



**Chairman:**

Hon. Peter Morris

**Commissioners:**

Mr. James Bell

Prof. Moritaka Hayashi

Capt. Barry McKay

## SKILLED SEAFARERS A MUST

The recent grounding of the Malaysian freighter Bunga Tetatai Satu on the Great Barrier Reef highlights the vulnerability of coastline environments to the operations of international shipping the Chairman of the International Shipping Commission [ICONS] Peter Morris said today.

It also underlines the need to ensure that ships crews have the skills and competency to operate their ship safely he said.

Crew competency and quality of training are key issues that have been repeatedly brought before the Commission in its worldwide inquiry into ship safety he said.

Mr. Morris was speaking at his departure from Australia on the last round of the Commission's public meetings and consultations to began in Pretoria, S A. on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2000.

Private meetings will follow this with the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization, Mr. William O'Neill and various shipping interests on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> November in London.

A public meeting to be opened by the U K Minister for Shipping the Hon Keith Hill M P. will be held at the Thistle Hotel, Victoria the following day at which most shipping and related interests will be represented.

From London ICONS will be proceed to Brussels, Oslo, Geneva, Piraeus and Cyprus before returning to London to meet with officials of the Malta registry on Monday the 27<sup>th</sup> November.

Mr. Morris said more than 90 submissions had been lodged with the Commission almost all of which could be seen on the ICONS web site at [www.icons.org.au](http://www.icons.org.au)

Serious concerns had been expressed to the Commission in submissions, at meetings and public discussions include:

- 1 The vital need for crew skills, competency, quality training and authentic qualifications.
- 2 The failure of nations registering ships to ensure that the ships met International Maritime Safety standards.
- 3 The need for complete public accountability or transparency in shipping operations to ensure that there is full public awareness of the beneficial owners of a vessel, the ships managers, charterers and cargo owners.

- 4 The need for all parties along the chain of responsibility from ship owner to cargo owner to ensure that the quality of shipping is maintained and to help ensure the eradication of sub standard shipping from the seas of the world.
- 5 Urgent need to end the horrific abuse and exploitation of seafarers.
- 6 There should be set criteria and performance standards for the Classification Societies that survey ships and they should be liable for their for actions.

The Commission has already met with interested parties and government maritime agencies and held public meetings in Sydney, Singapore ,Mumbai, Manila, Beijing, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Vancouver, Montreal, New York, Washington and Miami.

The Commission is due to present its report to the A P E C Symposium on Safer International Shipping at Sydney on the 6<sup>th</sup> March,2001.

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