



Submission from: Captain Ted van Bronswijk
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10 April 2008

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**House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport, Regional
Development and Local Government**

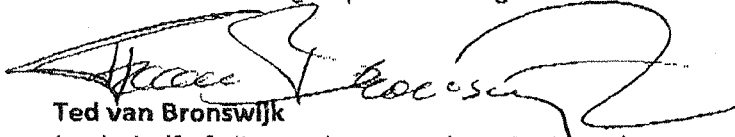
Inquiry into Coastal Shipping Policy and Regulation

Please find following a compilation of comments submitted by the following individual
members of the Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited:

Captain Ted van Bronswijk
Captain Bob MacManamon
Captain John Cardelli
Associate Member John Walker, B.Ed. M.A.

The comments in this submission are contributed **in addition** to those which the
Inquiry should have now received from Captain Arthur Diack, on behalf of the
Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited. We support the comments
submitted by Captain Diack. A copy of the submission from Captain Diack is included
for your reference.

Our comments are grouped according to the aims of the Committee's report.


Ted van Bronswijk
(on behalf of all contributors to this submission)

SUBMISSION

Review the policy and regulatory arrangements in place for the coastal shipping sector

- Regulations are required to put the Australian Coastal shipping industry on the same regulatory and financial level as our competing shipping nations. This may include some beneficial tax advantages for capital expenditure and other areas.

Assess strategies for developing an adequate skilled maritime workforce in order to facilitate growth of the Australian coastal shipping sector

- A well trained workforce is important for filling specialised shore jobs in conjunction with the new expansion of coastal tonnage.
- Encourage overseas students to return to Australian nautical training colleges.
- A joint maritime website possibly along the lines of the Sea Vision UK site, a new initiative aiming to unite the whole UK maritime sector in promoting the role of the sea in our lives, including the range of exciting and challenging careers on offer across the broader maritime industry.
- Increase awareness of the maritime industry by disseminating information, via the Department of Education and recruitment drives in schools, on how to embark on such a career.
Example: explaining and implementing defined career paths, with emphasis on mobility between seagoing and shore employment within the industry and providing step-by-step explanations for aspiring new entrants who, in common with their career advisers, at present have no idea where to start.
- There is and will continue to be a skills shortage in the maritime sector due to very short sighted marine management in the 1980s. At the time Australia was able to entice overseas officers to work on Australian ships, but now, as in the airline industry, the salaries in Australia are not good enough to entice sufficient qualified mariners to come to Australia. We should be able to learn some lessons from the Australian aviation industry and then improve on our current position. Salaries and then conditions are the two main areas which should be focused on here. Conditions can be broadened to include hi-tech training, tax concessions, onboard

conditions including equipment, machinery and even the calibre of seafarers onboard ship.

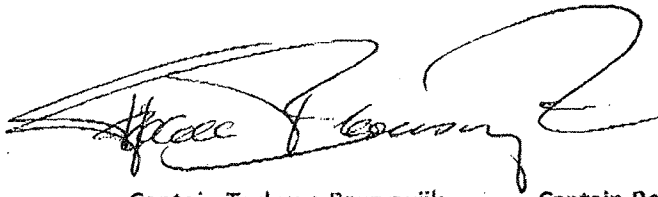
- There is a huge unmet demand for personnel worldwide in the maritime industry. The training of Merchant Navy officers is primarily technical yet the modern Master and senior officers have to deal with complex leadership and human factor issues such as:
 - Leadership and behavioural safety e.g. bridge communication and cross cultural communication on vessels with international crews
 - Communicating effectively with agents, ship owners and shore staff on technical matters
 - Managing and mediating conflicts
 - Leading and managing human environments where stress and fatigue can affect leadership and judgment
 - Leading behavioural safety
 - Mentoring on board where ship operation training may have gaps in essential competencies
 - Managing the morale and teamwork in a profession that is no longer attractive to younger people. It is a dying profession.
- In the rush to train and supply crews in the demand situation at present, human factor leadership competencies are likely to have competency gaps including:
 - An inability to deal with conflicts – letting them fester
 - Poor people management of crew and shore based clients
 - Losing project momentum by not managing change effectively
 - Inability to motivate crew, resulting in low morale, change resistance and failure of safety procedures (ISM codes of practice) and environmental practice (all of which carry heavy penalties)
 - Not meeting the critical needs of key stakeholders, resulting in issues
 - Allowing safety behaviours to fall below critical mass due to an inability to understand and manage a range of behaviours
 - An inability to apply situational leadership – stuck in an autocratic mode
 - Inability to delegate authority appropriately.
- Australia could lead in maritime leadership training and provide world class excellence in leadership and people management if it recognized the importance of its maritime fleets.

Consider the effect of coastal shipping policy on the development of an efficient and productive freight transport system, taking into account issues such as environmental and safety impact and competitive neutrality between coastal shipping and other modes of transport

- Getting long haul transport off the roads in favour of coastal shipping, and improving infrastructure to allow the quick distribution of intrastate and interstate goods, as distinct from overseas imports, and reducing the need for customs and/or quarantine inspections.
- Shipping at present pays for everything proportionally. i.e. light dues for light house operation, harbour dues for infrastructure etc. Trucks do not have to pay for traffic lights, bridges etc and make only a small contribution towards roads which is absorbed in general revenue anyway. Coastal shipping should be allowed to operate on a level field with other transport providers.
- Recognise and evaluate the hidden subsidies from which road transport derives a benefit vis-à-vis the lack of effective subsidies for sea transport, and rectify the disproportionate benefits.
Example: as well as financing the heavy corporate costs of port facilities, shipowners pay the entire cost of coastal lights and other navigational aids enjoyed free of charge by recreational and fishing vessels; the reverse is true of trucks (for example), which do not pay for the entire nation's road signage and traffic lights, nor for the full cost of the heavier construction of roads built to support 40-tonne trucks rather than 1-tonne sedans.
- An efficient transport system will only grow when the sea legs are considered CONSTANT, STABLE, RELIABLE and EFFICIENT. Chopping and changing coastal runs and services, such as SPOT 3 from Sydney to Tasmania, was a very good example of inconsistent and short-sighted government decisions on shipping services. We do not tear down a bridge over a river just because relatively few vehicles use it at the outset! So why stop a shipping service that bridges the Bass Strait? We need long term solid commitment by the elected politicians, not their invisible bureaucrats, to act on this report and then make the decisions themselves for the long term good of Australia.

Consider the implications of coastal shipping policy for defence support, maritime safety and security, environmental sustainability and tourism

- Implement a variety of Federal Government initiatives to increase the number of Australian registered vessels.
- Introduce a second scientific research vessel, new and purpose-built, bringing the standard of the existing national facility up to that of other developed nations, including NZ and Canada. (The current national facility consists of Southern Surveyor, a converted fishing vessel built some 40 years ago.)
- Establish a non-military coastal service to operate the existing ETV, Ocean Viking and Triton, and augment it with other vessels, all of which can contribute in a co-ordinated way to defence support, maritime safety and security, and environmental sustainability.
- Operate a vessel dedicated to supplying remote communities in Australia and SW Pacific with medical aid, disaster relief, delivery of donated equipment, educational materials etc, possibly with suitably qualified volunteer input.
- An efficient marine transport system IS NEEDED by the Australian armed forces.
- Most of Australia's island neighbours would be efficiently served by roll on/roll off (ro-ro) shipping that could also be used as support for the Australian military.



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