well as Australia’s and the US’s experiences. The report stresses the need to match interests with the partner state and to uphold a sustained

commitment. In reference to choosing the right partner, it suggests five required partner state characteristics: 1) it invests in its own capacity; 2) it can absorb and sustain capacity building; 3) it has high governance indicators; 4) it possesses a strong economy; and 5) it shares common security interests with the contributing state.

The IMO has several documents that discuss maritime security capacity building, though best practices are limited. Their CBA ‘two-pager’, for example, lists the different activities they undertake and provides some rationale for these activities.<sup>54</sup> A second document, *Our Voyage Together*, highlights strengths from which limited best practices can be implied, including that they “treasure values of impartiality and universality, and have global operational outreach through UN resident coordinators and regional organisations in all developing countries”.<sup>55</sup> Finally, the IMO releases annual reports discussing their technical cooperation.<sup>56</sup> While this report does not explicitly discuss best practices, consultation and targeted context-specific interventions are highlighted throughout.

Representatives of the Jeddah Amendment to the Djibouti Code of Conduct—an intervention against illicit maritime activities in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden—have documented their lessons learned.<sup>57</sup> One project manager identified lessons such as the need for national organisation, building regional capacity through national capacity development, and the need for information sharing based on existing frameworks.

NATO has also produced a maritime capacity-building document through its Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Centre of Excellence.<sup>58</sup> Arguing that NATO lacks a systematic approach for planning maritime security CBAs more cohesively, the document recommends the development of a more systematic, common, and institutionalized approach to planning.

External monitoring of some maritime security CBAs has been undertaken by One Earth Future.<sup>59</sup> This is primarily limited to a mapping of the main multilateral actors in the Western Indian Ocean maritime domain, however, and does not offer a set of best practices beyond the implementation of the activities themselves.

Holihead et al. undertook a commissioned evaluation of the UNODC GMCP’s activities. Their analysis of the programme’s effectiveness implies certain best practices.<sup>60</sup> This report notes “each Project Officer within the team is empowered to plan, programme and implement their work which results in ‘ownership’, strong incentive and creativity, and a desire to achieve the best possible results”. It further identifies successes in the “ability to forge good relations with the appropriate countries, launching a programme that was holistic in nature and that provided a complete service from arrest and handover, detention, prosecution, sentencing, imprisonment and ultimate repatriation”. Holihead et al. further note trainers located in the field and the use of mentors in the police as being particularly effective.

## II. RESEARCH NETWORK PROJECTS

In response to novel and experimental approaches to piracy off the coast of Somalia, the SafeSeas network undertook a project on maritime security capacity building in the Western Indian Ocean that had five outputs focused on CBAs—a best practice tool kit,<sup>61</sup> an edited book,<sup>62</sup> and three academic articles.<sup>63</sup>

Most closely aligned to this current guide is the best practice toolkit, titled *Mastering Maritime Security: Reflexive Capacity Building and the Western Indian Ocean Experience*.<sup>64</sup> The toolkit identifies overarching macro-strategies for maritime security capacity-building planning, including the need for ongoing reflexivity, a holistic view of maritime security, local ownership, and an awareness of local problems. Through these themes, SafeSeas makes several best practice recommendations for programming and implementation, including drawing on non-maritime capacity builder experience and knowledge, creating shared repositories of information on maritime security capacity building, establishing close liaison between planners and implementers, preserving institutional memory to ensure consistency, being honest about failures, and recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of different methods. The main takeaway is that capacity building is best steered by receiving countries, meaning an active and ongoing engagement with domestic actors is essential for ensuring local ownership.

In the edited volume *Capacity Building for Maritime Security: The Western Indian Ocean Experience*, Bueger, Edmunds and McCabe identify some best practices via their Spaces, Problems, Institutions, and Projects framework. They argue that this framework allows for avoiding “universalist best practice recommendations and instead aims to provide a context-specific assessment tool with relevance for academic analysis and maritime security practitioners alike”.<sup>65</sup> In the chapter where this framework is applied, McCabe highlights the importance of experimentation in the process of planning and implementing maritime security CBAs in the Western Indian Ocean. This chapter identifies the importance of embedded mentoring over short-term training, developing working relationships with local trainers, running long-term training courses, and of building locally informed and functional MDA architectures.<sup>66</sup> In the western Indian Ocean, such interventions led to an increased technical ability to achieve legal finish of piracy prosecution cases.

Bueger, Edmunds, and McCabe’s paper “Into the Sea” focuses on three ‘innovations’ that imply certain best practices: (1) thinking regionally by developing regional institutions, (2) the establishment of new informal networks among actors, and (3) the production of maritime security knowledge through information-sharing structures.<sup>67</sup> Regrettably, this paper does not explicitly discuss the practical application of the innovations.

Bueger also directs his attention to the Capacity Building Coordination Group (CBCG), which is part of the Contact Group for Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS).<sup>68</sup> He describes that the group intended to facilitate coordination between different maritime security CBAs to better match the needs of countries with the provided projects. Part of this coordination included the development of a database by the CBCG—the Capacity Building Coordination Platform—that was maintained by the US-based NGO Oceans Beyond Piracy. Despite some successes, however, Bueger notes that “all capacity gaps are not adequately addressed, there is overlap, priorities are unclear and counter-piracy actors and recipient governments frequently mourn about the quality of coordination”. He highlights the need for expertise, ownership, the development of tool kits, a networked model of coordination, and more emphasis on trust and confidence building.

Edmunds’ article “Maritime Security Sector Reform: Lessons from the Mainstream” further analyses the activities of the CBCG within the CGPCS. He elucidates several lessons, including “the importance and meaning of local ownership, the inherently political nature of the reform process itself, the dangers of externally driven and overly technocratic responses, and the consequent need to work with rather than against local governance”.<sup>69</sup>

The practices identified by SafeSeas find resonance in work undertaken by various researchers for the **Geneva Centre for Security Sector Reform** (DCAF). Two DCAF documents are particularly noteworthy. The first is their MSSR backgrounder, which echoes the lessons above while also emphasizing various coordinating practices such as marine spatial planning as key to maritime security CBAs.<sup>70</sup> The second is their applied regional thematic brief, *Maritime Security Sector Governance and Reform in Southeast Asia*.<sup>71</sup> This document also suggests that a best practice is to align MSSR with existing frameworks to promote streamlining rather than cause further duplication.

Researchers at the **United States Studies Centre, University of Sydney** discussed how the Quad nations can coordinate on maritime capacity building and stressed that such an approach must have the dual objectives of consolidating duplicative efforts and developing a combined strategy.<sup>72</sup> They recommended the establishment of a Maritime Capacity Building Initiative within the Quad to coordinate current ad hoc activities.

## EMBEDDED MENTORING IS MORE IMPACTFUL THAN SHORT-TERM TRAINING

### III. OTHER ACADEMIC WORKS

Several other academic works draw implicit attention to potential best practices for maritime security CBAs, though usually macro-best practices.

