

10.4.08

The Secretary

House of Representatives Standing Committee

Canberra

RE: SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO COASTAL SHIPPING FROM THE MARITIME INTEREST GROUP , AN INFORMAL GROUP OF EXPERIENCED MASTER MARINERS AND AN ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR SPECIALIST WITH A MARITIME BACKGROUND

Captains Ted van Bronswijk, Bob MacManamon, John Cardelli

John Walker

Terms of Reference

The Committee is to inquire into coastal shipping policy and regulation and make recommendations on ways to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian coastal shipping sector.

Submission

1. 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.
2. Developing a competent workforce that may include lifting current restrictions on Education establishments allowing full fee students from overseas to make up numbers.
3. Tax incentives for Australian Seafarers to encourage young persons to go to sea.
4. Getting long haul transport off the roads in favour of coastal shipping and better infrastructure to allow the quick distribution of state and interstate goods as

distinct from overseas imports and the need for customs and/or quarantine inspections.

SUBMISSION 5

5 The importance of well trained workforce for filling specialized shore jobs in conjunction with the new expansion of coastal tonnage.

6. The importance of a national fleet to support the navy in situations of need. Possible incentive schemes that support co-contribution during building of vessels, offset by agreements for some vessels to be taken up from trade for military purposes in time of need.

7. Shipping at present pay for everything proportionally. ie light dues for light house operation, harbour dues for infrastructure etc. Trucks do not have to pay for traffic lights, bridges etc and 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.

8. Career opportunities for young people joining the merchant navy. This means that a Masters Certificate be given a degree status to allow those wishing to continue further education and specialize in maritime related fields can do this unencumbered.

9. A joint maritime website possibly along the lines of the UK Sea Vision site promoting careers in the maritime industry at large.

Captain Ted van Bronswijk

Reference: Competitive neutrality between shipping and other modes...

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 1: 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 (e.g.) 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.

Reference: implications of coastal shipping policy for defence support etc. Implement a variety of Federal Government initiatives to increase the number of Australian registered vessels.

Example 2: 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).

Example 3: Establish a non-military coastal service to operate the existing ETV, Ocean Viking and Triton, and augment it with other vessels, all of which contribute in a co-ordinated way, to defence support, maritime safety and security, and environmental sustainability. SUBMISSION 5

Example 4: 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.

Reference: strategies for developing an adequate skilled maritime workforce
Encourage overseas students to return to Australian nautical training colleges.

Example 5: Those potential students who are now prohibited from entering Australia on unspecified national security grounds. This security procedure, introduced by the previous government, directly caused the shut-down of ocean-going certificate courses at Sydney Maritime Institute and significantly reduced enrolments at other colleges including AMC, and this in turn has deprived native-born Australians of associated facilities.

Example 6: See also [Sea Vision UK](#) - 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 maritime careers on offer across the industry.

Reference: strategies for developing an adequate skilled maritime workforce
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 6: 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.

Captain Bob MacManamon

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

There is and will continue to be a skills shortage in the Maritime sector due to very short sighted marine management in the 1980's. 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 2 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 caliber of seafarers onboard. SUBMISSION 5

Reference: Consider the effect of coastal shipping policy on the development of an efficient and productive freight transport system,

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 decisions on shipping services. A bridge over a river is not torn down when the vehicle traffic drops over the early period.!!!

So why stop a shipping service that bridges the Bass Strait.? We need long term solid commitment to act on this report and then make the decisions themselves for the long term good of Australia.

Reference: The implications of coastal shipping policy for defence support, maritime safety and security, environmental sustainability and tourism.

An efficient marine transport system IS NEEDED by the Australian armed forces.

There is a strong argument for this is based on the extensive interaction with the RAN immediately after the East Timor uprising when Australia's armed forces realized there was an urgent need for fast and simple deployment of equipment, mainly rolling stock required for ground support and infrastructure consolidation. Extensive dealings with the RAN illuminated that they were very interested in the Wilhelmsen ro-ro ships and all their capabilities.

Most of Australia's island neighbours would be efficiently served by ro-ro shipping that could also be used as support for the Australian military.

Captain John CARDELLI

Reference: strategies for developing an adequate skilled maritime workforce

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 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 crew ships in the demand situation at present, human factor leadership competencies are likely to have competency gaps including:

- An inability in dealing 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

Retaining and maintaining crewing levels in an industry that has little romance and motivation yet with mountains of regulatory burdens and very high levels of personal accountability is going to be increasingly difficult. It is estimated that 180,000 seafarers will be required in the next three years for worldwide shipping. Even though countries like China and the Philippines are rapidly increasing the numbers and improving the quality of training there are going to be many ships understaffed, with many languages and the opportunities for cultural misperceptions requiring highly skilled people management skills at the senior officer level.

Australia could lead this maritime leadership training need and provide world class excellence in leadership and people management if it recognized the importance of its maritime fleets.

John Walker B.Ed, M.A.

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