

MARITIME LAW ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

ACN 054 763 923

ABN 97 054 763 923



Neil Beadle

President

DLA Piper New Zealand

DLA Piper Tower

Level 22

205 Queen Street

PO Box 160

Auckland 1140

NEW ZEALAND

Tel: +64 9 300 3865

neil.beadle@dlapiper.co.nz

www.mlaanz.org

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PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

Since our last AGM in Perth last year, many have contributed their time and enthusiasm to this association, and enjoyed participation in events throughout the year.

Aside from local activities of the state branches in holding seminars and conferences, significant work has been undertaken in the pursuit of furthering the objectives of the association.

In particular, I wish to thank the committee consisting of Derek Luxford, Neil Hiller, Stuart Hetherington, Sarah Derrington QC, and Paul Baxter for their work on our project to amend the Commonwealth Marine Insurance Act 1909, in response to changes to legislation in the UK. Their work included the preparation of a briefing document and draft Bill, and presentations at roadshow events, which were well attended by members. We have made much progress, and once consultation is complete, we will forge ahead with presenting the proposal to the Australian government for implementation.

I ask any member of the association who may have the opportunity to assist in ensuring this occurs, to contact a member of the Board, or the committee.

Associate Professor Kate Lewins has written timely academic articles in the MLAANZ Journal extolling the value of implementation of the Athens Convention in Australia. Professors Nick Gaskell and Craig Forrest have advocated implementation of the Wreck Removal Convention 2007 in Lloyds Maritime Commercial Law Quarterly.

MLAANZ is grateful for the engagement and involvement of all academic members of the association in assisting us in both identifying objectives and working so assiduously in helping us engage with government.

In a similar vein, we are fortunate to have as one of our longstanding members, Stuart Hetherington, as President of the Comité Maritime International. Stuart and Nick have recently met with Australian government representatives to better understand their processes and priorities, and advocate on behalf of MLAANZ implementation as a priority of the Athens Convention, the Wreck Removal Convention, and also the Ballast Water Convention. The New Zealand Branch has also met with ministerial staff and written to the appropriate minister to promote the Wreck Removal Convention. We value and seek to improve our relationships within government both in Australia and New Zealand.

The CMI held its conference in New York in May this year. I attended as your representative and other members including Matthew Harvey and Sarah Derrington QC, were also present. The York-Antwerp Rules 2016 were approved at the conference. I have written about my thoughts on that process and value that the CMI brought to it, in our newsletter. It is a significant achievement that compromise between commercial interests has been reached and the results implemented so quickly.

I make special mention of the 40th anniversary of the formation of the New Zealand Branch, and joiner with Australian colleagues to make this an ANZAC association. It was a milestone well-celebrated at a dinner in Auckland last month. I also mention the passing of one of our former presidents and founding members, Mr Ian Mackay, and record that Judge Tom Broadmore is speaking on our behalf at his memorial service which is to be held on the day of our AGM.

The association relies on volunteers, and it is not possible to name everybody, but my sense is that the association is in good heart, and well engaged with the tasks in hand in pursuing our constitutional objectives, while ensuring we do our best to enjoy ourselves discussing, debating and networking while we do so.

Neil Beadle
President