**Bateman**, in his paper “Capacity Building for Maritime Security Cooperation: What are We Talking About?”, discusses the evolving conceptualizations of maritime security and capacity building and offers a catalog of maritime security capacity shortfalls at the national and regional levels. Primarily focused on what needs to be done rather than best practices to get it done, Bateman emphasizes the need to “think globally, act regionally”, and calls for expanding multidisciplinary and multinational education and training. Above all, he stresses that countries in need of assistance must still feel that they are retaining control over waters under their sovereignty.<sup>73</sup>

**Bradford** examines opportunities for the US-Japan Alliance to promote regional maritime governance in the article “Maritime Governance Capacity Building: A U.S.-Japan Alliance Agenda for Rule of Law in the Indo-Pacific”. He specifically recommends that a senior-level regional coordinating committee should set the agenda while implementation is coordinated by clearly established working groups organized by the US and Japanese embassies in the partner nation capitals.<sup>74</sup>

In “A Discussion on the Implementation of the Polar Code and the STCW Convention’s Training Requirements for Ice Navigation in Polar Waters”, **Engtrø** examines Canadian-led IMO capacity building.<sup>75</sup> This work stands out among other studies of maritime security CBAs as it focuses on the micro-practices of training workshop delivery. Engtrø conducted interviews with the three people responsible for developing and facilitating a five-day train-the-trainer workshop. He concluded that the workshop was “adequate” on the basis that it was “developed and conducted by highly competent and experienced persons”, but it did not reach its full potential as a train-the-trainer activity because many of the participants were not qualified or adept at conveying knowledge learned in the CBA to relevant stakeholders back home. Strengths of this CBA included experienced instructors who had taken time to plan and coordinate the training with the IMO; the extensive debriefing and feedback between instructors, participants, and the IMO; and the focus on skills practice and learning by doing rather than relying on lecture-based learning.

**Garcia-Carriazo** also writes about the IMO's maritime security CBAs.<sup>76</sup> The article "Building Capacity in the Law of the Sea: The IMO International Maritime Law Institute's Experience" describes why capacity building is necessary before discussing the 'success story' of the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI). Garcia-Carriazo highlights the IMLI's multicultural nature, its flexibility (students do not have to be away from their professional posts for too long), and its ability to develop female empowerment. The article also points to the importance of networks and strong institutional partnerships to sustain the benefits of CBAs.

In the paper "Maritime Security and Capacity Building in the Gulf of Guinea: on comprehensiveness, gaps, and security priorities", **Jacobsen** analyses maritime security CBAs in the Gulf of Guinea to highlight that there is a need to pay more attention to the constitutive effects of 'failures', implying this is a best practice. This is because, she argues, "when capacity building efforts 'fail', e.g., because they do not add up to a comprehensive approach, they still 'succeed' in having an important impact on the security landscape in the region".<sup>77</sup>

In *The International Response to Maritime Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and Drivers of Danish Involvement*, **Larsen and Nissen** looked at Denmark's efforts to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia, though this is primarily reduced to a mapping of maritime security CBAs.<sup>78</sup> One best practice highlighted is the general need for sustained international support.

In "Capacity Building Assistance in the International Community: The Case of the United States and China", **Yamashita and Iida** examine US support to Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines in the Celebes Sea, focused primarily on counterterrorism and counter-piracy.<sup>79</sup> The article has an in-depth study on the objectives and characteristics of capacity building in these cases and highlights several factors that led to success. These include coordination with initiatives of recipient countries, a long-term focus on operational and maintenance needs, and targeted curricular development that factors in recipient country needs and includes a broad range of case studies.

#### IV. BEST PRACTICES DRAWN FROM EXISTING LITERATURE

Taken together, the best practices for maritime security CBAs stated or implied in existing literature can be summarized and grouped into seven broad (and sometimes overlapping) themes:

1. Maritime Security CBAs must have clear, coordinated goals. There should be coordination between planners and implementers and between external and local actors to achieve stated goals and avoid the duplication of activities.
2. Ongoing commitment from CBA implementers (provider states) is necessary to ensure the capacity gained is sustained, institutional memory is preserved, and activities are not duplicated.
3. CBAs should be relevant to the local (recipient) context and there must be local ownership of the activities. Additionally, training participants should possess the relevant skills and backgrounds to take advantage of the training provided.
4. Instructors should possess the relevant expertise, not only in the subject matter and local context but also in training delivery methods. Trainers should also be invested in (have ownership of) the training, and there should be close liaison between planners and instructors.
5. Information should be shared via robust, likely pre-existing, structures to create knowledge-producing repositories and build regional capacity.
6. Informal networks or communities of practice should be created or strengthened among both CBA implementers and recipients to facilitate information sharing and increase and sustain capacity.
7. CBAs should be systematically evaluated, with particular attention given to past failures and to the advantages afforded by varied training delivery methods.

# **PART B GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING CAPACITY- BUILDING ACTIVITIES**

## PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

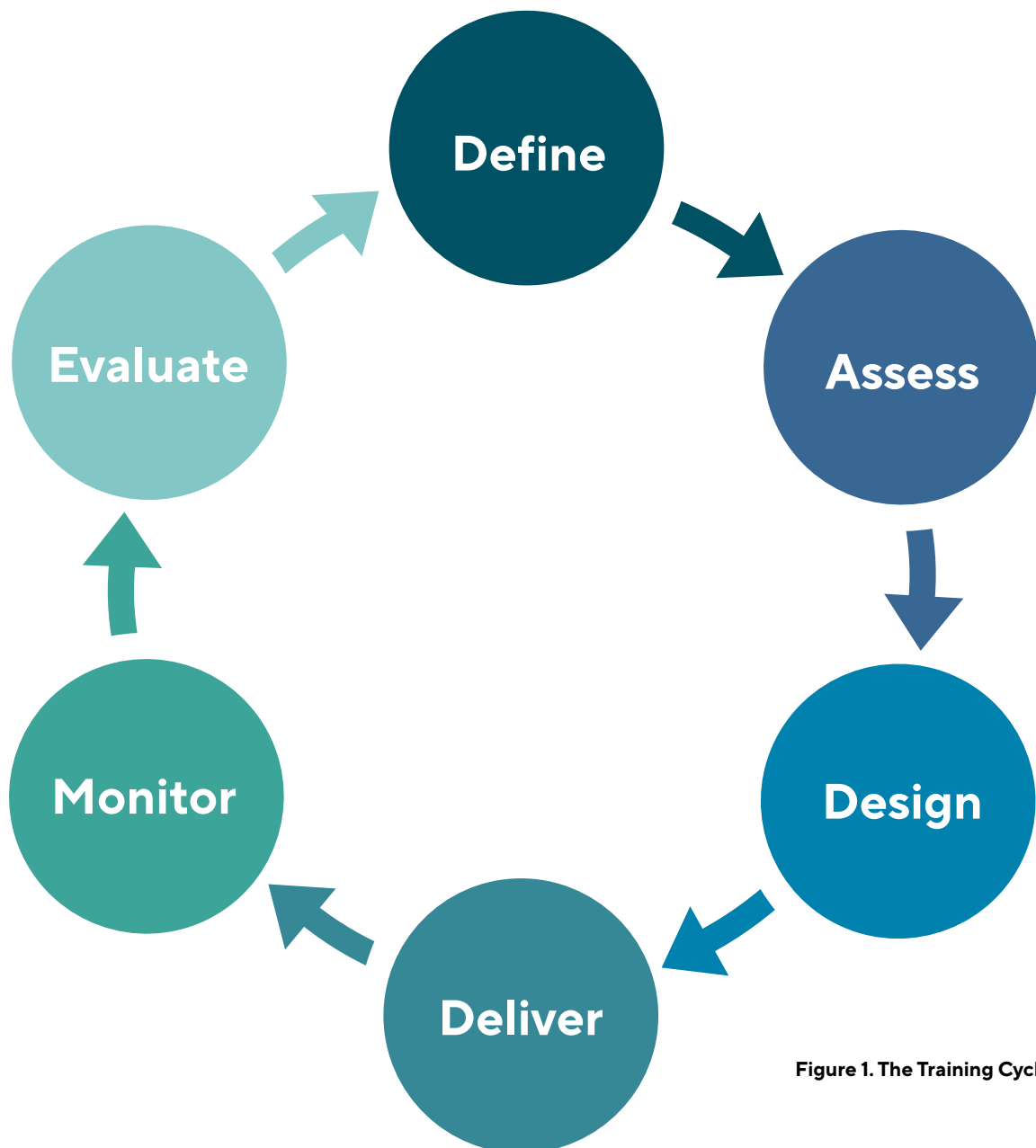


Figure 1. The Training Cycle

Best practices identified in the existing literature are based on the viewpoints of maritime security specialists and on the lessons learned through the experience of maritime security practitioners. However, very few of these specialists, practitioners, or researchers have strong backgrounds in international education and training, intercultural communication, or programme evaluation. The practices can be strengthened and better transferred into action when analysed from these perspectives.

