

QUEENSLAND TOURISM INDUSTRY COUNCIL

# Marine Workforce Qualifications

## for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Sailing Program

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*Advice regarding the Declaration of Maritime Qualifications  
as Apprenticeships and Traineeships*

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## Executive Summary

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will see sailing hosted in the Whitsundays and Townsville — a confirmed decision announced in March 2025 following the Queensland Government's 100-day Games review. The Whitsunday Sailing Club has been specifically identified as expected to play a key role in hosting and organising the competitions due to the 74 Island Archipelago and amazing sailing waters of Pioneer Bay. Airlie Beach/Whitsundays is the premier sailing destination in Australia with the highest boat per capita population and the most sailed region in Australia.

Delivering a world-class Olympic sailing program requires a substantial qualified marine workforce: vessels for race management, athlete safety, media, spectator management, logistics, and ongoing maintenance. Based on comparable Olympic sailing events, the Whitsundays venue alone is projected to require between 200 and 300 support vessels and between 400 and 900 qualified marine crew during and leading up to the Games period (ie from 2028 – 2032).

Australia is currently experiencing a critical maritime skills shortage. The 2026 BIA National Jobs & Skills Survey found that 90.1% of marine businesses are concerned about the lack of skilled labour and 88.4% are anxious about the widening shortage of apprentices. Long-term workforce gap forecasts stand at 58% over five years. Without urgent action, this shortage will be severely exacerbated by Olympic demand.

The following apprenticeships and/or traineeships, would provide the structured workforce pipeline needed to meet 2032 requirements and leave a lasting legacy for the North Queensland marine industry :

- Certificate IV in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 Near Coastal)
- Certificate IV in Maritime Operations (Master <45m Near Coastal)
- Diploma of Maritime Operations
- Diploma of Marine Engineering
- Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 2 Near Coastal) [note: declared June 2025 — confirm implementation pathway]
- Certificate II in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 Near Coastal)

With a six-year runway to the Games, and given that higher-level maritime qualifications require significant sea time that cannot be compressed, the pipeline would need to begin immediately.

# 1. Brisbane 2032 Olympic Sailing — Context and Venues

## 1.1 Confirmed Venue

Following the Queensland Government's 100-day Games review, Premier David Crisafulli announced in March 2025 that Olympic and Paralympic sailing for Brisbane 2032 will be hosted at two locations: Townsville and The Whitsundays. The sailing events will take place in Pioneer Bay, off Airlie Beach, and around the Whitsunday Islands including Hamilton Island.

World Sailing welcomed the decision, with Australian Sailing President Shevaun Bruland noting: "There is an extremely strong connection between sailing and the communities in North Queensland, and we are pleased that we will have the opportunity to provide a regional legacy for the 2032 Olympic Games."

The Whitsunday Sailing Club has been specifically named as expected to play a key role in hosting and organising the competitions, reflecting the Club's standing as a premier competitive and administrative sailing body in the region being the only Club in Australia that is a Licensed RTO, and is also an Australian Sailing Discover Sailing Venue.

The decision to host sailing in North Queensland rather than the greater Brisbane region represents a significant opportunity for the Whitsunday marine industry — but also an unprecedented demand on regional marine workforce capacity that does not currently exist at the required scale.

## 1.2 Olympic Sailing Program Scale

Olympic sailing is a substantial event involving multiple simultaneous disciplines, race courses, and support operations. At the Paris 2024 Games in Marseille:

- 330 athletes from more than 60 nations competed
- Approximately 250 competitor boats and boards participated
- Four to five simultaneous race areas operated
- Approximately 300 Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs) were equipped and managed for race management and support operations (Oria Marine, 2024)
- 10 sailing disciplines contested, from ILCA dinghies to mixed multihulls and kiteboarding

Brisbane 2032 is expected to follow a similar format. With two venues at this stage (Whitsundays and Townsville), the total support fleet will be distributed across both sites. The Whitsundays, as the primary venue for Olympic sailing disciplines, is projected to host the majority of the fleet.

Whitsunday Sailing Club already has bid for a number of major World Title events including the ILCA4s, ILCA6's and 7's for 2029 and 2030 which alone will require in excess of 60 Safety Vessels, 2-300 support vessels, media vessels, course and safety vessels.

