Vice President’s Message

Dear Members

At the MLAANZ Federal conference in Brisbane in 2012, Ron Salter presented the FS Dethridge Memorial Lecture. His title was the typically understated “Ambling Through Half a Century of Maritime Practice in Australia”. He talked of joining the newly formed association in May 1975 and attending the first meeting/conference of about a dozen members held in the Palm Lake Motor Inn in Melbourne. The New Zealand branch had similar humble beginnings with about the same number of people assembling at Turangi sometime in the mid-1970s.

And so the NZ branch conference is held each year in early April. It is held in Taupo. For our Australian colleagues, Taupo is in the central north island. It is a bit of a road trip for most, but for some this year it involved a flight from Wellington which was diverted to Palmerston North, followed by a 3 hour coach trip. To the dozen or so stalwarts who made it through, we salute you.

While we encourage new members and people attending the conference, the collegiality of the group is reflected by the fact that founding members still attend. This year they included Alistair Irving of P&I Services, and His Honour Judge Mark Perkins.

The theme of ‘using the sea’s resources’ was the centrepiece of the conference, and we had visiting speakers David Robinson of the Petroleum Exploration and Production Association NZ (PEPANZ) talking about the importance of the search for oil and gas in NZ, and a contrary view of the compliance regime by reference to our international obligations from Duncan Currie, an international and environmental lawyer. Both lively passionate speakers, they contributed to our understanding of the drivers and the regulation of this key economic activity and the environmental issues that arise.

Related to that, John Knight of Chapman Tripp presented an interesting case study on the prosecution of a NZ vessel for breach of MARPOL. Though it appeared that the vessel was not in breach of NZ’s enactment of the convention, a US court found that in failing to maintain its records on the high seas, on entering its jurisdiction the vessel was in breach of US law enacting the same convention, thereby exposing it to conviction and a significant fine.

There were also sessions on the changes to the regulation of vessels and seafarers, the practical and legal aspects arising from mis-declaration of container weights, developments in fishing technology and the hot topic of whether admiralty proceedings can secure priority over an international insolvency (judgment in that case is awaited).

The presentations are being uploaded to the MLAANZ website here.

As usual, conversations in the bar and at the dinner were as important as the formal conference sessions. With thanks to our unofficial photographer John Lucas of The Insurance Council, some photos follow overleaf.
Fraser Hunt of Piper Alderman, Neil Beadle of DLA Phillips Fox, Marty Logan of Pitt & Moore and John Knight of Chapman Tripp

Alan Sherlock and Sarah Holderness of Hesketh Henry, Michael McCarthy of Lowndes Associates, Kerryn Webster (secretary of the NZ Branch) and Gracie Campbell of Wilson Harle
Captain Mike Austin of Cunningham Lindsey, Andrew Colgan of McElroys, Stephanie Winson of Maritime New Zealand

Alistair Irving of P&I Services, Nora Lynch with her husband Russell Gillies of AON New Zealand, and John McKelvie of Vero Marine
Barbara Versfelt of Lowndes Jordan and Peter Dawson of Dawson & Associates Limited

Bevan Marten, University of Wellington and John Burton of Izard Weston
Dave Hope of New Zealand Maritime School, Graham Orchard of QBE, and Keith Auld of Munich Re

Bob Hawkins of Dunsford Marine Limited and Neil Mackay of VFR Consulting Limited
Anthony (and his partner Madeline) Smith and Kerry Walker of Vero Marine, with Matthew Flynn of McElroys

At the NZ AGM former President of the association, Judge Tom Broadmore announced he is retiring from the bench and the law in October, and that this was likely his last conference. The association will organise a suitable send off for Tom later in the year, partly in the hope that it will cause him to reflect and then decide to share his experience and good humour with us again next year.

Kind regards

Neil Beadle
New Zealand Vice-President
MLAANZ
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