## I. APPLYING THE TRAINING CYCLE TO MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING

Training programmes and CBAs are best designed with the ‘training cycle’ in mind. The training cycle is a concept that helps programme managers design, deliver, and evaluate training activities. The cyclical nature of this model also promotes the improvement of subsequent programme implementation.

Variations of this cycle are used by IOs, such as the UN (when delivering peacekeeping training, for example), and well-established international aid organisations, such as the Peace Corps, in addition to being used extensively by human resources specialists in the private sector.<sup>80</sup>

The training cycle has six stages: Define, Assess, Design, Deliver, Monitor, and Evaluate. These are described below with specific reference to their relevance to maritime security CBAs.

### Stage One – Define

The first step in planning any maritime security CBA is to examine the big picture and define the strategic context, vision, purpose, and goals.

CBA providers must ask themselves:

- In what social, political, and economic context is the training set?
- What ongoing programme or change effort is the training part of?
- What are the ultimate aims of this effort?
- Who wants what to happen and why?

For cross-national maritime security CBAs, it is important that trainers balance the strategic objectives, priorities, and mandated tasks of the mission with consideration of the political context, availability of resources, and cultural appropriateness of the CBA.

### Key question: Where do we want to be?

Stage One of the training cycle corresponds to maritime security best practices 1 and 2:

1. Maritime Security CBAs must have clear, coordinated goals. There should be coordination between planners and implementers and between external and local actors to achieve stated goals and avoid the duplication of activities.
2. Ongoing commitment from CBA implementers (provider states) is necessary to ensure the capacity gained is sustained, institutional memory is preserved, and activities are not duplicated.

### Point to note: Goals and Objectives

An initial step in the design of any educational training programme is to ascertain its goals. In other words, ask: What are the desired programme outcomes? What does the implementer (provider state) want to achieve? What does the recipient want to gain?

Next, ascertain the programme’s objectives. Ask: What actions should I take to achieve the desired outcomes?

**Goals differ from objectives.** A goal is an achievable outcome that is generally broad and long-term, while an objective defines measurable actions to achieve the overall goal.

An example of a goal for a maritime security CBA would be to develop capability and trust among participating countries in response to a crisis.

An example objective for achieving this might be to hold a workshop where participating states work together to share knowledge and practice visit, board, search, and seizure techniques.

## Stage Two – Assess

A training programme needs assessment compares *desired* and *existing* levels of competencies in the target (recipient) group. In addition to identifying a gap in competencies, this assessment details the knowledge, skills, and/or mindsets needed to close this gap.

CBA providers must ask themselves:

- What are the learner (target group) characteristics/ learning levels?
- What are the target group's specific learning needs (knowledge, skills, attitudes)?
- Are these needs real or perceived?
- Is the target group in a position to extend or transfer the newly acquired knowledge/skills to peers?
- Does the target group have the ability to promote change? If not, can this ability be built into the broader capacity-building process?
- Who decides what is important?
- Are there other stakeholder interests that must be fulfilled?

It is also necessary to assess obstacles to learning. This information can help inform how the CBA should be designed and delivered, as well as what kind of follow-up support may be necessary. For example, problems related to resource limitations, feelings of disengagement, attitudes and/or stressful work environments cannot be solved by training.

Maritime security CBA practitioners should pay special attention to power relationships and the cultural appropriateness of the CBA when conducting a training needs assessment.

### Key question: Where are we now?

Stage Two of the training cycle corresponds to maritime security best practice no. 3:

3. CBAs should be relevant to the local (recipient) context and there must be local ownership of the activities. Additionally, training participants should possess the relevant skills and backgrounds to take advantage of the training provided.

## Point to note: Data Sources

When conducting a training needs assessment, a variety of data sources should be used to establish desired and existing competencies.

Data sources for establishing desired (or required) competencies include:

- Policy Documents
- National and organisational strategies
- Standard operating procedures
- Guidelines
- Commanders' Assessments
- Mission mandates
- Planning assumptions
- Operational plans
- Task orders

Data sources for analyzing existing competencies include:

- National and organisational strategies
- Mission reports
- Strategic assessment reports
- Unit performance reviews
- After-action reports
- End of assignment reviews
- Training evaluations

It is useful and efficient to use existing data. However, to collect a complete understanding of performance gaps, you may want to collect new data via surveys, questionnaires, or interviews. Alternatively, you may choose to invite representatives from recipient countries to jointly plan the CBA.

*> Liaison officers from participating countries coordinate exercise activities during exercise SEACAT 2017 at Changi Naval base, Singapore. Credit: U.S. Navy, Joshua Fulton.*

### Stage Three – Design

Stage Three of the training cycle is to design the CBA. This involves a consideration of the resources needed to develop and deliver the training, as well as of the training objectives and delivery methods.

CBA providers must ask themselves:

- What funding sources will be used?
- Who will contribute to the training content? Is there in-house expertise, or does an external expert need to be brought onboard?
- Does a similar CBA exist, or do we need to design something from scratch?
- What are the learning objectives? (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
- How will the training setting be organized?
- How will time be scheduled?
- Which topics will be selected and how will they be sequenced?
- Which delivery and learning methods are appropriate for the topics and target group?
- Which other logistics need to be planned?
- What follow-up support will be needed?

Maritime security CBA providers might have to pay particular attention to CBA duplication and contradictory training delivered by other agencies, and to risks of postponement.

**Key question: How do we get from where we are to where we want to be?**

#### Point to note: SMART Objectives<sup>81</sup>

Writing clear learning objectives enables training to be designed with a clear end goal in mind.

When writing learning objectives, it is often helpful to use the acronym 'SMART':

**S—Specific:** the objective should clearly state what the learner will be able to do by the end of the training or session (use plain language and avoid jargon).

**M—Measurable:** it should be possible to measure whether/to what extent the learner has achieved the objective.

**A—Attainable:** the objective should be realistically attainable within the given time period.

**R—Relevant:** the objective should be relevant to the needs of the target audience.

**T—Time bound:** the time in which the objective will be achieved should be clearly stated.

Another way to think of a SMART objective is to ask yourself: **[who]** will do **[what]** resulting in **[measure]** by **[when]**.



### Stage Four – Deliver

Stage Four of the training cycle is the actual training event or CBA. This might be in the form of a workshop, conference, coaching or mentoring programme, or online learning course.

CBA providers should consider:

- Adult learning principles and different learning styles.
- The role of the trainer/facilitator.
- The language of facilitation.
- The language(s) of the learners.
- How they will keep individuals engaged.
- How they will manage group dynamics.
- The learning sequence: from introductions and icebreakers through content presentation, to practice and then feedback.
- How they will support learners to take risks, practice, apply, and extend learning.
- How they will provide follow-up support after training.

In cross-national maritime security CBAs, it is particularly important that trainers consider the different backgrounds and learning traditions of the participants. Participants from different nations will likely have different expectations about the roles of instructors and students in educational settings. Training materials must have cultural relevance to the CBA participants.

