



Galileo is the MCA flagship training facility in Asia Pacific and probably the best value-for-money maritime training experience in the world.

Actually, the story started in 2011 when a Royal Navy engineer flew out to Thailand and had a vision to start a school for superyacht crew. He could see Asia growing fast as a maritime destination for charter superyachts as well as for cruise and merchant shipping. The crew, he thought, could be mostly young Asians with a taste for adventure, and he would provide the training they would need.

So, he set up Galileo Yachting and got started with mainly Thai students. The school had no accreditation at that stage and taught basic stewardess interior and deckhand skills. Phuket turned out to be a great location to attract not only local crew but quickly became known in Europe and America. Phuket is the centre of the superyacht industry in the Asia Pacific region, and superyachts were discovering the great abundance of pristine cruising grounds in the remote and beautiful areas of the Andaman Islands, Phuket and Phang Nga Bay, the newly opened Mergui archipelago off Myanmar, the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam, etc. The opportunity was there to grow Galileo into a fine business but the key to success would be financing facilities, a full range of internationally approved courses, and a successful

outcome for the Galileo graduates in getting placed on suitable yachts and cruise lines.

At this time, I was buying and developing rubber plantations, having recently taken early retirement from the public corporations that I had been managing for some 30+ years, and was living in Phuket just across the road from Galileo Yachting school. As a lifetime ocean sailor and navigator, I was fascinated by the potential for this fledgling school and soon realized that this could be my final career challenge to build a world class fully international maritime academy. The location looked obvious, right in the heart of the Asia Pacific cruising grounds, and the marine industry generally was set to grow faster here than anywhere in the world. So, I purchased a 50% stake in the company and a few months later purchased the remaining 50% also.

I then tried hard to interest the UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) to audit my school and give us their approval and accreditation, but they first thought us to be too far away and in a region known for inadequate training standards – how would they be confident of maintaining their reputation for excellence and world leading training standards? After a year of proving to MCA that my



HOW did Galileo become the MCA flag-ship Maritime Academy in Asia?

By Anthony Gould



own track record as CEO and President of UK, USA, Australian and Asian public listed companies over a 30-year career, together with my vision for the future of Galileo as a truly trustworthy and standards driven academy in Asia, the policy makers at MCA agreed to put us to the test with desk audits in Southampton, then, if we passed that rigorous stage, a full field audit with examiners out here in Thailand. That was a very demanding and expensive process over an 18-month period and required much investment in instructor training and recruitment, training facilities that met all MCA, IMO, MNTB and ISPS requirements and criteria, and business control systems proven to meet the highest security, safety and integrity standards. Eventually we passed all the audits and our examiners told us we were “well on our way to becoming the world’s top maritime training facility”. Asked why, the response was that we were doing things other academies were not doing so well, particularly, focusing on an interactive, engaging and practical experience that was stimulating, fun and given with dedication and enthusiasm by young expert instructors.

We were all so fired up with enthusiasm and plans for the future growth of our facilities, for

expanding into a full range of courses for professional seafarers across cruise and merchant shipping, offshore oil & gas as well as superyachts. So, after three years we entered another process of re-auditing our existing 10 MCA courses and adding 10 new advanced STCW courses for MCA approvals. By mid-2017, we achieved full MCA approvals to deliver 20 STCW courses and provide Certificates of Competence to professional seafarers on behalf of MCA.

In the last four years we have come a long way. We have now attracted three investors to help us finance the huge cost of equipment, facilities, school buildings, training vessels and life-boats of all types. We now have a School of Marine Engineering, an Advanced Fire Fighting School, Deep Water Survival Pool, Survival Craft and Fast Rescue Boats facility, a Medical Centre, Culinary Arts Kitchen and a Crew Residence for 30 students at a time.

Really, we can now claim to be the MCA flag-ship training facility in Asia Pacific and probably the best value-for-money maritime training experience in the world. And there is so much more to come!



A bit more about my background to this mission:

Galileo focuses on interactive, engaging & practical experience that is stimulating, fun & given with dedication and enthusiasm by young expert instructors.

I have been an active yachtsman for the last 50 years although my professional life has been as CEO of public companies in the publishing, data technology and shipping industries across USA, UK, Australia and the Asia region. I bought my first yacht at 19 years old and yachting has been my passion since then, becoming Chairman of the cruising committee of the Cruising Association and later Chairman of Council of that august body based in St Katherine Dock in London. I wrote regular articles for *Yachting Monthly* and several other yachting magazines during my first and second two-year cruises around the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas and then later during my journey from Taiwan, through the Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and down the coast of Australia to Sydney, where I became an active member of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.

My early career was in publishing, first in newspaper circulation and marketing, then as MD of a group of professional publishing companies within the International Thomson Organisation where I developed fine art, political, legal and electronic publishing businesses. During that time, I created the European Law Centre which was Europe's first foray into remote on-line searching for highly valuable information and documents by a service called "Eurolex". This was a forerunner to the internet and the searching system we then designed, with the help of a team of computer scientists from the Atomic Energy Authority, the EEC (today's European Union) and the University of South Wales (USW), is the same basic software "STATUS" that we all use today when we ask a question on the internet via any search engine.

Later, after building a 54-foot yacht in Taiwan and sailing to Papua New Guinea where I became CEO of the Development Corpora-

tion and directed shipping, transportation and freight handling companies, I sailed into Sydney Harbour and was soon invited to set up the Australian Legal Information System and took that company public on the Australian Stock Exchange. My company took over several computer service companies to form the largest IT systems group in Australia with about 4,000 professional staff. A few years later, after establishing a British public transport systems group as CEO, Asia Pacific, and then as CEO and President of Image Sensing Systems, a Nasdaq USA listed group, I retired from the "board-room" and became a rubber plantation owner in rural Thailand. That was when I first became interested in Galileo and started to develop Galileo Maritime Academy in Phuket.

We built a new campus, based in the 200-acre site of Asia's largest superyacht marina, at Yacht Haven Marina. Our new HQ building is located right in the centre of the campus of facilities, overlooking the marina and the beauty of Phang Nga Bay, where students can walk to each of the different specialized training facilities and boats in the marina.

The new central building also has three lecture theatres, teaching kitchens, recreation room and a boardroom where fine dining is practiced in regular assessment dinners and graduation parties. Our business has expanded and we are now providing training programs for the cruise line, merchant marine and offshore oil and gas industries.

Our mission is to provide, for professional seafarers worldwide as well as new entrants to the industry, the most enjoyable practical training experience to the highest international standards and with MCA, IMO, MNTB and ISPS compliant equipment, instructors and lesson plans. Creating the MCA flag-ship training facility in the Far East will be the realization of my life's remaining professional task. ⚓

