

THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS PORT OF NEWCASTLE, AUSTRALIA

Mr. Peter Morris
Chairman
International Commission on Shipping

Dear Mr. Morris,

Thank you for your invitation to the Mission to make some comments on Port State Control and its effectiveness in recent days.

The Mission has received a few complaints about sub-standard, or illegal, conditions on ships as they relate to safety. Our contact with the relevant authorities (especially Mr. Malcolm Goodfellow) has always resulted in quick investigation, and a report back.

You will no doubt be aware since the parliamentary enquiry into ship safety, companies notorious for cost cutting in this area, are no longer sending their vessels here. This experience has been confirmed by many conversations with mariners as they relate their own stories about unsafe ships.

Port State Control suffers, I believe, from low staffing levels. (This is also true for the Customs Service.) More people available increases effectiveness of the vigilance. But of course you're to be concerned with the element of human relationships as they affect proper concentration on mariners' responsibilities and duties. A person concerned about being on the receiving end of belittling behavior from superiors will not be an efficient operator in many circumstances.

I hope these comments will be of some use to you.

The Mission to Seafarers avails itself of this opportunity to renew to yourself, and members of the Commission, its esteem for your work in improving the lot of those who work at sea.

Yours faithfully
The Reverend John Crane
Port Chaplain

6 July 2000