### Key question: How do we successfully guide the training participants to where we want them to be?

Stage Four of the training cycle corresponds to maritime security best practice no. 4:

4. Instructors should possess the relevant expertise, not only in the subject matter and local context but also in training delivery methods. Trainers should also be invested in (have ownership of) the training, and there should be close liaison between planners and instructors.

### Point to note: Adult Learning Principles and the Role of the Trainer

**Adult learning** is best achieved in dialogue. *Dia* means ‘between’; *logos* means ‘word’. Hence, *dia + logos* = the word between us. This approach to adult learning emphasizes that adults have enough life experience to be in dialogue with any teacher, and will learn new knowledge, skills, or attitudes best in relation to that life experience.<sup>82</sup>

#### Adult learners:

- **Are autonomous and self-directed:** they should be free to direct themselves and learn by doing. Trainers must actively involve participants in the learning process, guiding them through the information rather than supplying them with facts.
- **Have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge:** learning is most effective when connected to this knowledge or experience base.
- **Are goal oriented:** learners usually know what goals they want to achieve when attending a training. Trainers should show participants how this particular training will help them achieve their goals.
- **Are relevancy oriented:** they must see a reason for learning something. The training content should be applicable to their work and responsibilities to be of value to them.
- **Are practical:** trainers should tell participants explicitly how the lesson will be useful to them on the job. They may not be interested in knowledge for its own sake.<sup>83</sup>

**An effective trainer** must possess a range of technical, professional, and interpersonal skills and is able to recognize and adapt to the role that best suits their specific audience.

An effective trainer should:

- Have the technical skills of the subject matter.
- Be able to combine the professional skills of facilitator, time manager, learning coach, mentor, encourager, leader, organizer, public speaker, curriculum developer, course designer, and performance analyst as needed.
- Employ the interpersonal skills of a good communicator, listener, facilitator, and manager; incorporate diverse viewpoints, manage/diffuse tension; and work effectively with a wide range of participants, including background, rank and gender.

### Stage Five – Monitor

This stage involves observing and analyzing proof of learning and gauging the application of newly built capacity at the end of the training event and beyond. It is necessary to monitor learner outcomes to ensure there is a link between training and improved capacity. Specifically, monitoring helps to ensure that training is helping to close the gap between actual and desired competencies.

CBA providers should ask:

- Did the participants learn new knowledge/skills/ attitudes? (pre-/post-tests, role-plays, simulations, other assessment tools)
- Are the participants satisfied with the training programme? (debrief, survey, feedback)
- Do the participants have plans to put into practice what they have learned?
- Are the participants able to teach their new knowledge, skills, or attitudes to other people?
- Are there systems/policies/procedures in place to provide follow-up and support?
- Are there resources available to support change and sustain capacity?

Maritime security practitioners organizing CBAs in the Indo-Pacific can make use of popular social networking platforms such as WhatsApp to keep in touch with participants after the training. Ongoing communication with recipient nations is important for relationship-building and the sustainability of CBAs.

### **Key questions: Was the training effective? What is needed to put into practice the change that we want? (systems, policies, values, structures, support, resources)**

Stage Five of the training cycle corresponds to maritime security best practices no. 5 and 6:

5. Information should be shared via robust, likely pre-existing, structures to create knowledge-producing repositories and build regional capacity.
6. Informal networks or communities of practice should be created or strengthened among both CBA implementers and recipients to facilitate information sharing and increase and sustain capacity.

### Point to note: Communities of Practice

One sign that a training programme has been a positive experience for the participants is the emergence of an informal network of colleagues and/or friends who keep in touch after the training event. Such a community of practice is invaluable for continued learning among the participants and for sustaining the capacity gained from the training.

“Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly”<sup>84</sup>

Communities of practice organize themselves, set their own agendas, and establish their own leadership. Membership in a community of practice is self-selected.<sup>85</sup>

Training events can help to foster communities of practice by promoting group work and problem solving, hosting out-of-classroom activities such as shared meals and off-site trips, and by providing ample opportunity for informal networking throughout the event.

### Stage Six – Evaluate

An internal evaluation of the CBA is necessary to determine whether it has met its goals, to find opportunities for improvement, to identify needs for further funding and support, and to ensure that resources are not wasted.

CBA providers must ask themselves:

- How should the CBA be evaluated? (survey, focus groups, interviews)
- Did the training programme meet its goals?
- Did each programme objective produce the desired outcome towards the goal?
- How can the CBA be improved?
- Were the delivery methods appropriate?
- What new content would update the course?
- Who needs to know the results of the evaluation so that all relevant stakeholders are aware of the successes and challenges?

When evaluating maritime security CBAs, it is essential to consider how the training fits into the overall picture of the CBAs in which the recipient is engaged.

#### **Key questions: How far did we come in reaching our intentions and purpose, and why? How effective was each step in the cycle, and why?**

Stage Six of the training cycle corresponds to maritime security best practice no. 7:

CBAs should be systematically evaluated with particular attention given to past failures and to the advantages afforded by varied training delivery methods.

### Point to note: Theory of Action

One way that a training programme can be effectively evaluated is to examine the programme's theory of action.

In the Define, Assess, and Design steps of the training cycle, decisions were made as to:

- What the CBA aimed to achieve (goals)
- How the CBA would achieve those aims (objectives), and
- Which activities and delivery methods would be most efficient for meeting those objectives.

Assumptions were made as to why those activities, delivery methods and objectives would lead to the desired goals (ultimate change in capacity).

These steps must be revisited during Stage Six—the Evaluate stage.

To determine if the CBA was effective, the evaluator must pay particular attention to the chain of causal assumptions that linked programme resources, activities, intermediate outcomes, and ultimate goals.

## II. TRAIN-THE-TRAINER AND CASCADE MODELS OF TRAINING

Train-the-trainer and cascade models of training are popular methods of delivering CBAs in maritime settings as they are efficient ways of training many people, especially in challenging environments.

**Train-the-trainer** is a model where new or less experienced instructors are trained on the best ways to deliver training programme content to others. With the **cascade model**, a group of trainers is trained, and then they train other groups. This continues until all target recipients have received the training. In other words, training is conducted at several levels by trainers selected from the level above (see Figure 2).<sup>86</sup> These models are advantageous when funding is tight and there is a need for a cost-effective approach, and in situations where training may be best handled at the local level.

### Pitfalls

However, as noted in the earlier discussion of the Canadian-led IMO capacity building for ice navigation<sup>87</sup>, there are pitfalls that must be avoided if the training is to reach its full potential. Perhaps the most obvious pitfall to this type of training method is that of dilution. As information is passed down from one trainer to the next, it risks dilution and can become garbled, much like in the childhood game of ‘telephone’. Linked to dilution is the issue of quality assurance. If the participants selected to be trainers are not competent, the programme risks distortion and collapse.

