



From left, Head of Academic Captain Voi Garisau, Ilaisa Malakau, Josevata Yaqona, Adi Elenoa Rakuro, Etueta Kalouniwaqa, Disciplinary Officer Vosataki Kolinisau, Josifini Lutu, Matila Marama, Linda Fong and FMA CEO Mahesa Abeynayake.

## Students undertake professional industrial attachment with Captain Cook Cruises Fiji

Seven students from the Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) will have an opportunity to train on vessels operated by Captain Cook Cruises Ltd, Port Denarau. After three months of shore training on smaller craft, they will be sailing on Fiji's prestigious vessel the MV Reef Endeavor.

FMA Chief Executive Officer Mahesa Abeynayake said the selection of cadets by well-established shipping companies in Fiji and overseas clearly reflects the potential the students have and with the right guidance, they can become the best in the world.

Mr Abenayake said experience ashore and onboard would provide the cadets with an opportunity to learn from experts in a professional environment.

"This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn from the best in the business. I'm proud to see that our students continue to receive such attachments, and it shows the confidence the industry has with the Academy," said Mr Abenayake.

"The time cadets spend onboard the MV Reef Endeavor, complies with the tonnage and the engine capacity requirements for the trainee record book."

The students who are all Diploma 1 cadets from the Nautical Science and Marine Engineering Programmes commenced their mandatory industrial attachment, which is for six months.

"In the new structure developed in 2018, students have the choice of attending the attachment at either Stage Two or Four of their studies or completing the Diploma first and recording their sea time after completion."

During their attachment, students will be guided by supervisors and will have an opportunity to move from one section to the other to understand and get an overview of operations.

"All cadets must maintain the record book containing details of the ship, the work, and the equipment that they work on daily. The book is signed by the captain or the senior officer in charge and presented to the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji (MSAF) for a Certificate of Competency (COC) examination," CEO Mr

Abenayake said.

Sailing on vessels such as MV Reef Endeavor, Ramarama and Spirit of Pacific, the young trainees have a chance of visiting many of the beautiful islands of Fiji. They also interact with passengers and learn many soft skills not included in the Academy curriculum.

"Cadets are also monitored closely by FMA staff in conjunction with the Operations and Human Resources section of the organisation."

Mr Abenayake said the selection of female cadets was also a positive sign and would serve as an encouragement to others who would be contemplating embarking a career in the Maritime Industry.

"We are incredibly proud that of the seven candidates, four are females and this is a strong indication that females are breaking into this previously male dominated field, and doing it well. It's encouraging to see that our female cadets are receiving equal opportunities to excel in the Maritime Industry," said the senior academic.

The CEO said the Fiji Maritime Academy had noted an increase in the enrolment of females in maritime programmes.

"From 10 females in 2018, we now have 44 females enrolled this year, out of which, 21 are sponsored by the World Wild Life Fund (Pacific) in the Deckhand Fishing course," he said.

"The feedback we have received from the industry is that our female students are diligent and disciplined. This news is encouraging despite the hardships experienced by females in a male-dominated industry."

"Overall, we continuously receive positive reviews from local and regional shipping companies regarding the calibre and confidence of our students, and this in itself speaks volumes."

The Fiji Maritime Academy is an entity of the Fiji National University (FNU) and is managed by the Colombo International Nautical and Engineering College (CINEC) from Sri Lanka.