## 1.3 Vessel Categories Required

An Olympic sailing venue requires a complex multi-category support fleet. Based on World Sailing Race Management Policies (January 2024) and Paris 2024 operational data, the following categories apply:

| Vessel Category               | Role                                                                 | Typical Quantity (per course) |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Race Committee Vessels</b> | Start/finish line management, course direction, PRO platform         | 2 per course                  |
| Mark Laying Vessels           | Set and adjust course marks; shift with windward/leeward adjustments | 3–4 per course                |
| Safety / Rescue RIBs          | On-water safety, capsized vessel recovery, athlete welfare           | 6–8 per course                |

|                              |                                                                |                |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Umpire Vessels               | On-water rule enforcement; fleet and medal race umpiring       | 2–4 per course |
| Team Coach / Support Boats   | National team support; training and warm-up outside race area  | 80–100 total   |
| Media / Broadcast Vessels    | Camera platforms, press boats, broadcast RIBs                  | 20–30 total    |
| Spectator Management Vessels | Crowd control, spectator zone enforcement, passenger transfers | 10–20 total    |
| VIP / Hospitality Vessels    | Sponsor, IOC, government and dignitaries' viewing platforms    | 10–15 total    |
| Fuel / Logistics Vessels     | Refuelling at-sea, spare parts delivery, waste management      | 5–10 total     |
| Patrol / Security Vessels    | Maritime security, exclusion zone enforcement                  | 5–10 total     |

## 1.4 Projected Workforce Demand — Whitsundays Venue

Assuming 3–4 simultaneous race courses at the Whitsundays venue (consistent with Paris 2024 proportioning), projected fleet and crew requirements are as follows:

| Fleet Category                      | Estimated Vessels      | Estimated Crew      |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Race management fleet (all courses) | 60–80                  | 120–200             |
| Team support boats (all nations)    | 80–100                 | 160–250             |
| Media, spectator, VIP, logistics    | 60–80                  | 120–200             |
| Patrol, security, fuel support      | 15–25                  | 30–60               |
| <b>TOTAL (Whitsundays Venue)</b>    | <b>215–285 vessels</b> | <b>430–710 crew</b> |

Additionally, the Games period (estimated 12–14 days of racing plus pre-Games preparation and the 2031 “Test Event”) will generate significant demand for maintenance, repair, and shipwright services across the support fleet. A conservative estimate of 50–100 qualified maintenance and marine engineering personnel on-site is reasonable based on the scale of operations.

In total, the Whitsundays venue is projected to require approximately 500–800 qualified marine personnel, the vast majority of whom will need to hold AMSA Certificates of Competency underpinned by the qualifications proposed for traineeship declaration.

## 2. Current Maritime Workforce Shortage

The Olympic demand projected above falls against a backdrop of a severe and worsening national maritime skills shortage. Multiple data sources confirm the urgency:

### 2.1 Boating Industry Association — 2026 National Jobs & Skills Survey

The 2026 BIA National Jobs & Skills Survey, released May 2026, surveyed businesses across the full marine industry spectrum and found:

| Finding                                                                | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Businesses concerned about lack of skilled labour                      | 90.1%      |
| Businesses anxious about apprentice pipeline shortage                  | 88.4%      |
| Businesses experiencing immediate revenue loss due to labour shortages | 52.1%      |
| Businesses experiencing project delays and delivery backlogs           | 42.1%      |
| Long-term workforce gap forecast (5-year horizon)                      | 58%        |

The most sought-after trade apprentices nationally are Shipwrights and Boat Builders (38.8%), followed by Marine Mechanics (21.5%) and Marine Trimmers (12.4%). These are precisely the trades required to prepare, operate, and maintain the Olympic support fleet.

### 2.2 Industry Skills Australia — Maritime Workforce Report

Industry Skills Australia (ISA), the federal Jobs and Skills Council for the maritime sector, has identified maritime as a priority shortage area. ISA is currently leading the National Maritime Skills Network and a Maritime Coordination of Sea Time project — both direct responses to the inability of current training pipelines to produce qualified seafarers at the required rate.

ISA notes that the sea time requirement embedded in AMSA's Certificate of Competency framework cannot be shortcut: trainees must accumulate qualifying sea service days on commercial vessels under supervision before they can sit for their AMSA CoC assessments. This means training lead times for higher-level qualifications (particularly Certificate IV and Diploma level) extend to four to six years when sea time accumulation is factored in.