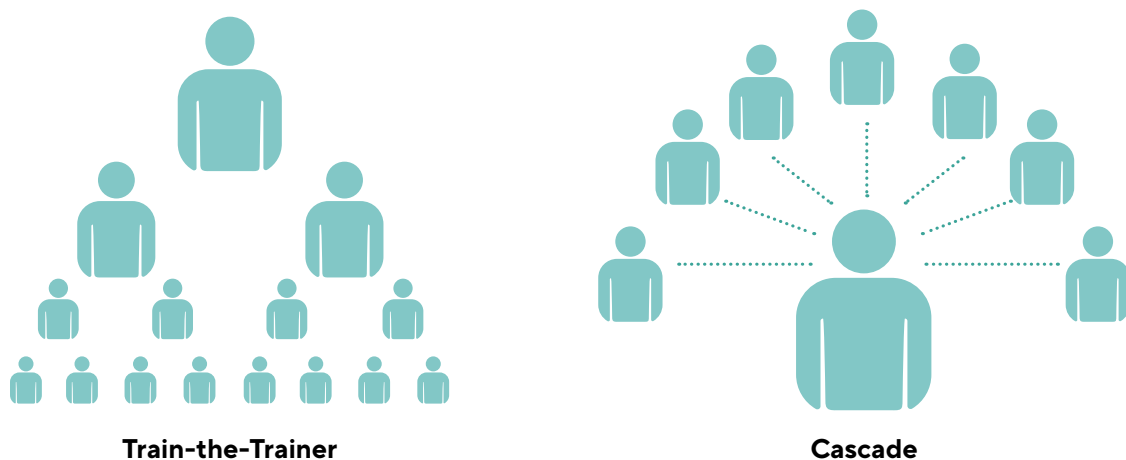
The language and cultural references used in training materials are important for any cross-national training or CBA. However, they become more important in train-the-trainer and cascade training situations, as the training material must be fully understood by second-level participants if they are to digest and possibly adapt it for training at the local level. Second- and third-level participants will likely not have access to the original trainer if clarification of the material is needed.

### Tips for effective train-the-trainer and cascade training

Not all subject matter is suitable for this type of training. If the content requires substantial feedback between the expert and the learner or is too technical, it is likely too complex to be cascaded. Content that is fairly straightforward and not significantly beyond the target audience’s current capacity works best.

Training delivery methods that are experiential and reflective are more effective than those that are purely transmissive. Local trainers must be able to adapt the training to suit their cultures and context.

Monitoring and evaluation practices are especially important with train-the-trainer and cascade models to avoid dilution and distortion. Master and second-level trainers should plan site visits to observe subsequent training activities. It might also be a good idea to allow learners to independently evaluate the CBA.



**Figure 2. Train-the-Trainer and Cascade Models of training**

*Image credit: Train the Trainers & Cascade Models—A practical guide and toolkit, The British Council.*

# MARITIME SECURITY CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN PRACTICE

YCAPS observed training events conducted by several agencies in the Indo-Pacific to build a real-world picture of maritime security CBAs and to identify a comprehensive list of best practices for developing and implementing them. This section presents the results of those observations, augmented with data from discussions with the course planners and instructors of the CBAs. It specifically identifies actionable best practices that should be considered when developing and implementing maritime security CBAs in the Indo-Pacific. These best practices are presented within the framework of the training cycle and elaborated upon with details from the training events. These details often highlight weaknesses in current CBA practice.

▼ A boarding team from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force during RIMPAC 2016.  
Credit: Republic of Singapore Navy.

## I. OBSERVING CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

The YCAPS team observed nine training events, as outlined below. Essential to the process was assurance that data would be anonymized. Therefore, neither trainers, training recipients, venues, nor materials are included in this publication.

### CBA Observations

- 9 CBAs
- 9 providers
- Located in 3 nations
- Held at 7 facilities
- Training providers from 3 nations, 2 international organisations, 1 NGO
- Instructors from 9 nations
- Trainees from approx. 30 nations
- Between 11 and 90 trainees per CBA
- 4 CBAs focused on skills
- 4 CBAs focused on knowledge
- 1 CBA focused on attitudes



## II. BEST PRACTICES

### Define

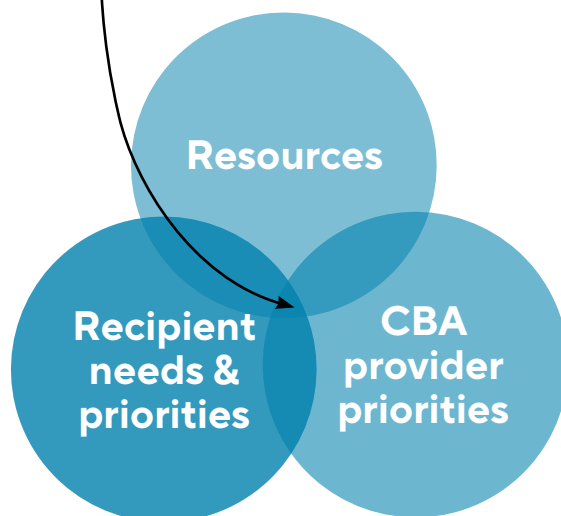
#### Determine Goals

The skills-based courses we observed usually had clearly defined goals. However, the majority of the CBAs observed were oriented more toward knowledge and attitudes, and in these cases, the goals were generally unclear to the instructor and students. In fact, in about half of the CBAs observed the instructors were unable to clearly state reasons why their organisation was conducting the training. Without determining the goals, priorities could not be established. As a result, resources were poorly optimized.

#### Balance Resources, Provider and Recipient Priorities

For a CBA to be effective and sustainable, it is important to think strategically about what the CBA provider wants to accomplish, what the recipient nations need, and what the CBA can actually do. In several observed cases, misalignment of these considerations yielded a situation where trainees attended the event primarily as an opportunity to travel internationally rather than to learn, thus taking advantage of the providers' resources.<sup>88</sup>

**The greatest opportunity for designing a CBA with sustainable results lies here**



**Figure 3. Designing a Sustainable CBA**

### Assess

#### Engage with the Optimum Audience

One of the most common problems observed was the issue of pairing the optimum audience with the appropriate training. This can be difficult to overcome if the training provider and recipient organisations are not aligned. In some observed cases, difficulties arose because the purpose of the training was poorly defined or transmitted. In other cases, the provider organisation defined the course, and the recipient organisation(s) chose to send students who were a poor fit for the training. For example, in one CBA, VBSS tactics, techniques and procedures were transferred to naval architects. While providing naval architects with knowledge of VBSS could arguably be indirectly helpful in reaching organisational objectives, this training practiced physically demanding skills which are not part of a naval architect's job. The training may not have been worth the opportunity costs. In another case, the training was provided in English with interpreters supporting the host nation language. However, a third-party nation sent students who could not understand English nor the host nation language.

#### Determine the Needs of the Audience and Share them with the Instructor

No training event observed carried out a student needs assessment. In the majority of cases, the instructors did not know who the students would be until just before the training event, well after the curriculum was fixed. While a formal needs analysis would rarely be practical, course planners should be aware that gathering as much information as possible about the training audience and sharing it with instructors increases the efficacy of the training.

### Design

#### Align Objectives with Goals

While most events did not have clear goals, the majority had relatively clear objectives. In other words, the trainers generally knew what material they were covering, but not why they were covering it. Consequently, the content of the lectures or training materials did not necessarily support the priorities of the recipient or provider organisations. Students often wondered why they were being taught about certain topics. To be able to effectively deliver training, instructors must know if it is aimed at enhancing skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes.

### Select Trainers with Subject Matter Expertise and Teacher Training

The best instructors were those from organisations that selected subject matter experts who also had some sort of formal teacher training. In some training events, subject matter experts were able to train effectively because they had developed sufficient teaching competency through experience. However, in other events, the instructors were experts but unable to convey information well or properly engage with students. These CBAs had low levels of efficiency. In yet other cases, the instructors had less expertise than some members of the training audience, but they were still able to facilitate training by empowering knowledge sharing among the students. In a small number of cases, the instructor was not an expert but attempted to teach from a pre-existing set of slides or notes. This was completely ineffective.

