



A continual evolution - plenty going on here!

By SCOTT HENDERSON

It's been a better year for shipping. Container rates have improved, and a bumper agricultural year saw record high demand for exports last summer. The dry bulk index is now five times what it was in February 2016. Product tanker rates have improved on the back of increasing global demand for diesel, petrol and particularly jet fuel. There are signs that the recent upturn in the heavy lift/project cargo sector may be sustained and of course, the cruise industry is continuing to boom. We must all be smiling.

SAL has increased its shipping line representation during the past year. I was pleased to welcome Quay Shipping Australia as a new full member at the end of 2016. The mergers and acquisitions between global shipping lines, which have been widely discussed in the maritime press, have added the former operations for China Shipping and UASC to SAL by inclusion within COSCO and Hapag-Lloyd respectively. Unfortunately, these mergers and acquisitions can also negatively impact on SAL revenue. APL did not renew their membership this year following their acquisition by CMA-CGM. Other major line changes such as Maserk's acquisition of Hamburg-Sud and COSCO's acquisition of OOCL are not expected to impact on membership numbers, as those lines are already members of SAL and have announced that they will continue to operate separate brands.

There has been much going on in policy and advocacy throughout 2017. Matters being addressed by SAL include: availability of equipment to support exports; coastal shipping amendment bill; MUA's expansion plans; passage of Harper Review amendments and scoping of block exemption; amalgamation of Customs, Immigration and Attorney General functions; visa requirements for FPSO; IMO developments; ballast water convention implementation and charges; biofouling; national freight and logistics

strategy; first port of entry regulations... The list is truly endless. I will leave it for our chief executive to provide more details of these matters.

Around the States, SAL has continued to be active. In Victoria, last December, SAL held a lunch to honour Phil Kelly, our long-term State secretary, who had stood down due to ill health. Only a month later we were all saddened by the news of his passing. A fitting tribute to Phil was published in the SAL Autumn/Winter Magazine and I will not attempt to summarise it here. Please take the time to read it (all magazines are available on the SAL website), if you have not already done so.

At the beginning of 2017 we welcomed Charles Masters (formerly Columbus Line and Marfret), to take on the Victorian State secretary role. Charles has been very active since and (despite a short absence for heart surgery) has arranged a successful golf day, a luncheon featuring Federal Minister Darren Chester, a very popular blockchain business breakfast, and has upscaled and relocated the State committee Christmas lunch to the iconic West Brighton Club! You can expect to hear of a lot more interesting events in Victoria now that Charles has settled in.

Our New South Wales State Committee has been particularly active. We saw the departure of our long time Minister for Roads Maritime and Freight, Duncan Gay. Our New South Wales State chairman, Bill Rizzi and CEO Rod Nairn have subsequently met with Minister Melinda Pavey, and SAL has been invited to join the Ministerial Freight Advisory Council. As has been the trend over many years, the New South Wales events, expertly coordinated by State secretary Melwyn Noronha, have been generally oversubscribed this year and invitations usually limited to members and their guests. This year the events included: Parliamentary Lunch; Newcastle Club regional lunch; Christmas Lunch; and a

Safe Ports business breakfast. There will be more in store in 2018.

In Queensland, our enduring State secretary, Bill Guest, has continued to be dynamic in his management of State Committee meetings and excels in the coordination of special events. The SAL Queensland Shipping Industry Golf Day is legendary, and the SAL Shipping Industry Ball, held in October each year, is well supported by sponsors and guests. This year the event raised \$15,000 for the Mission to Seafarers thanks to generous platinum sponsorship from Port of Brisbane, Gold sponsors: Svitzer, Patrick and Chalmers and other supporting sponsors.

My very sincere thanks to our volunteer State chairmen, Geoff Dalgliesh (K-Line) Queensland, Bill Rizzi (MSC) New South Wales, Sunil Dhowan (WWL) Victoria, Paul Paparella (Asiaworld) South Australia, and Robert Boyce (MSC) Western Australia, for their leadership on shipping matters in their States. I would also like to thank various committee chairmen of our national steering groups, Ross McAlpine (Border Agencies, Technical and Public Relations Steering Groups), Eddy Declercq (Human Resources Steering Group), David Pratt (Bulk Shipping Group) and John Thompson (Maritime Legal Steering Group).

In my first year as chairman it has been a bit of a revelation to be more intimately involved with the work of the SAL team. The SAL secretariat works very hard behind the scenes to provide public comment and influence policies, provide concise summaries of important information for members and support members to provide sustainable international shipping. In closing, I would like to thank our small but effective SAL team for their professionalism and ongoing dedication to providing these services. ▲