

Committee Secretary,
Transport and Public Works Committee,
Parliament House,
George St
Brisbane Qld 4000.

Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Intrastate Shipping.

My name is Robert Richardson, I have served in the Australian Merchant Navy for over 30 years with experience on tug boats, large tankers, bulk carriers, F.P.S.O's, emergency response vessels etc, I am a chief cook but also a qualified able seaman, experienced navigator and have several advanced fire fighting certificates and helicopter underwater escape training.

I have several points I would like to bring to the honourable committees attention.

1. Cabotage.

This has been eroded {almost eradicated} due to a sustained ideological attack on Australian seafarers which has no rational basis, this has been achieved by making sure there are no Australian flagged vessels available for certain cargoes and then issuing permits of various types to foreign vessels, generally flag of convenience vessels with appalling safety standards and outrageous pay scales, this has the effect of replacing Australian seafarers with foreign nationals on as little as \$4 per hour. One could imagine the community outrage if it was decided that all cab drivers, fire fighters or lawyers were to be paid 3rd world wages in their own country yet this is what is occurring with our seafarers who by the way are the best trained in the world, this is an outrageous situation.

2. Fuel Excise.

The average fuel excise on a medium to large vessel exceeds a \$1M per annum, which skews the playing field and deprives the Australian Treasury of substantial revenue.

3. Security.

We now have no Australian flagged oil tankers, this is ludicrous given the security and economic implications of being starved for fuel, we carry 21 days worth only. Australian seafarers have to carry Maritime Security Identification cards, the spurious reasoning for these was the stopping of terrorism even though only Australian seafarers carry them not foreign seaman.

4. Community Disruption.

The effect of removing Australian seafarers from our coast has been family breakdowns, mortgage defaults, local business failing and once again lost revenue to treasury.

I humbly ask this inquiry to make findings that we need a National fleet as well as small state based shipping something like Western Australia's State Ships used to be.

Sincerely


Robert Richardson,

14.1.2018.