### Ensure the Training Venue is Optimized for the Activity

Most of the CBAs took place in dedicated training facilities such as classrooms and lecture halls. When these were not used (for example when a hotel ballroom was used), planners generally made appropriate decisions regarding room arrangement (e.g., horseshoe, cabaret or traditional classroom seating layouts), but there were also instances where this was not the case. For example, in one case a small number of participants were spread across a large room when they could have fit around one or two tables. This meant opportunities to build a learning community were reduced. In most of the observations, the audio-visual systems were functionally appropriate, but in three cases technical issues inhibited training. In one case the audio system periodically produced feedback; in another, the projector's colour was washed out, rendering slides that relied on colour ineffective; and in a third case, the screens were too small for all participants to clearly read the text.

### Use Seating Plans to Optimize Value

Seating plans can be powerful tools and should be used to support the training goals. If the training is oriented toward team-based skills, then typically participants should be seated in a way whereby team members can support one another. In the two CBAs observed that aimed at training teams, this worked well. In contrast, if the training goals involve creating new connections between the students (an example of attitudes-oriented goals), then colleagues who usually work together should be seated apart. It is important to remember that fixed chairs reduce trainee interaction and roundtables encourage discussion.

### Establish Realistic and Practical Expectations for the Training Audience

In several of the CBAs observed, the training audience was not aware of the course content until they arrived at the venue. This meant that those who wanted to prepare beforehand may have reviewed information that was misaligned with the training. A lack of information also raised student anxiety as they did not know what to expect. Providing an overview of the course content and learning outcomes in advance improves student readiness and engagement.

### Plan, Communicate and Stick to the Daily Schedule

To avoid confusion and reduce anxiety, planners and trainers should design the daily schedule around local cultural requirements (to include prayer times) and inform the training audience in advance. They should also proactively inform the course participants when things change during the training event. For example, in one CBA, the trainees had a printed course schedule, but the instructor changed the order of events. In other cases, the instructors sought to accelerate the schedule aiming for an early daily release. While many students were grateful for more personal time, it introduced distractions for others by disrupting their plans for meals, religious activities, social engagements, and other outside commitments.

### Organize Meals and Snacks

At six of the nine CBAs observed, the organizers provided food for lunch and tea breaks. This kept the events on track by enabling a predictable schedule, reduced stress on students who would otherwise need to find food in an unfamiliar environment, prevented hunger from being a distraction, and created opportunities for socialization that multiplied the training impact. It also reduced the burden of dealing with reimbursements and anxiety of those from low-income countries training in high-cost locations.

### Social Activities Can Be Important

Only one of the nine CBAs observed included a formal social activity. The social activity had a multiplying effect on the training outcomes. Activities can boost engagement and student motivation for all sorts of training but are particularly empowering for CBAs that are oriented toward strengthening teams, building communities, or shifting attitudes. Therefore, social activities should be given resource priority, not seen as wasteful or improvident. If regulations prevent stakeholders from funding social events, unfunded activities should be considered.



## Deliver

### Self-Introductions and Nametags

When training goals focus on building teams or expanding interpersonal networks, opening the CBA with self-introductions can be very effective. Even for skill-oriented training, self-introductions can be a useful icebreaker to set a positive learning environment. However, in several of the CBAs observed, self-introductions were so poorly managed that they detracted from the session. Therefore, the methods for getting to know one another should be deliberately selected based on the specific goals, resources and training audience composition. Those methods should then be clearly modelled by the instructors for the training audience. For a small group, it may be best to allow each person to share whatever they want about themselves. For a medium-sized audience, it may work best to give assigned parameters for the introductions such as name, job, and personal training objectives. For larger groups, self-introductions are likely counterproductive. In one observed case, introductions were poorly managed because the instructor unexpectedly asked team leaders to introduce themselves and their teams; however, the training audience did not have clear teams or team leaders. So, people were confused and anxious about making mistakes. In another suboptimal case, over 80 people were asked to introduce themselves. The process took over half an hour, and the students became bored and disengaged. When self-introductions are counterproductive, nametags (almost always a good idea) can be a suitable replacement. In one case, no self-introductions were made, and name tags were not available. During this CBA a senior ranked student told a breakout session facilitator that their point was irrelevant because there were no military personnel in the course, yet the breakout session included an active duty colonel in civilian clothes. Training events are almost always more effective if the instructors and students know who they are working with.

### Use Slides to Reinforce, not Define Delivery

In several of the CBAs efficiency was reduced by under-utilization or over-reliance on slides. Slides can be valuable tools to present graphical information, signpost the structure of the presentation, and set student expectations. The amount of text included on a slide should be tailored to the audience. Too much text can be difficult to read and distract from the instructors' spoken presentation. However, text is necessary to highlight key points, especially for those less adept in the language of instruction (typically English), who would like to cross-reference what they see with what they hear. In some cases, a lack of slides or "visual-only" slides meant that the opportunity was missed to reinforce the spoken presentation. In other cases, presenters read aloud lists of text without providing context, and student engagement with the presentation dropped noticeably.

### Ensure Student Engagement through Different Means

The most successful CBAs held the interest of the training audience. Observers noted that the training audience paid more attention to presentations in the morning rather than in the afternoon. Skilled instructors noticed when attention was waning and would ask questions to the trainees or bring in case study scenarios specifically relevant to certain audience members. Pair and small group problem-solving activities also increased engagement and encouraged interactivity. These activities were aided by the use of flipboards and whiteboards. The training events which received the most positive feedback from students were those that comprised syndicate work or tabletop exercises, where the same small cohort met regularly throughout the training event. These activities are especially important if a goal of the CBA is to create lasting networks.

### Facilitate Knowledge Sharing and Reinforce Learning

Trainees enjoyed learning about the techniques and processes used by other nations—both the training provider nations and the nations of their peers. Only about half of the training events observed handled this effectively. In some cases, trainees were asked to prepare briefs in advance of the training and deliver them as a national team during the CBA. In other cases, teams presented the results of their syndicate or tabletop exercise discussions. Unfortunately, because microphones were often underutilized, the audience often lost interest. In the more successful classrooms, microphones were used, and the instructors restated participant questions to ensure that everyone could hear and understand. When the content of briefs was not clear, effective instructors would ask clarification questions to ensure maximum learning. These instructors would also create an atmosphere where trainees could feel comfortable asking for clarification. Learning was also reinforced through the use of a daily hotwash (summary discussion) which engaged participants and elicited key takeaways from each training session.

### Provide Reference Materials and Take-Homes

Participants often requested reference materials and opportunities to take home training materials. In most cases, this was accomplished by putting all of the presentations and references into an online shared folder. This worked well. When post-session materials were unavailable, trainees missed valuable opportunities to revisit and share their learning. In these situations, trainees might take photos of slides, thereby distracting themselves and others from engaged learning.

### Use Quality Interpreters

Three of the nine CBAs observed employed interpreters. In two of the cases, the interpreters were excellent, and in one of those, the interpreters had engaged with the same trainer and curriculum on many occasions. In the third case, the interpreters were unfamiliar with the specific terms and technical language associated with the training material, and training value was lost in translation.

## Monitor

### Ensure Participant Feedback Tools are Well-Designed and Used

Most events included a student feedback survey. However, in many cases this was poorly designed and insufficient time was given for the trainees to complete it. In some cases, it works well for the trainees to give feedback via their phone, but in others, such as when the room does not allow personal electronics or the internet connection is poor, a paper-based survey might be preferable. We also observed that evaluation and feedback work better when the participants are provided with the feedback survey before the final session(s). While this may reduce feedback about the final session(s), participant input was more thorough, as they were not rushed to depart the training venue. To assess the utility of the CBA, it is important to ask not only if the participants are satisfied with the training but also if they will put into practice what they learned. The survey should not be too onerous for the trainees to complete (see Appendix 1 for an appropriate survey template that can be tailored to a specific case).

