

Transport Security Amendment (Serious or Organised Crime) Bill 2016

Monday, April 04, 2016

Senators of the “Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee”,
Subsequent to the hearing day of Wednesday 30th March the MUA would like to counter points raised by the Office of Transport Security’s oral contribution.

The MUA appreciates the opportunity to appear before this inquiry and notes that for the life of the maritime security legislation (MTOFSA) we have dedicated significant resources and time to work with industry and government to achieve the best and most balanced legislative outcomes for our country.

In my verbal submission I mentioned that the OTS did hold industry meetings from time to time but presented proposed changes to the eligibility criteria to the industry group as fait accompli. This is why we have commented on the lack of consultation and continue to firmly hold this view.

We are told that changes are required to accommodate the National Ice Taskforce recommendations which were released less than 4 months ago. Since that time there has been no meetings or discussion to our knowledge.

In his second reading speech on Thursday 11th February 2016 the then Deputy Prime Minister confirmed that-

In December last year, the National Ice Taskforce, chaired by Ken Lay APM, released its final report, which made 38 recommendations across five priority areas. One of these recommendations, adopted by the government in its response to the final report, was to continue to protect the aviation and maritime environments against organised crime by strengthening the eligibility criteria for holders of ASICs and MSICs. This bill will give effect to this element of the government's comprehensive package of action across the five key priority areas, which together are intended to tackle Australia's ice problem head on.

Notwithstanding the side debates the real issue at hand is security and the MUA repeats our distress over the enormous National Border Security chasms.

These include the disgraceful and deliberate demise of the Australian national shipping fleet which should be considered in the context of National Security but has been so deeply politicized so as to leave our borders exposed and at the mercy of FOC shipping.

The systemic corruption found in the Flags of convenience shipping registers including that of Panama which had been identified as a serious vulnerability by our own Border Force but goes ignored.

The missing planks in maritime supply chain security include exemptions in the MSIC programs for container packing yards as well as exemptions for middle and senior management of the Stevedoring industry.

Sincerely

Dean Summers

On behalf of the Maritime Union of Australia.