

Sent: Tuesday, 2 September 2014 12:42 PM

**Misleading Information Presented to Senate Environment and Communications Committee:
Great Barrier Reef**

I quite literally 'stumbled' over a copy of this recent submission by Geoff McPherson to the Senate Environment and Communications Committee inquiry into management of the Great Barrier Reef (copy attached - 'sub15'). I have also attached a copy of some information about myself, to demonstrate my *bona fides* in this arena. Given its file size, I have sent through via separate e-mail a copy of the report* of mine which is discussed by Mr McPherson, so that the Committee may make its own judgment.

Although Mr McPherson makes some useful points, I am afraid that his attack on the quality of my report is based upon a very superficial and selective reading of it and an inaccurate summation, if not total omission, of my conclusions and recommendations in this regard. I think it is illustrative that Mr McPherson made no contact with me to discuss or get any further information on his concerns or my analyses of these issues, despite the fact that my contact details are clearly indicated on the report which he so actively criticises. Critically, Mr McPherson has omitted to reflect on the recommendations (pp. xii and 138 of my report) that I clearly made in relation to ship-generated noise in the Great Barrier Reef, namely, that appropriate authorities:

- Undertake appropriate marine noise studies in key areas of the Great Barrier Reef region to test assumptions and conclusions presented in this report.
- Monitor and implement International Maritime Organization (IMO) initiatives regarding ship design and operations to minimise radiated underwater noise.
- Facilitate adoption of any mandatory measures which may be codified by IMO to minimise ship-radiated underwater noise.

It is pertinent to consider that the most effective means of reducing ship-generated noise is through ship design and build, and this is something that is guided internationally by the IMO - as an individual nation with a very small shipping register there is little that Australia can do to influence international shipping in this regard except through its membership of the IMO, and the recommendations in my report reflect this truism.

Mr McPherson made note (p. 26 of his submission) that the discussion on noise in my report was 'A scant 2.5 pages of a report of 226 apparently attempting reporting on the environmental implications of shipping'. In reality, the Section (7.2) of my report assessing environmental effects from routine shipping operations is 23 pages in length, of which around 3 pages are devoted to noise issues - so something in the order of 10%. Mr McPherson is further incorrect in stating that my report is 226 pages in length, it is actually 222 pages in total.

Mr McPherson also seems to place great emphasis on his claim that I did not reference any relevant literature later than 2000 (pp. 26, 27, 34 and 41 of his submission), but neglects to consider references originating in 2006 and 2008 that were cited in that section of my report.

Rather ironically, Mr McPherson (p. 3 of his submission) states "Documentation of naval sonar systems are not included in this review as they are managed appropriately between Navy and SEWPaC for GBRWHA " - the irony is that I am the person who reviewed the environmental risks and developed the risk mitigation and employment measures observed by Defence which Mr McPherson seems to consider are effective.

I would appreciate it if this matter was brought to the attention of the Committee.

Kind regards,

John Polglaze

* Great Barrier Reef Shipping: Review of Environmental Implications, PGM Environment 2012