

International Commission on Shipping

Chairman:

Hon. Peter Morris

Commissioners:

Mr. James Bell

Prof. Moritaka Hayashi

Capt. Barry McKay

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Colleague,

I write to advise you of the work of the International Commission on Shipping [ICONS] and to invite your participation in the task it is undertaking.

In June of last year at the request of the International Transport Workers Federation I agreed to chair an International Commission on Shipping, charged with the following Terms of Reference:

Quote ". Taking into account current materials, recent developments and current initiatives:

1. Investigate and appraise the current approach used by governments, industry and interested parties to achieve compliance with international minimum safety, environmental and social requirements;
2. Examine whether current approaches are in line with applicable international law, especially the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea [UNCLOS];
3. Recommend an appropriate compliance/enforcement strategy that encompasses both the non-regulatory and regulatory approaches."

I have been joined in the task by Mr James Bell, the highly respected former Permanent Secretary of the International Association of Classification Societies [IACS]; Professor Moritaka Hayashi of the School of Law at the Waseda University, Tokyo; and Captain Barry McKay, formerly Director General of the Ship Inspection Branch of Transport Canada and leader of various Canadian delegations to IMO.

Initially the costs of the Commission are being met by the ITF, backed by "in kind" support from a broad range of Government maritime agencies and industry organisations.

The Commission has complete independence in the determination of its work program, the performance of its tasks, its decisions and the preparation of its report.

We have prepared an information paper entitled "International Shipping", which is attached for your consideration, together with a copies of the Commissions recent Press Releases.

Most major ship owners, shipping associations, shippers groups, employee organisations and Government maritime agencies have made it clear that they want to see quality in shipping.

Yet there remains a hard core of sub standard operators who run sub standard ships for a certain class of cargo owners despite the dangers and crew abuse involved.

We are inviting all interested parties to make a submission to the Commission, preferably via our Website www.ICONS.org.au or by Email to info@ICONS.org.au

The original closing dates for submissions were 31st May 2000 for the Asia Pacific region, and 31st July 2000 for the Americas and Europe. However it is not too late to make a submission or contribution to the matters being considered. It would be preferable to receive new submissions via email as soon as possible, but no later than the end of October.

Following analysis of the submissions received, the Commission will conduct a series of public consultative meetings with representatives of all elements of the shipping industry to seek local opinion and gather feedback. The program for the public meetings is as follows:

Pretoria	Friday 10 th November
London	Tuesday 14 th November
Brussels	Wednesday 15 th November
Oslo	Thursday 16 th & Friday 17 th
Geneva	Monday 20 th November
Athens / Piraeus	Tuesday 21 st & Wednesday 22 nd November
Limassol	Friday 24 th November
London	Monday 27 th November

The independent role of the Commission will be reinforced by the open procedures it will follow in its search for solutions to the problems faced by the industry.

Participation in the Commission's inquiry is voluntary and proceedings will not be protected by privilege.

However I am confident from the responses and encouragement we have received thus far, that collectively we can make an important contribution towards improving the safety and efficiency of shipping worldwide.

At the same time we can help bring an end to the abuses and exploitation of seafarers and the dangers associated with sub standard shipping.

The Commission aims to complete its report for public release during the first quarter of 2001.

Yours Sincerely

**Peter Morris
Chairman**

22 October 2000