### 2.3 Implications for Brisbane 2032

The combination of existing shortage, extended training lead times, and a firm deadline of 2032 creates a narrow but achievable window for action. If traineeship declarations are secured in 2026 and training commences immediately, graduates of Certificate IV and Diploma programs could realistically complete their qualifications and accumulate required sea time by 2030–2031 — allowing a 12–18 month period of practical deployment and refinement before the Games.

Delay beyond 2026 progressively reduces the available workforce pool and increases the risk that the industry will be unable to meet Olympic demands from within the Queensland marine workforce, necessitating importation of qualified personnel from interstate or overseas — an outcome that undermines the regional legacy intent of hosting the Games in North Queensland.

### 3. Qualifications Proposed for Declaration — Analysis

The following qualifications are proposed by QTIC for declaration as apprenticeships and/or traineeships in Queensland. Each is analysed below in terms of: current traineeship status; AMSA licence alignment; vessel roles requiring the qualification; and the case for declaration.

#### 3.1 Certificate II in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 Near Coastal)

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Package Code</b>    | MAR20424 (or current version)                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>AMSA CoC Outcome</b>         | Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 Near Coastal                                                                                                                     |
| <b>QLD Traineeship Status</b>   | Not yet declared (as of advice date)                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Vessel/Role Application</b>  | Engine watch on vessels with propulsion up to 500kW; crew on smaller support RIBs and tenders; entry-level engine watch on race management and safety vessels |
| <b>Olympic Workforce Demand</b> | Approximately 100–200 personnel at this level required for Games operations                                                                                   |

This is an entry-level engineering qualification that serves as the foundation for the MED pathway. Its declaration as a traineeship provides the lowest-cost, most accessible entry point into maritime engineering for new entrants — particularly school leavers and career changers in the Whitsunday region. Combined with the already-declared Certificate III MED Grade 2, declaration of the Certificate II creates a full articulated traineeship pathway from entry level through to AMSA licensing.

#### 3.2 Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 2 Near Coastal)

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Package Code</b>    | MAR30824                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>AMSA CoC Outcome</b>         | Marine Engine Driver Grade 2 Near Coastal                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>QLD Traineeship Status</b>   | DECLARED — approved 26 June 2025, implemented 7 July 2025                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Vessel/Role Application</b>  | Engineer on vessels with propulsion up to 1500kW; engine operations on mid-range support vessels including larger safety boats, committee vessels under 24m, and logistics craft |
| <b>Olympic Workforce Demand</b> | Approximately 50–100 personnel required; critical for maintaining and operating safety and race management vessels                                                               |

This qualification has been declared. QTIC and industry stakeholders should confirm that the implementation pathway — including employer engagement, training provider capacity in North Queensland, and sea time coordination — is actively progressing. Given the 2032 deadline and

required sea time accumulation period, trainees commencing in 2026 are on the minimum viable timeline.

### 3.3 Certificate IV in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 Near Coastal)

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Package Code</b>    | MAR40224 (or current version)                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>AMSA CoC Outcome</b>         | Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 Near Coastal                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>QLD Traineeship Status</b>   | NOT DECLARED — critical gap above Certificate III pathway                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Vessel/Role Application</b>  | Chief engineer on vessels with main propulsion over 750kW; required for larger committee vessels, passenger spectator vessels, media vessels and VIP charter craft used in Olympic operations |
| <b>Olympic Workforce Demand</b> | Approximately 20–40 personnel required for Games operations; ongoing demand in commercial marine tourism post-Games                                                                           |

This is a priority declaration. The Certificate IV MED Grade 1 qualification is required to be Chief Engineer on commercially operated vessels with engines over 750kW — this encompasses the vast majority of committee boats, media platforms, spectator ferries, and VIP vessels that will be central to Olympic operations. Without qualified engineers at this level, these vessels cannot legally operate.

Critically, this qualification represents the top of the MED engineering pathway for near coastal operations. There is currently no traineeship pathway above the Certificate III level in Queensland. Declaration here completes the engineering traineeship ladder and creates the career progression structure needed to retain qualified marine engineers in regional Queensland long-term.

