

1. National Council Report: Shipping Campaign

Bluewater Seafarers Commission

The Bluewater Seafarers Commission (“BSC”) was held in Melbourne between 11 and 14 December 2016. Delegates, unemployed seafarers, and officials gathered for the biggest congregation of seafarers since the Bluewater conference of 1997 and the shipping conference of 2012.

Assistant National Secretary Ian Bray chaired the BSC, which provided him and other officials with the opportunity to report back to members the work undertaken by the union over the previous 12 months. This work included the legal, political, policy and industrial strategies taken by the union. It also provided members with the opportunity to provide their input and ultimately, their endorsement of the course of action taken by the union.

The **attached** resolutions were endorsed by those present at the BSC. In addition, officials made a commitment to visit all Bluewater ships in the proceeding months of the BSC, in order to assist delegates with report backs, to answer questions from rank and file that were unable to attend and to provide an update on new matters (if any).

Policy work – Mick Doleman & Rod Pickette updates

Senior Policy Officer Rod Pickette and MIF Director Mick Doleman gave detailed reports on all the policy work that had been done to date and this work was mostly captured in a series of fact sheets which were delivered back to the ships by the delegates. Since the BSC Minister Chester has released a “Discussion Paper” for the industry to consider and ongoing work in the following areas is currently being undertaken:

- Minister Chester’s Discussion Paper
- Response submission to discussion paper
- MIAL response to discussion paper

Lobbying and Policy Work

Comrade Bray reports that the Union is making a concerted effort to shift away from lobbying conservative politicians and instead, concentrating our resources on lobbying Labor and the Cross-Bench in formulating new policy on shipping, in addition to the following:

- Energy;
- Taxation;
- Environment;
- Industrial Relations;
- Defence;
- Infrastructure; and
- Workers Capital.

He notes this list is not exhaustive and the thinking behind the lobbying of Labor politicians and cross benches is based on the view That Minister Chester is unlikely to do anything to further travel the road

of total deregulation, however he will not do anything to rebuild or support Australian seafarers or strengthening cabotage either. The view is that we should be ensuring that Labor have the right policies to address shipping prior to winning government so the first term of office is not wasted. Should they win.

Cabotage Taskforce

Comrade Doleman, attended the Cabotage Taskforce in Oslo, Norway, on 4 April 2017. Each country gave a report, with SIU Canada being the stand out following the recent court action being withdrawn by the SIU due to an out of court settlement by the union (details of the settlement will be forward to us shortly but I will briefly highlight to those later in this report).

Prior to Mick attending the conference, the MUA put together a country report which was tabled and addressed at the meeting. A statement was included in the outcomes as outlined below:

- The ITF will be holding a Cabotage conference in Cape Town on 4 June 2017. The Secretariat was keen to ensure that the affiliates understand the ITF takes the issue of Cabotage very seriously.
- There was a report from Deirdre Fitzpatrick on the research she has been undertaking, however no detail other than a final report will be presented at the Conference in June. Deirdre believed this would create the environment for campaigning nationally and internationally, including taking the campaign to international forums such as UNTAD and others.
- It was acknowledged that more work needed to be done with the labour supply countries and that they may not fully understand the Cabotage campaign, this was demonstrated by the fact that only Ukraine and Russia attended this meeting.
- The discussion centred on how the dialogue with the labour supply countries would play out and it was agreed that a smaller group have this discussion with the labour supply affiliates.

Industrial

The report also updated National Council on some domestic matters directly to do with:

- EBA's
- Disputation
- Strategic issues to support policy to expand Australian seafarer's employment opportunities on the Australian coast, such as reviewing the Rio Tinto Framework Agreement.

Legal

On 6 April 2017, the Fair Work Ombudsman served us with proceedings it had brought against the MUA and nine members in relation to the *MV Portland*. These proceedings were filed in the Federal Court and will be rigorously defended. We are also in the process of developing a narrative to get on the offensive with the FWO due to them being heavily politicised by the Turnbull Government.

Shipping Campaign ongoing work

Comrade Bray reports that the Union is continuing to work through issues with the Victorian Government in relation to Alcoa. We have been in discussions with the Victorian Unions and they have agreed to step up a campaign on ALCOA and if necessary, the Andrew's Government in general and specifically, at the ALP State Conference.

BP

Meetings are currently being sought in London, with the ITF and Unite in attendance.

CSL

- We are in continued engagement with CSL.
- SIU legal case and the significance thereof.