### Tailor and Tend Alumni Networks to Maximize Participation

Seven of the nine CBAs observed used online platforms for the instructors and trainees to network. This was noted positively and demonstrates thoughtful planning. However, engagement can only be sustained if users are familiar with the platform and CBA provider organisations tend the groups by posting relevant information over the long term.

Five of the CBAs established a WhatsApp group. This worked well for the exchange of information and chat about social activities during the event, but the group became dormant as the training became more distant. Notably, WhatsApp dominates most of Asia as a regularly used application but is used relatively rarely in some key Indo-Pacific states such as Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines.

One CBA encouraged students to remain engaged via LinkedIn. This has the advantage of enabling people to see each other's backgrounds and creates opportunities to connect professionals in adjacent networks. However, simply connecting with the instructor does not connect students with each other. Connecting with the CBA hosting organisation's institutional page is preferable. Furthermore, although LinkedIn usage is growing in Asia, it does not have the market penetration it has found in Europe and the United States. These students have not been particularly active on the platform since the training event.

## Evaluate

### Ensure the Training is Evaluated by the Provider Organisation

About half of the CBAs observed invited representatives from the provider organisation to sit in the class, observe, and provide feedback. In the other half, the instructor was "on their own" and could not benefit from such feedback. This also meant the instructor lacked the support of an independent voice when advocating for training improvements. Regardless of whether an observer is present in the training, the instructor should sit down with the course planners/provider organisation after the event to pass on information about the successes and challenges of the CBA.

### Ensure the Evaluation Information is Available for the Next Iteration of the Course

In the majority of the activities observed, the instructors did not have access to the information from previous (student and organisational) evaluations. In other cases, the information was available but not accessed by the instructors. CBAs should be built on the strengths of previous events.

*> U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Enforcement Specialists debrief Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency coast guardsmen after a VBSS training drill. Credit: U.S. Navy, Tristin Barth.*

### III. ACHIEVING SUCCESS

In the Indo-Pacific, there is no fast-track toward improving maritime governance capacity. Instead, it requires a step-by-step approach that builds over time. Success is only likely if the complete training cycle is utilized; there is more to education and training than design and delivery. If a CBA's goals and objectives are not clearly identified, then organisations do not know when they have achieved success. If no needs assessments are performed, they have no starting point from which to measure. Monitoring is essential to understanding what capacities have been transferred and how they are put into practice. Finally, evaluation is needed to determine the effectiveness of each stage of the cycle.

With a valid training cycle in place, success can be measured by conducting pre- and post-training student tests to check skills and knowledge transfer, and by administering well-designed surveys to gauge how attitudes may have shifted. However, measuring progress toward larger goals will generally involve examining the influence of CBAs on recipient organisations and the resultant changes in organisational behaviour. This requires tracking how the newly trained groups and individuals perform their work long after the training is complete.

Still, policy goals will only be met through a series of well-executed CBAs, most likely implemented by a variety of providers. Training providers can maximize the contribution of CBAs by ensuring that their events are optimized, not only at the programme level, but also by considering how the training fits into the overall picture of the CBAs in which the recipient is engaged.



# OPERATIONALISING MARITIME CAPACITY-BUILDING COORDINATION

Much of the disconnect between the policy vision for and practical implementation of maritime security CBAs stems from poor communication and a lack of coordination either within governments, across CBA provider governments or organisations, or between CBA provider governments and partner nations. As outlined in Part A of this guide, when uncoordinated, the activities conducted and skills transferred may be duplicative or not optimized to recipient needs, and opportunities for training events to build upon each other may be missed. In worst-case scenarios, the training content offered by different organisations can be conflicting and counterproductive. This is especially troubling given that CBAs involve meaningful resource investments not only from provider nations, but also from the host countries when training activities reorient personnel and facilities away from operations.

## I. CAPACITY-BUILDING ACTIVITY COORDINATION AS A SPECTRUM

A coordinated approach to CBAs is needed. A useful way to think about coordination in the maritime security capacity-building arena is to borrow concepts from the continuum of interoperability, as used by NATO and the armed forces of Australia and the United States.<sup>89</sup> Interoperability with partner nations ranges from deconflicted, to compatible, to full integration. In the context of CBAs, the continuum could be interpreted as shown in Figure 4.

A deconflicted CBA might be as simple as the provider nations sharing information so that training activities keep an appropriate tempo. For example, in early 2025, Australia, Japan and the US all arranged training for Palau's Division of Marine Law Enforcement (Palau's coast guard equivalent) in the same month. This took a large percentage of the small nation's forces away from their regular patrol routine. The Palauan defence coordinator seeks to avoid this type of conflict by arranging meetings with representatives from partner nation CBA providers located on the island, but as a single person is overstretched.

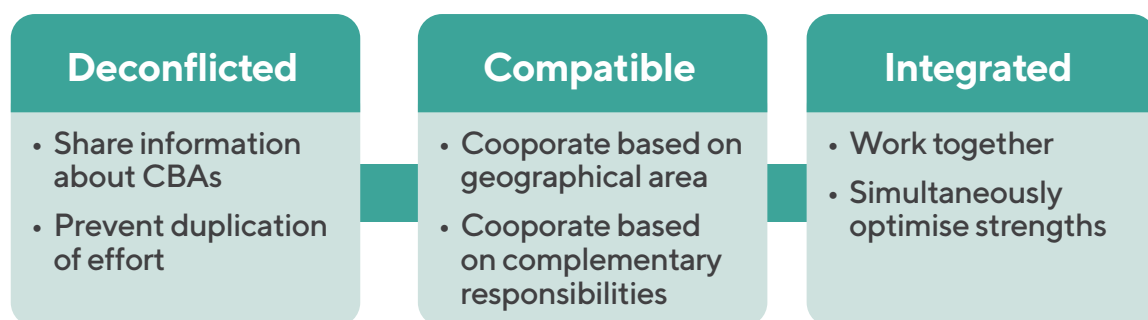


Figure 4. Spectrum of Capacity-Building Activity Coordination

The US and Japan have provided examples of compatible CBAs. For example, a division of complementary training began after the Philippines raised concerns about receiving conflicting training for engine maintenance procedures prior to 2017.<sup>90</sup> So, the US took the lead on technical training for outboard diesel engine maintenance on small vessels and Japan focused on training for generators and propulsion engines on multi-role response vessels (MRRVs).

We saw integrated capacity-building with the VBSS training provided by Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand, the UK and the US during the 2023 Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training (SEACAT) multilateral exercise. Here, the capacity provider nations worked together to deliver aspects of the classroom training that played to their strengths.

Military doctrine sees the continuum of interoperability as a progression: it generally understands that the goal should be to advance cooperation along the continuum to integration. However, with regard to capacity-building, it is better to describe this framework as a spectrum, as does Jennifer Parker when discussing Australia's interoperability challenges in Southeast Asia.<sup>91</sup> Neither point on this spectrum is necessarily a goal more important than the other. In many cases, the goal of deconflicted CBAs is enough; yet, in others, compatible or integrated CBAs may be the preferred outcome. CBA providers should assess where on the spectrum their CBA should fall.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

The following recommendations highlight how a coordinated approach to capacity-building training with open communication at the working level might be achieved.