### 3.4 Certificate IV in Maritime Operations (Master <45m Near Coastal)

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Package Code</b>     | MAR40324                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>AMSA CoC Outcome</b>          | Master less than 45 metres Near Coastal                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>QLD Traineeship Status</b>    | NOT DECLARED — largest gap in the deck officer traineeship pathway                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Vessel/Role Application</b>   | Master of commercially operated vessels up to 45m in length; required for race committee vessels, media platforms, spectator ferries, coach boats over 24m, and VIP hospitality vessels at Olympic level |
| <b>AMSA Sea Time Requirement</b> | Minimum 180 days qualifying sea service while holding a Master <24m NC CoC or Mate <80m NC CoC (including 120 days as person in charge of navigational watch)                                            |

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Olympic Workforce Demand</b> | Approximately 50–100 skippers required for Games vessel operations requiring >24m master status; ongoing strong demand in Whitsunday charter and tourism sector |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

This is the single most critical qualification for declaration. The Master <45m NC certificate is required to command the majority of vessels that will be central to Olympic operations — committee boats are typically 12–30m, media platforms 15–40m, spectator ferries 25–45m, and VIP vessels up to 45m. The currently declared Master <24m traineeship (MAR30924) creates the entry level, but there is no structured traineeship pathway to progress to the next tier.

The sea time requirement — 180 days on a commercial vessel at navigational watch officer level — means that a trainee who begins a Master <24m program in 2026 could realistically hold a Master <45m CoC by 2029–2030, providing a 2–3 year period of operational readiness before the Games. This is the tightest viable timeline; any delay significantly compresses or eliminates the available pool.

This qualification is also the backbone of the commercial charter and tourism industry in the Whitsundays. Training providers including the Whitsunday Maritime Training Centre, Great Barrier Reef International Marine College (TAFE Queensland), and Queensland Maritime Training Services already offer this course — declaration as a traineeship adds funding support and employer engagement structures to courses that the industry already recognises as essential.

### 3.5 Diploma of Maritime Operations

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Package Code</b>    | MAR50320 (or current version)                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>AMSA CoC Outcome</b>         | Pathway toward Master <100m Near Coastal and senior operational management roles                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>QLD Traineeship Status</b>   | NOT DECLARED — no traineeship exists at diploma level in maritime operations                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Vessel/Role Application</b>  | Chief Mate, senior operational management, marine operations coordinator; multi-vessel fleet management; required for overall Games marine operations management roles including Fleet Commander, Operations Manager |
| <b>Olympic Workforce Demand</b> | 10–20 senior operational personnel required; essential for management layer above individual vessel commanders                                                                                                       |

The Diploma of Maritime Operations is the qualification that develops the senior leadership layer in marine operations — the personnel who can manage multi-vessel fleet operations, coordinate between race management and safety teams, liaise with World Sailing officials, and make real-time operational decisions across a complex event. The Olympic Games will require a cadre of professionals at this level.

Declaration as a traineeship would be the first such pathway at diploma level in Queensland maritime, filling a structural gap that currently forces experienced mariners to self-fund tertiary study. The 6-year runway to 2032 is sufficient to complete a Diploma and accumulate the required sea time for senior commercial roles, but only if training commences now.

### 3.6 Diploma of Marine Engineering

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Package Code</b>    | MAR50120 (or current version)                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>AMSA CoC Outcome</b>         | Pathway toward senior marine engineer and chief engineer roles on larger vessels                                                                                                                            |
| <b>QLD Traineeship Status</b>   | NOT DECLARED — no traineeship exists at diploma level in marine engineering                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Vessel/Role Application</b>  | Chief Engineer, Fleet Engineer, vessel maintenance manager; overseeing fleet maintenance programs for large numbers of support vessels in Games operations; shipwright and boat-building project management |
| <b>Olympic Workforce Demand</b> | 10–20 senior engineering personnel required; critical for pre-Games fleet preparation (18+ months out) and ongoing maintenance during Games                                                                 |

The Diploma of Marine Engineering is the capstone qualification for marine engineers in the near coastal sector. It equips personnel to manage engineering operations across complex multi-vessel deployments — precisely the profile required to keep a fleet of 200–300 support vessels operational across a 12–14 day Olympic regatta.

