

Editor:	Keith Ingram
Manager:	Vivienne Ingram
Editorial assistant:	Mark Barratt-Boyes
Contributors:	Carol Forsyth Michael Pignéguy Hugh Ware, USA Kelvin Hieatt Stuart Cawker Lindsay Wright Marty Logan Alan Moore Lea Clough Lynton Diggle Steve Punter Trevor Coppock Louise Dehan-Owen Andrew Stevens Bob McDavitt
Advertising:	Hamish Stewart
Designer:	Rachel Walker
Printers:	GEON
Distribution:	Gordon and Gotch Ltd

Subscriptions: *Professional Skipper* is published for the maritime transport industry. It is available on subscription in NZ and overseas.

General: Reproduction of articles and materials published in *Professional Skipper* in whole or part, is permitted provided the source and author(s) are acknowledged. However, all photographic material is copyright and written permission to reproduce in any shape or form is required.

Contributions of a nature relevant to the maritime transport industry are welcomed and industry participants are especially encouraged to contribute.

Letters to the Editor should be signed and carry the writer's full name and address.

Articles and information printed in *Professional Skipper* do not necessarily reflect the opinions or formal position or the publishers unless otherwise indicated.

Material and information of a formal nature provided by the MSA, MoF or TAIC is identified by the use of their logo.

All material published in *Professional Skipper* is done so with all due care as regards to accuracy and factual content. The publishers and editorial staff however cannot accept responsibility for any inadvertent errors and omissions which may occur.

Professional Skipper is produced bi-monthly.

Finalist 2008 Qantas Media Awards 



MPA Associate Member



EDITORIAL

TIME TO SHAPE UP OR SHIP OUT

What a complacent mob we are. Is it any wonder our inshore commercial industry is in such turmoil when its participants appear not to give a shit! Yes, I am talking about you, not me!

I'm not going to be tarred with the same brush as you because I care, and I am tending to spend most of my time advocating and defending the rights of our coastal and inshore commercial operators.

Changes are happening that will have a serious impact on the way we all do business. The livelihood of inshore small-contract fishermen who fish leased annual catch entitlement is bordering on collapse because of the state of many of our boats.

Charter boats are facing monthly catch reports to the Ministry of Fisheries, even if they do not fish, along with potentially draconian penalties for mis-reporting. Maritime New Zealand is conducting its first major review of our safe ship management system. They are also in the middle of the first major shake-up of seafarer qualifications and operating limits since the repeal of the Shipping and Seaman's Act in 1994.

This is all serious stuff. I ask you all to think about it and ask yourself honestly. "Will any changes to the current position have any impact on my business?" If the answer is yes, get off your arses and find out what! Then take time out to respond to the consultation papers from MFish, Maritime NZ and the independent paper by the New Zealand Marine Transport Association. See page 58 of this issue.

Why am I growly? For starters, over the years I have advocated for and on behalf of our maritime industry and my voice receives a good ear. I have been responsible for effecting change for the better, something we have all benefited from. But for many of the bureaucrats and officials it has been the constant voice of Keith.

While I am not suggesting it, I can't help but be mindful of our official ears possibly thinking, "Is this just the views of one man or is it a collective, supported view?"

It's now time to stand up and be counted. The many changes afoot are too many and of such magnitude they will all have a serious impact on the way we do business in the future.

Clearly Maritime NZ is on the path of overhauling our safe ship management system. It has brought itself a battle with all the SSM companies who may share alternative views to the director's desire to scrap SSM and introduce a more user-friendly system where responsibility lies with the operator to ensure his vessel and crew are fit for purpose for the task being carried out.

I am on record for challenging the director, Catherine Taylor, when she stated publically

that the maritime inshore shipping industry has a mediocre safety record.

I have touted the virtues of our safety record and questioned why we need such high compliance costs. In part, she has agreed and is trying to reduce compliance costs to the good operator so these responsible folk don't have to subsidise the lazy or un-safe operator.

And in part I am wrong, as clearly the statistics are against us, because since the introduction of SSM in 1993 the maritime industry's record of serious harm, accidents, incidents and mishaps, including fatalities, has shown an upward trend.

I was bloody surprised, let me tell you, but it's hard to argue against the stats, which tell us all SSM is not working. In initiating change, Maritime NZ has gone out to the industry, SSM companies and operators to consult on its discussion papers.

Yes, it is canvassing our views and has held numerous public industry meetings around the country so we can front up, listen and make an informed comment.

Technically some 3162 vessels are under SSM and seven SSM companies. The attendance at these meetings by operators was abysmal, yet 100 percent of SSM companies attended. If this is not a statement I don't know what is.

SSM staff are attending because they need to protect their commercial interests and are making their views heard at every opportunity. The question you must ask is, "Do the SSM-driven views represent my views?"

If the answer is no, you need to speak out and tell Maritime NZ while there is still a chance. Because of the general apathy and poor response from the industry to date, the MTA and I have succeeded in requesting the director to extend the consultation period until July 30. If you do nothing else useful this year, please read the "Invitations to comment for Rule Parts 19 and 44" online at; www.maritimenz.govt.nz/moss

I cannot stress enough that it is vitally important for you all to respond to this process. Remember, whatever the result, we will be stuck with it for the next 20 years. So, let's get it right.

Call Maritime NZ on freephone 050 822 5522 and ask for Sharyn Forsyth, Arthur Jobard or anyone available to take your oral comments, or post your written submission to Maritime NZ, PO Box 27006 Wellington. If you do nothing else, at least respond to both MNZ and MTA questionnaires.

Keith Ingram, Editor