

Senior Leaders Program and Leadership Development Program

Helping senior and emerging leaders navigate new waters

The Client

In 2018, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) took over full responsibility for commercial vessel safety in Australian waters from state and territory governments, greatly increasing its area of operations and direct dealings with the industry it serves.

Employing over 400 people in 15 locations around Australia, the authority now regulates all shipping in Australia's 8-million-square kilometre exclusive economic zone, the world's third largest.

AMSA also protects Australia's marine environment in this huge area, coordinates search and rescue operations, and manages the country's international maritime obligations.

With 26,000 ships visiting Australian ports each year, and more than two-million Australian boat owners also using these busy waters, AMSA's leaders must work together more effectively than ever before to maintain maritime safety around Australia's perimeter.

The Challenge

To develop new leadership skills that matched its enhanced powers, AMSA chose Melbourne Business School to help its leaders drive change, lead strategically, influence others and collaborate widely.

A technically focused organisation, with a proud history of managing safety at sea, AMSA leaders needed a stronger, more collaborative culture to bring about change with a greater focus on clients.

During the discovery process, AMSA and Melbourne Business School's Organisational Learning Group explored and developed the organisation's new leadership objectives, challenges and positive aspects of its current culture.

The process revealed a hunger to learn and adapt. It also revealed that AMSA needed two parallel programs – one for senior leaders, who were setting the organisation's future direction, and another for emerging leaders, who would become a pool of future leaders.

The programs set ambitious objectives but had realistic expectations. At a minimum, they would help participants set their leadership priorities and continue developing them into the future.



Unleash the power of people with a program designed by your organisation, for your organisation, with our help.



Government and
Public Sector



Financial Services



Health and Sciences



Energy and Utilities



Infrastructure Services

The Solution

Following the discovery phase, AMSA and MBS co-designed the **Senior Leaders Program** and **Leadership Development Program** to create new levels of self-awareness, ability to lead others, strategic thinking, collaboration and customer focus among AMSA's leadership talent.

The design stage explored the phases of leadership development at AMSA and agreed on design principles, learning objectives and evaluation methodologies. A 'three-way partnership' model jointly committed AMSA, MBS and participants to each program's success.

In keeping with AMSA's leadership phases, the Leadership Development Program was designed to be foundational, with a strong focus on developing self-awareness and leading others.

Both programs were supported by the MBS online learning platform and "pulse-checks" throughout. They were delivered by MBS Organisational Learning Consultants and subject-matter experts, in human-centred design, for example, and included simulations, such as the Organisation Workshop.

Senior Leaders Program

This program was delivered to 30 senior AMSA leaders, who engaged with AMSA's Group Executive Team members over its 10-month duration.

It was built around key modules and support for participants through diagnostics, a personal debrief of their diagnostic results and one-on-one executive coaching. The Leadership Styles Inventory (LSI) tool provided 360-degree feedback and insights into leadership strengths and areas of development. A composite LSI was also examined from a group perspective in the workshops.

30
SENIOR
AMSA LEADERS

10-month
DURATION

Pre-program INFLUENCERS WORKSHOP

- Co-design
- Accountability
- Application

THREE TWO-DAY WORKSHOP

- Leading change, shaping culture amid complexity
- Customer-centric leading
- Change leadership, success strategies

FIVE HALF-DAY SKILLS-BUILDING WORKSHOPS HALF-DAY GROUP-COACHING SESSIONS

- Developing people through coaching
- Feedback to engage, develop others
- Crucial or difficult conversations
- Engagement, accountability conversations
- Collaborating and influencing effectively

Leadership Development Program

Delivered to five cohorts of up to 26 participants each, this six-month program included key workshops, pre-program diagnostics, the LSI tool to assess leadership styles and a 90-minute one-on-one coaching debrief.

5
COHORTS

26
PARTICIPANTS

6-month
PROGRAM

Pre-program INFLUENCERS WORKSHOP

- Co-design
- Accountability
- Application

Pre-program DIAGNOSTIC AND COACHING DEBRIEF

- Leadership Styles Inventory
- 90-minute coaching debrief

WORKSHOP 1 (THREE DAYS)

- Self-awareness
- Leading effective teams
- AMSA leadership

WORKSHOP 2 (TWO DAYS)

- Customer and stakeholder management
- Leading in a complex, uncertain environment

The Result

Based on surveys before, during and after each program, Melbourne Business School provided AMSA with impact reports to show where its senior and emerging leaders had most improved and were most often applying their new learning.

Senior Leaders Program

Learning objectives	Improvement
Widespread improvement	Almost 70% moderate 25% high
Widespread application - applying their improved leadership skills to their work	60% always applying 38% occasionally

Most-applied leadership skills

- Collaborating across the organisation to ensure alignment with AMSA's strategic direction
- Using self-awareness to better understand the impact of their leadership style and give constructive feedback

“Prior to the program, the managers, to a certain degree, worked in silos, and there was little collaboration among them. The increased interactions and engagement between the managers have resulted in a high level of collaboration, thus aligning our strategic goals.”

Senior Leaders Program participant

Leadership Development Program

Learning objectives	Improvement
Improved leadership skills across all learning objectives	Average 13%
Highest-rated strengths	
Taking accountability for own performance	8.9 /10
Building and maintaining rapport to achieve positive outcomes	8.4 /10
Understanding the behaviours, values, beliefs, and assumptions that create a positive culture at AMSA	8/10
Most-improved capabilities	
Knowing how to take people through change successfully	22%
Generating questions rather than solutions when working with others	21%

“I gained a heightened confidence to question and be bold in making decisions within my level of authority to influence positive change in the organisation, leading to improved safety outcomes and culture change in the industry.”

Leadership Development Program participant

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