



# MERCHANT NAVY ASSOCIATION

(ACN: 009 485 269)

**“TO FOSTER THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE SEA”**

## SENATE RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT REFERENCES COMMITTEE

### **Inquiry into Increasing use of Flag of Convenience Shipping in Australia**

The Merchant Navy Association was formed on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1935 as the ‘Merchant Servicemen’s Association’. Initially, Merchant seamen with active sea service, and only those with war service were eligible to join. The constitution was changed in 1974, and Merchant seamen without war service were eligible to join. The present name, the ‘Merchant Navy Association’ was taken in 1987.

The Merchant Navy Association (MNA) represents serving seafarers, and ex-seafarers from many nationalities. The membership mix includes master mariners, deck officers, deck crew, engineers and catering offices and crew. Thirty percent of the members are WWII Merchant Navy veterans.

The Merchant Navy Association is a non-profit, volunteer organisation. The principle activity is to promote the welfare of serving and ex-Merchant Navy seafarers. We endeavour to continue the camaraderie of the members of the merchant navy through various social events and attendance at memorials to commemorate those merchant seafarers who gave their lives in the service of their nation in time of war and peace. The part played by the Merchant Navy in wartime is unique..

The MNA recognise many complex issues will be covered in submissions from the Maritime Unions and Shipping Companies. Australia is an island nation and highly reliant on shipping, the MNA supports any moves to revitalise and improve the Australian Shipping industry.

As previously stated our principle activity “relates to seafarers welfare”. All too often we receive reports of exploitation and ill treatment of seafarers on FOC ships. It is essential that AMSA the ITF and the unions are allowed to continue to monitor the safety and well being of seafarers employed on flag of convenience ships. Our concern is that not enough support and resources are given to these organisations to enable them to increase the scope of their inspections and necessary scrutiny.

In an emotive conclusion: To the memory of the sacrifice made by Merchant seafarers in times of war and peace, we build on that tradition and continue to work towards better maritime safety and well being for *all seafarers*.

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