

## A global reach, with a family touch.

Sal Milici, General Manager Trade Policy & Operations at Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) recently had the opportunity to sit down with Alessandro D'Orto, Director & Founder of FJT Logistics to get his reflections on his long career and introduction to the world of freight forwarding in the early 1980s.

From the moment Alessandro founded FJT Logistics in Australia in 2001, he was determined that the company would be set apart from the competition. Alessandro considers *"FJT is separated from the rest as we specialise in trust and customer service."*

The company with Italian roots has built its strong Australian identity and market presence, always anticipating, and offering what the Australian and global market has required.

With offices in Australia, New Zealand, China, Hong Kong, Italy and Spain, and partnering with an extensive global network, FJT Logistics has evolved to become one of Australia's largest privately owned truly integrated freight forwarding companies, enabling it to provide reliable, efficient, end-to-end logistics services across the globe. *"Customers deal with one brand every step of the journey, eliminating complexity and providing improved visibility."*

### **Sal Milici – Alessandro, how did you get into the freight business?**

My passion for the industry has been nurtured by family tradition, as both my grandfather Giuseppe and my father Mario worked on the wharf in Livorno, Italy, as longshoremen and stevedores.

### **Sal Milici - What is your background in logistics?**

My journey in the industry began in Livorno, Italy in 1981, when I was just 17 years old as a delivery boy for one of the most renowned shipping agencies in the Mediterranean, Coe & Clerici S.P.A., a shipping agent for CMA



the 1970's & 1980's (now CMA-CGM), Evergreen Line, ABC Container Line and Lykes Line to name just a few. In 1991, I commenced working at F.J.Tytherleigh Italia S.R.L, where I had the good fortune to work with Mr John Columba Grant, President of F.J.Tytherleigh (UK) Ltd, a company with offices in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and the USA.

### **Sal Milici - How would you describe your company culture?**

I thank Mr Grant for much of my professional growth and other valuable advice, including how the importance of employees is not less than the importance of customers, respect for all people no matter their role or level of experience, and ultimately the balance to always be humble and gracious while remaining ambitious. Retaining these family values continues to fuel the growth and success of FJT Logistics.



### **Sal Milici - What do you offer that sets you apart from your competitors?**

We have a very strong desire in providing a personal customer experience and enjoy working with customers who we can build a strong ongoing relationship with. Often, an honest long-term relationship is better than winning the large contract. Our intimate understanding of all aspects of our services and industry pricing helps us to respond quickly and competitively to our customers. We really do care about what we are doing and about providing customers business an advantage. Even as we digitise, logistics is still about people and relationships.

### Sal Milici - What would customers say about FJT Logistics?

We have a large number of long-term customers who have been with us since we started in 2001. We have handled their business for years and they have never forgotten the service we have provided. It's because we have an attitude of *"let's get the job done in the simplest and most efficient way for the customer"*. We have maintained this attitude throughout and continually instil it across the team. Customers like the fact that we can make quick decisions. We don't need to go to a head office across the other side of the world or pass the details through a long chain of people. We make decisions here and now.

### Sal Milici - What do you see as the challenges for our industry?

COVID was a significant factor in the business of freight forwarding in recent times. As a global freight forwarder, we dealt with it calmly and it produced some great opportunities for the business. Everyone working in the logistics industry knows the challenges the international supply chain is facing now. Russia's war on Ukraine affecting the supply and flow of goods, numerous countries experiencing inflation, and the debate about relations with China go without saying. Rise in fuel oil prices, staff shortages, shipping schedule reliability, driver shortages, unreasonable container detention charges and general industry infrastructure failings can cause daily issues, but we continue to remain resilient and overcome these challenges.

### Sal Milici - What would you consider your biggest achievement?

Celebrating 21 years in Australia was a great achievement and a fantastic milestone in our company's history. It's a reflection on the support of my family and the great work of our entire team, past and present.

### Sal Milici - Tell us about your team

We have a hierarchy of roles, but we all work closely together to get the job done. The support of family members in some of our local and international offices embodies our mission statement *"A global reach, with a family touch"* and helps us maintain consistency and stability



in vision, organisational structure and culture. This opens more opportunities for business development and the business' continued success. Our team has the freedom in how they can help customers without the inflexibility larger multinationals have in place. We give them the trust and courage to work through challenges that will help them grow. *"We are always looking for shining stars in the industry to join our company and make a valuable contribution."*

### Sal Milici – Where is the business currently at?

We have increased our investment in National warehouse facilities and our own vehicles, and diversifying our business to ensure we can keep up with shifts in customer behaviour and customer expectations. We are also investing in supply-chain-management visibility software and new internal systems to complement our operational support and further enhance our customer service and customer experience.

### Sal Milici – Where do you see the next 2-3 years for FJT Logistics?

FJT has a clear vision of where we are, where we want to be and how to get there over the course of the next 2-3 years. What's attractive about FJT Logistics is that it is in expansion mode, not just in Australia & New Zealand, but also into strategically placed international locations. We're planning to expand aggressively and it's going to be an exciting time so keep your eyes peeled.

