

Report on **IMO WORLD MARITIME DAY 2007**

held at the offices of Blake, Dawson, Waldron , Brisbane Qld, Thursday 4/10/2007



The Nautical Institute, Queensland Branch together with the Marine & Shipping Law Unit of The University of Queensland once again hosted a well attended Seminar to celebrate IMO WORLD MARITIME DAY 2007.

Due to a number of intervening factors the Seminar was held on Thursday 4th October a few days after the designated day.

The theme of the seminar “*Environmental Challenges for Shipping: Australian Responsibilities and Interests*” which reflects the problems that are presently being experienced by Australia as a major trading nation both locally and overseas. Even more disturbing were the problems which were highlighted by the various speakers that are liable to be faced by the nation in the future.

Captain Peter Liley MNI, Chair of the Queensland Branch welcomed the assembled gathering and introduced the various speakers.

Dr. Sarah Derrington CNI, Director , Marine and Shipping Law Unit , and Reader , T. C. Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland presented the message from IMO Secretary General, His Excellency, Admiral E. E. Mitropoulos for World Maritime Day 2007. This presentation highlighted both the positive and negative aspects associated with IMO’s role and the need to rectify the perceived slow pace of implementation of decisions made by the body. This has resulted in individual states or provinces enacting their own environmental rules rather than acting globally as has occurred in Australia

with state enacted ballast water legislation. Dr. Derrington also added that Australia was at fault and an audit of all IMO legislation was required.

Next speaker was Dr. Rick Morton, General Manager, Planning and Environment , Port of Brisbane Corporation, who additionally is Chairman of the Association of Australian Port and Marine Authorities (AAPMA), Environmental and Sustainability Group.

As Chairman of the latter group Dr. Morton was able to give a very clear and overall picture of problems being met with by Australian Ports. These fall into a number of categories including, Air Quality, Dredging, Environmental Windows, Sea borne Pests, and Green Technology. Air Quality is a major problem in America and Europe who are dealing with vocal opposition. In Australia the main problem is dust from bulk cargo handling and buffer zones are being instituted around bulk loading facilities. Dredging continues to be a major problem especially in Victorian Ports and others which are experiencing general public opposition. Difficulties are experienced because there are no overarching principles between State and Commonwealth bodies on some environmental decisions. Locally pests are a problem as encountered in Moreton Bay with many trans Pacific yachts making their first port at the local Manly boat harbour. Again State and Commonwealth have differing views on imported marine pests and unfortunately no accepted treatment mechanism is in place.

Green technology and sustainability is a “sleeper” problem that will come to the fore and he instanced Whale migration along the east coast of Australia. Presently there are about 8,000 whales on the move and these will increase annually by an anticipated 10% so in future years there will be a greater number on the move over the 100 day migratory period. Dr. Morton instanced the case of a ship colliding with a whale off Boston, USA, with its resultant well documented publicity and legal implications.

A subject appropriately close to home was a presentation by Neil Trainor, Manager of the very efficient Great Barrier Reef & Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service. This is an excellent example of cooperation between the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and Maritime Safety Queensland. Mr. Trainor is also Vice Chairman of IALA. Ships are now tracked through out the area resulting in 4 million position reports daily emanating from the control centre near Hay Point in central Queensland. Since its introduction in the 1990's the system has been refined and greatly improved and the power point presentation gave an excellent over view of all aspects of this fragile marine park area. With a back ground in the Fishing Industry Mr. Trainor's intervention has resulted in a better understanding and improvement between fishing boats and large vessels in the confined waters of the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Straits.

After a rather dramatic flight up from Tasmania (plane hit by lightning etc) the next speaker was Dr. Laurie Goldsworthy, Research Leader (Marine Engines) at the Australian Maritime College. Dr. Goldsworthy was able to give a very interesting and enlightening look at the problems associated with marine engines, and various problems associated with fuel oils. Explanations were given to the problems of NOX (Nitrogen oxides) and SOX (Sulphur Oxides)being experienced in USA and EU Epa's and the demand that will force additional control measures as the environmental requirements

start to bite. Wartsila are looking closely at fuel and water injection. Different types of fuels are being viewed and Dr. Goldsworthy and his team are at the cutting edge of research in this regard. He suggested that in the future LNG may be a possible option for Australian domestic shipping. (albeit the deep sea fleet now almost extinct).

The final speaker was Mr. Llew Russell, CEO of Shipping Australia Ltd who gave an overall view of the “green” credentials of local shipping. Local shipping supports 28.15% of the domestic freight task in Australia but contributes a bare 2% of total emissions from the transport sector. In comparison with other modes of transport, sea transport is by far the most energy efficient and environmentally friendly as far as these other emissions (NOX, Co2, SOX), particulate matter and energy use is concerned. International Shipping is not only engaging with IMO committees and sub-committees in seeking to arrive at international standards to improve environmental and energy efficiency performance. Both Maersk and Wallenius Wilhelmsson Lines are front runners in improving performance both from a practical and environmental aspect. Shipping is not resting on its laurels and as the most environmentally friendly form of transport is seeking to improve the level of that performance wherever possible. Shipping is not a pale shade of green! Well said.

The Chairman then summed up the morning and thanked the speakers especially for their excellent presentations. Additionally a special thanks to the hosts once again, Blake Dawson , Waldron especially to Ernie Van Buuren MNI for his great assistance once again

A very pleasant and convivial lunch supplied by our hosts was an appropriate conclusion to a most interesting seminar.

The presentations may be found on the MASLU website at www.law.uq.edu.au/maslu/ .

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