Rio Tinto

- On ground community campaign.
- Comprehensive review of framework agreement.
- Ongoing meetings with Rio Tinto attended by the National Office and the Qld Branch

Work in Strategic areas of growth opportunity for Shipping

The key note addresses were given at a MIAL Conference and were reported to National Council

Strategic Defence Fleet - Key note speech from Vice Admiral Barrett.

- There has been a 50-billion-dollar investment for upgrades.
- Navy and industry are partners in a National Enterprise. The Navy and maritime industry are very much aligned and this will become even closer with the investment upgrade.
- People must think differently and need to make corrections rapidly. There are behavioural changes happening within navy.
- Starting a cultural program - NGN New Generational Navy.
- Navy strategies have been refreshed. Concentrating on contract with government, trust of Australian people. Also, managing the upgrade investment with industry.
- Upskill capabilities to help change direction of how navy operates.
- In terms of defence, there will be broader security, recruitment, training, humanitarian aid and search and rescue.
- To be introduced by 2018.
- Now is the time to turn theory into practice.
- Strengthening relationships with partners to bring delivery of new navy by 2018.
- NB: they have briefed parliamentarians to get them to understand what the navy does. Barrett has written a book called *Navy and the Nation*, which explains the navy strategic enterprise.
- They are about to recapitalise the Navy.
- In next 15 years, the navy fleet will double. Frigates, OPVs and other vessel types. Funding is agreed bipartisan
- It's time to think more broadly. First steel to be cut in 2018.

- They are campaigning to develop a continuous build strategy, as opposed to the start v stop nature of new builds.
- We need to understand that not all to be built in one geographical area.
- Who are the business partners? What skills are needed? Meeting expectations.
- Local jobs are a key feature in the strategic plan and must be part of the defence strategy.
- Industry and navy have failed to succeed in drawing together. This gap needs to be closed.
- Navy needs to focus on deterrents. Industry to focus on opportunities and sustainability. We all need to work on the issues around affordability.
- Availability is a challenge. There is no point having a fleet that sits alongside a wharf. Availability also in terms of supplying and supporting navy logistics and maintenance program. Want to deliver same instant response as Qantas. This needs to be achieved in order to deliver a continuous construction phase and it will need to deliver for the next 50 years.
- Acquisition - navy is changing to meet the needs to respond to the continuous shipbuilding program.
- They are now achieving delivery into service, down from 18 months down to 3 months. Including regulatory behavioural change and how they work with AMSA.
- Private sector now manning some ships.
- There are great opportunities to do things now.
- Future ship building program needs to change to include a continuous build program not just for navy but for all government ships, including CSIRO, Icebreakers etc.
- This is a national endeavour whereby Government, Navy and industry must work and think together.

AMSA, Mick Kinley, CEO

- Talked about the strategic fleet and not policies.
- He has a view that we already have the makings of a strategic fleet.
- Employment of seafarers is critical and he wants to ensure that this remains ongoing.
- Maintaining a national skill set is critical to advancement of an Australian maritime fleet.
- Spoke about reduction of manufacturing, decline in steel and refineries and how this has impacted on shipping.
- IMO has less and less people with maritime background experience dealing with Maritime matters because of decline in national skill sets.
- Coral Knight, Investigator, Aurora Australia should all be considered in the thinking towards a National Strategic fleet
- Border force - cape class patrols.
- Ocean Sheils - run by private sector.
- Should include TT-Line vessels as part of the national highway into the strategic fleets.
- Bass Strait fleet should also be considered as part of the strategic fleet, given the amount of government funding that goes into it.
- Industry has not pulled its weight in training. Schools are struggling to meet berths on courses.
- Coral Knight - concedes that AMSA have not pulled their weight in assisting with training by underutilisation of training berths.
- The government fleet should ensure that training is continued to ensure maritime skill sets are maintained.

- Training institutions need significant investment for upgrades and this is unlikely to come, if there is not a demand for training from the industry.
- Students complain about the quality of training for the amount it costs to undergo the training.
- The Government fleets have a critical role in delivering training and supporting the strategic defence fleet, and have agreed that industry must support the continuous ship building program.
- Paid respects to the Navy for their contribution in supporting Australian government fleet and rescue assistance.

Actions: The following actions considered by National Council

- Walk to Canberra proposal.
- Video of Portland Crew, "*Where are they now?*"
- Back to Canberra during budget week, 9-11 May 2017.
- Unions ongoing Political and Lobbying Work
- Continuous Campaigning
- Cabotage Taskforce