

28 JUL 2005

Submission No. 30
Date Received 28/6/05

Mrs Paola Cerrato
Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Department of House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

BY: *Mig*
RCDA

Dear Mrs Cerrato

I would like to present this Submission to the Inquiry into skills recognition, upgrading and licensing announced on 19 April 2005 by Senator Amanda Vanstone, Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

The Submission deals with the apparent shortage of *shipping personnel* ie persons with the skills, knowledge and experience of Ships & Shipping, and the need to reconsider the "points" awarded to such personnel for the purposes of migration.

A. Anecdotal evidence of shortage of shipping personnel

- 1. There is anecdotal evidence to indicate that there may be a shortage of shipping personnel.
- 2. Although this shortage has been mentioned by shipping executives at the top of their profession, there is no substantive evidence to support or deny it.

B. Shipping industry has national significance

- 3. Recent appointments of overseas applicants to shipping positions in State and Commonwealth Governments lend some weight to the evidence.
- 4. If there is, or could be, a shortage, it could have adverse effects on an industry whose activities have national significance.

C. Proposal for an in-depth Study

- 5. Because of the national impacts of this industry it is important to conduct an in-depth Study to determine, as far as is practicable, whether there is, or could be in the future, a shortage of shipping personnel.
- 6. It would be a disservice to all Australians if, in the next few years, a shortage of such personnel did develop with its potential for adverse impacts, nationally. (The current skill shortages being addressed by The Australian Government is one reason to avoid a repeat). On the other hand, the shipping industry may be happy to recruit persons from the Royal Australian Navy or the recreational (pleasure craft) industry.

7. The Study should consider, inter alia, the following:

- a whether there is a shortage of shipping personnel (or whether it is merely cyclical) and if so, the measures necessary to deal with it;
- b whether there will be a shortage in the future and the actions necessary to prevent it;
- c the need to review the "skills" for shipping personnel on say, a five year basis;
- d whether one of the causes for the shortage is the reduction in the migration intake of shipping personnel because the "points" awarded for shipping skills has been reduced to "40" in the late 1990's, thereby creating an artificial barrier for shipping personnel to migrate;
- e whether the agencies which the Government consulted (if it did), before setting the new "points" had the relevant expertise and the absence of a role for the shipping industry to provide input into a matter of national significance;
- f any consideration for varying the "points" for shipping personnel to be determined only after:
 - placing of advertisements in national newspapers and shipping newspapers/magazines calling for advice and comments;
 - evaluation of all advice and comments received;
 - final determination of the "points" to be published together with the reasons therefor. This will ensure that matters of national significance are handled with integrity and transparency.

Yours sincerely

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