The BIA's 2026 Jobs & Skills Survey identifies shipwrights and boat builders as the most critically short trade skill nationally (38.8% of businesses seeking these as priority apprentices). The Diploma of Marine Engineering provides the advanced qualification pathway for those who progress beyond trade-level work into fleet engineering and maintenance management. Declaration creates an incentive structure and funded pathway that does not currently exist.

## 4. The Case for Traineeship and Apprenticeship Declaration

### 4.1 Meeting Queensland's Declaration Policy Criteria

Queensland's Declaration of Apprenticeships and Traineeships Policy (November 2024) sets out criteria for declaration under the Further Education and Training Act 2014. The maritime qualifications proposed meet these criteria as follows:

- **Industry demand:** Confirmed Olympic hosting commitment creates a defined, documented, time-bound workforce demand in addition to ongoing commercial marine sector demand in the Whitsunday region
- **Employment-based learning:** Maritime qualifications inherently require sea time accumulation in real commercial vessel operations — the traineeship model is an exact fit for structured workplace-based learning
- **AMSA regulatory alignment:** All proposed qualifications are directly mapped to AMSA Certificate of Competency outcomes under Marine Order 505, ensuring training product currency and regulatory relevance
- **Training provider capacity:** Established RTOs including TAFE Queensland's Great Barrier Reef International Marine College, Whitsunday Maritime Training Centre, Queensland Maritime Training Services, and the Australian Maritime College (hybrid delivery) have existing capacity to deliver these qualifications in North Queensland
- **Employer engagement:** The Whitsunday marine tourism sector (charter vessels, tour operators, marina services) provides an existing commercial employer base for traineeship placements, with Olympic preparation activities creating additional placement opportunities from 2028 onward

### 4.2 Timeline Alignment

The 2032 Games provides a uniquely compelling timeline argument. The lead times for higher-level maritime qualifications — including mandatory sea time — mean that declaration in 2026 represents the minimum viable timing for producing qualified personnel by the Games. The table below illustrates indicative completion timelines:

| Qualification                      | Training Duration | Sea Time Required               | Earliest Readiness |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Cert II MED Grade 3 NC             | 6–12 months       | 60 days                         | 2027–2028          |
| Cert III MED Grade 2 NC (declared) | 12–18 months      | 90 days                         | 2028–2029          |
| Cert III Master <24m NC (declared) | 12–18 months      | 90 days                         | 2028–2029          |
| Cert IV MED Grade 1 NC             | 12–24 months      | 180 days (post-Cert III)        | 2029–2030          |
| Cert IV Master <45m NC             | 12–18 months      | 180 days (post-Master 24m)      | 2029–2030          |
| Diploma of Maritime Operations     | 18–24 months      | Extensive (continuous sea time) | 2030–2031          |
| Diploma of Marine Engineering      | 18–24 months      | Extensive (continuous sea time) | 2030–2031          |

Note: Sea time can accumulate concurrently with formal training under appropriate training contracts and employer arrangements. Earliest readiness dates assume commencement in the second half of 2026 and are indicative.

### 4.3 Legacy Benefits Beyond the Games

While the Olympic imperative provides the immediate driver, the workforce developed through traineeship declaration has enduring value for North Queensland:

- The Whitsunday region hosts major annual sailing events including Airlie Beach Race Week and Hamilton Island Race Week, which already require substantial race management and support fleets. Qualified local personnel reduce reliance on importing crew from southern states.
- Commercial charter tourism — the backbone of the Whitsunday economy — is growing and constrained by qualified master shortages. A traineeship pipeline directly benefits over 100 marine tourism operators in the region.
- Marine maintenance and shipwright services are critical for the charter fleet. Diploma-level engineering qualifications create the senior workforce needed to sustain and grow marine services businesses.
- National Maritime Skills Network: Queensland declarations will contribute to the national maritime training framework being coordinated by Industry Skills Australia, positioning Queensland as a leader in maritime workforce development.
- Regional retention: Structured career pathways — from Certificate II through to Diploma level — provide young people in Airlie Beach, Proserpine, Townsville, and surrounding communities with a clear, funded route into rewarding maritime careers without needing to relocate to major cities.