**Embassy-level coordination is key.** Representatives from CBA provider states who are based in CBA recipient nations should meet regularly to share information on their activities and develop strategies for CBA coordination. Coordination at this level is essential, as the embassy is the focal point that funnels CBAs funded and carried out by various agencies to the recipient country. In short, embassies are best placed to keep track of all the activities being performed by large governments. Moreover, those based at diplomatic missions have the most nuanced understandings of their partner nations' maritime security needs, political situations and strategic cultures, and are able to build sustained relationships. However, in many host nations, meetings between the CBA delivery embassies tend to be ad hoc and instigated by proactive individuals. Once this individual rotates out of country, the meetings wane. Meetings also often hold limited value because of inconsistent participation by representatives of other CBA provider embassies. As an example, an Australian official organized this sort of meeting in Jakarta, but it was inconsistently attended, and the effort stopped when he transferred. Senior leaders at CBA provider nation embassies should set participation in regular capacity-building discussion meetings as a priority for their staff.

✓ *Exercise Balikatan participants in-process at the Haribon Hangar on Clark Air Base, Philippines. Credit: U.S. Air Force, Jack Sanders.*



*Resources required: This recommendation requires embassy personnel to do additional work. The amount of labour required would be relatively small and may or may not require additional human resources.*

**Implementers must understand strategic priorities and share CBA feedback.** Policy goals mean nothing if they are not clearly communicated to those implementing the CBA training. Those on the ground must know why they are carrying out the training so that they can align course content with goals, engage the optimum audience, and select appropriate delivery methods. Very often that is not the case. Feedback obtained from the course participants and instructors should be evaluated by the CBA provider organization in order to determine the effectiveness of the training, assess its sustainability, and prevent duplication of effort. Without the careful design and monitoring of CBAs, embassy level-coordination will fall short.

*Resources required: No extra resources are required. These activities should already be taking place but in practice they are often lacking.*

**Maritime domain awareness centres could achieve more together.** There are multiple national and regional MDA centres throughout the Indo-Pacific. They share information to promote collaborative maritime safety and security, but coordination is underdeveloped. An annual forum could be established where representatives from national and regional MDA centres, as well as those from relevant international MDA organizations, meet for dialogue about best practices for MDA information sharing and coordination of CBAs.<sup>92</sup> Participants would include representatives from national MDA centres, the IFC in Singapore, the IFC—Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), the Pacific Fusion Center (PFC) in Vanuatu, the Regional Maritime IFC in Madagascar, and the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC) in Singapore, among others. The UNODC GMCP has held five similar meetings under the Forum of National Maritime Fusion Centres (FNMFC). However, these meetings invite the heads of national MDA centres from Southeast Asia only. A forum with rotating hosting responsibilities could be wider in geographic scope and would enable direct information gathering to allow for more efficient CBA coordination.

*Resources required: An annual meeting with two representatives from each national and regional MDA centre as well as relevant international organizations could involve as many as one hundred people. This would be a costly event.*

**A maritime governance centre of excellence would make a big impact.** A maritime governance centre of excellence (COE) could serve as a hub for capacity building in the Indo-Pacific. The COE would gather information from and provide advice to embassies in the region. It would function to coordinate and expand CBAs by deconflicting duplicative activities and creating pathways for providing cooperative and integrated CBAs. It would incorporate the functions previously identified by Corben et al. under their proposed Maritime Capacity Building Initiative.<sup>93</sup> Specifically, the COE would aggregate knowledge of integrated, bi-lateral and multi-lateral CBAs; share information on CBA goals and outcomes; and gather understandings and conduct needs assessments of recipient country priorities. Additionally, the COE could be a centre for academic research that also hosts practical maritime security training for practitioners from across the Indo-Pacific. Personnel would be drawn from CBA provider nations to work full-time in the centre. The establishment of a similar COE was previously recommended at an international conference held in Singapore in July 2023.<sup>94</sup> In May 2026, President Ferdinand Marcos announced that ASEAN leaders had approved the Philippines to house the ASEAN Maritime Centre.<sup>95</sup> The scope of this new centre is yet to be defined but would be best designed along the lines of this proposal.

*Resources required: Establishing an Indo-Pacific Maritime Governance Centre of Excellence would require substantial resources but would not be as expensive as some might imagine. Illustrating the low cost involved, YCAPS has calculated its readiness to operationalise a centre with about ten core permanent staff for as little 2 million USD a year (plus real estate costs).*

> 2023 Indonesian National SAR Agency vessel conducts operations in the Banda Sea. Photo Credit: Annette Bradford

# CONCLUSION

States and other stakeholders have demonstrated sustained interest in CBAs to improve maritime governance in the Indo-Pacific. This is important work given the emerging and intensifying challenges faced by nations. Yet, budgets are not unlimited, therefore CBAs should be optimised to deliver maximum impact. While more CBAs could be performed, similar, or even greater, outcomes can be achieved by strengthening the quality, relevance, and coordination of the many activities already planned or underway. CBAs must be adaptive, locally grounded, and sustained over time. The observations and best practices presented in this handbook demonstrate that relatively modest improvements in planning, communication, training delivery, evaluation, and

coordination can significantly enhance the effectiveness and durability of capacity-building efforts. By aligning strategic objectives with practical implementation, fostering communities of practice, investing in long-term relationships, and ensuring that recipient states retain ownership of the process, Indo-Pacific stakeholders can strengthen the human networks, institutional resilience, and cooperative habits necessary to advance good order at sea. In an increasingly contested maritime environment, effective and well-coordinated capacity building can provide a foundational element of regional stability, prosperity, and security.





# GLOSSARY

|          |                                                   |            |                                                                                            |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AusAID   | Australian Agency of International Development    | JMSDF      | Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force                                                          |
| CBA      | Capacity-Building Activity                        | MDA        | Maritime Domain Awareness                                                                  |
| CBCG     | Capacity Building Coordination Group              | MEPSEAS    | Marine Environment Protection of the South-East Asian Seas                                 |
| CGPCS    | Contact Group for Piracy off the Coast of Somalia | MRRV       | Multi-Role Response Vessel                                                                 |
| COE      | Centre of Excellence                              | MSSR       | Maritime Security Sector Reform                                                            |
| CRIMARIO | Critical Maritime Routes Indian Ocean project     | NATO       | North Atlantic Treaty Organization                                                         |
| DCAF     | Geneva Centre for Security Sector Reform          | NGO        | Non-Governmental Organization                                                              |
| ESIWA    | Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia   | NOAA       | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration                                            |
| EU       | European Union                                    | PFC        | Pacific Fusion Center                                                                      |
| EUCAP    | European Union Capacity Building Mission          | ReCAAP     | Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia |
| FNMFC    | Forum of National Maritime Fusion Centres         | SEACAT     | Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training                                                    |
| IFC      | Information Fusion Centre                         | UNCLOS     | United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea                                            |
| IFC-IOR  | Information Fusion Centre—Indian Ocean Region     | UNODC GMCP | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Global Maritime Crime Programme                   |
| ILO      | International Labour Organization                 | USAID      | US Agency for International Development                                                    |
| IMLI     | International Maritime Law Institute              | USCG       | US Coast Guard                                                                             |
| IMO      | International Maritime Organisation               | USIP       | United States Institute for Peace                                                          |
| IO       | international organization                        | USN        | US Navy                                                                                    |
| IORIS    | Indo-Pacific Regional Information Sharing         | VBSS       | Visitation, Boarding, Search and Seizure                                                   |
| ISC      | Information Sharing Centre                        | YCAPS      | Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies                                                   |
| IUU      | Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated              |            |                                                                                            |
| JCG      | Japan Coast Guard                                 |            |                                                                                            |
| JICA     | Japan International Cooperation Agency            |            |                                                                                            |

Indo-Pacific nations depend on their waters and searoutes to support national and regional resilience. Yet natural

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> Members of the Philippine Coast Guard subdue a simulated hostile. Credit: U.S. Marine Corps, Isaac Cantrell.





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