



Shipping: indispensable to the world

28 September, 2016



As you sit in your office enjoying your morning coffee have you ever pondered how many of the things around us, things we take for granted, came to be here?

Chances are the clothes on your back, the chair you are sitting on, even the beans that make up your coffee arrived from across the seas, care of the maritime industry.

September 29 is World Maritime Day, when the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) highlights globally the importance of the marine environment, maritime security, shipping safety and to recognise the crews who sail the ships. The theme for World Maritime Day 2016 is *Shipping: indispensable to the world*. The theme focuses on the connection between global society and shipping as well as the importance of the IMO's position as the international shipping regulator.

The IMO estimates that up to 80 percent of all international trade is transported around the world by a fleet of nearly 50,000 commercial vessels, registered in more than 150 countries, carrying close to 1.75 billion tonnes of cargo, and crewed by over a million seafarers, of almost every nationality.

It is fair to say that shipping is indeed indispensable to not only our economy but also our way of life.

Australia has a long and proud history in the maritime industry and being “girt by sea” means our reliance on a strong and viable shipping industry plays a key role in our economic prosperity with the vast majority of our import and export trade arriving by sea.

Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) plays an important role in monitoring Queensland coastal waterways whilst assisting in the provision of safe and efficient passage to the shipping industry.

ReefVTS - protecting the Great Barrier Reef



MSQ staff provide essential maritime services including, aids to navigation, vessel traffic services, regulatory functions, pollution response and education. With over 18,150 vessel movements across the Queensland coastline in the 2015/2016 financial year alone, this is certainly no small feat.

World Maritime Day is a celebration of the hardworking men and women that keep our maritime industry running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in often adverse conditions. I encourage you all to take a moment today to reflect on how different our world would be without their dedication and commitment and to acknowledge how indispensable shipping and the people who work in it really are to the world at large.

Patrick Quirk
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