### 4.4 Funding Framework Alignment

From 1 July 2025, Queensland's User Choice funding model transitioned to three targeted programs aligned with Queensland's future workforce needs. The marine tourism and hospitality workforce pipeline for Brisbane 2032 represents precisely the kind of strategically important, regionally significant training investment the new framework is designed to support. QTIC is well-positioned to advocate for these qualifications to receive priority funding status under the revised framework, given the documented industry need, confirmed Olympic hosting, and regional economic significance of the Whitsundays marine sector.

## 5. Recommendations

Based on the analysis presented in this advice, the following recommendations are made to QTIC for action with the Queensland Department of Trade, Employment and Training:

### Recommendation 1 — Immediate Declaration Priority

QTIC should urgently advocate for the declaration of the following qualifications as traineeships, prioritised in order of Olympic operational criticality:

- **1. Certificate IV in Maritime Operations (Master <45m Near Coastal) — HIGHEST PRIORITY.** Largest gap; most vessels require this level; 180-day sea time requirement makes immediate commencement critical.
- **2. Certificate IV in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 Near Coastal) — HIGH PRIORITY.** Completes the MED engineering pathway; required for chief engineer roles on all larger vessels.
- **3. Certificate II in Maritime Operations (Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 Near Coastal) — HIGH PRIORITY.** Entry point to engineering pathway; accessible for school-based and new entrant trainees.
- **4. Diploma of Maritime Operations — IMPORTANT.** Senior operational leadership; declare concurrently with Cert IV programs.
- **5. Diploma of Marine Engineering — IMPORTANT.** Fleet engineering management; declare concurrently.

### Recommendation 2 — Implementation Assurance for Declared Qualifications

QTIC should verify with the Department that the Certificate III Maritime Operations (MED Grade 2 NC) declared in June 2025 and Certificate III Maritime Operations (Master <24m NC) declared in March 2025 have active employer engagement, training provider enrolments, and sea time coordination support underway — not merely declared on paper.

### Recommendation 3 — North Queensland Delivery Capacity

QTIC should work with TAFE Queensland's Great Barrier Reef International Marine College (Townsville and Airlie Beach campuses), the Whitsunday Maritime Training Centre, and Queensland Maritime Training Services to confirm delivery capacity for all proposed qualifications in North Queensland. The Australian Maritime College's hybrid learning model — demonstrated successfully through Svitzer's school-based traineeship program — provides a model for remote and regional delivery.

### Recommendation 4 — Industry Skills Australia Engagement

QTIC should engage directly with Industry Skills Australia, which has responsibility for the Maritime Training Package and the National Maritime Skills Network. ISA is actively working on Marine Order 505 alignment and sea time coordination. Queensland declarations for Olympics-related maritime qualifications align directly with ISA's strategic priorities and may attract co-investment or accelerated support.

### Recommendation 5 — Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee Endorsement

QTIC should seek a formal letter of support from the Brisbane 2032 Organising Committee and Australian Sailing acknowledging the marine workforce needs of the Games. Such an endorsement strengthens the business case for declaration and may support access to dedicated Olympics-related workforce funding streams.

### Recommendation 6 — School-Based Traineeship Pathways

Given the six-year lead time, QTIC should advocate for school-based traineeships in maritime operations qualifications to be made available to Year 10–12 students in the Whitsunday, Mackay,

Townsville, and Cairns regions. This mirrors the successful Svitzer school-to-traineeship model and creates the earliest viable pipeline of talent entering the workforce by 2030.

## 6. Conclusion

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic Sailing Program — confirmed for the Whitsundays and Townsville — will be the largest marine operations undertaking in North Queensland's history. The Whitsunday Sailing Club, named as central to the event's organisation, stands at the intersection of this opportunity and its attendant workforce challenge.

Australia's maritime workforce is already in deficit. The time to build the pipeline is not after the qualifications are needed — it is now. The six years between 2026 and the Games represent the minimum viable window for traineeship graduates to complete training, accumulate sea time, and be operationally ready for Olympic deployment.

Declaration of the six qualifications recommended in this advice — particularly Certificate IV Master <45m NC and Certificate IV MED Grade 1 NC — will provide the structured, funded, employer-engaged training pathways the industry needs. The Olympic imperative provides an unprecedented policy argument for action. The legacy benefit to the Whitsunday marine tourism industry will endure long after the Games.

QTIC's advocacy for these declarations, grounded in the analysis presented here, represents a pivotal contribution to both the success of the 2032 Games and the long-term economic prosperity of North Queensland.

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