

# A great foundation established as a new era emerges for APSA

By PAUL BLAKE, APSA Chair

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Across Borders and sadly my swansong as Chair of the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) as I have decided not to seek another term.

It has been an incredible two years of growth and involvement for the APSA entity and I am sure that the good work sets a very solid base for the association to continue on its pathway to becoming the pre-eminent advocacy body for all Australian exporters and importers

In 2016, with the imminent retirement of Rob Coode, the then Committee of Management voted unanimously to implement a significant change to the way APSA had operated since its inception in the 1990's or it could run the risk of becoming irrelevant.

We recognised that a shipper voice was imperative in a fast-changing global shipping and logistics environment and the model that evolved working in partnership with Paul and Caroline Zalai and Travis Brooks-Garrett has far exceeded our expectations.

The very clear agenda for APSA in 2016 was to increase industry awareness of the APSA entity and to advocate strongly on behalf of shippers across all areas if involvement and impact.

APSA in 2019 is now known at all levels of Government and within the shipping and associated industry as a strong representative advocacy group consisting of "hands on" exporters. Under the Part X designation, APSA remains recognised in a statutory sense as the peak shipper body dealing with an extraordinary and growing list of issues that confront shippers.



Signing of the Secretariat arrangement between FTA and APSA in November 2016 – back row: Caroline Zalai, Travis Brooks-Garrett and Paul Blake front row: Paul Zalai and Robert Coode

There have been countless operational and legal issues which have engaged us over the journey of the past two years, some of these include:

- briefing counsel to better understand the powers that are vested in APSA as the Peak Shipper body under Part X of the Competition and Consumer Act;
- in conjunction with the federal regulator dealing with the consolidating liner shipping industry and to monitor the activities and behaviour of foreign owned shipping lines to ensure, where possible, that shipper interests are not negatively

impacted by using the limited powers vested in shippers under Part X;

- dealing with the flow on impacts of port privatisation and the collateral damage that has evolved around cost and efficiency management at the container terminal tenants of the ports;
- coming to grips with the changed commercial model at container ports where stevedores who historically recovered shortfalls in operating costs in commercial agreements with shipping lines, now collect them via their vehicle booking system from transport operators who subsequently pass these costs plus margins on to shippers;

- lobbying the state and federal governments to undertake reviews of the ever-increasing terminal infrastructure levy costs which has resulted in at least one State Government review and the potential for APSA to present at the federal review;

- lodging detailed submissions to national, state and port related freight strategy development where APSA has advocated strenuously for recognition of shipper needs versus those of third-party logistics providers;

- advocating for improvement in the 1-Stop interface around PRA's and pushing for all shipping lines to conform to the very basic data management protocols to protect shippers from outrageous costs at terminals;

- exploring alternative payment arrangements with stevedores and ports to reduce the exposure to margins being accessed by third party providers on charges such as infrastructure levies and other non-stevedoring charges;

- advocating with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to provide a shipper perspective on the escalating cost of exporting and putting the case for the retention and improvement of Part X to ensure that Australian shipper interests are protected;

- gaining a seat on the National Committee on Trade Facilitation to represent exporters interests;

- gaining a seat on the Board of the Global Shippers Forum;

- working with Deakin University to develop the scope for a forecasting model for specialised equipment (read 20fq) which unfortunately remains unfunded at this point but remains a very important project for the APSA team;

- hosting of the tremendously successful GSF and ICHCA International conference in May 2018 and active involvement in the Tasmanian Shippers Forum activities; and

- working with GSF and other global contacts to understand the potential impacts of the IMO LSF directive on shippers and to closely monitor the roll out from a shipping line perspective;

At the time of writing, APSA was also seeking to obtain the primary designation as the Peak Body representing Australian Importers which creates a significant opportunity for exporters and importers to unite around common interests

It has been a very interesting and personally satisfying time as the Chair of APSA and I thank the Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) team and the APSA members for their support and

involvement and wish the enterprise well.

In closing, I would like to also thank fellow committee members who are stepping down, being Michael Lamperd (Bega Cheese / Tatura Milk Industries), Dominic Dillon (Cargill Australia) and Caylene Carmody (Barrett Burston Malting) and wish Sean Richards and the new committee every success in the years ahead.

## NEW BOARD ELECTED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN PEAK SHIPPERS ASSOCIATION

Sean Richards – Executive General Manager, Visy Logistics, was elected as the new APSA Chair at the association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26 February 2019 and will lead the new committee as listed below (pictured L to R)

- Flaminio Dondina - General Manager, Procurement/ Distribution - Casella Family Brands
- Kurt Wilkinson - Commercial Manager- Fletcher International Exports / Australian Meat Industry Council
- David Werner - Trade Execution Manager, Cargill Australia
- Patrick Hutchison – CEO, Australian Meat Industry Council
- Eimear McDonagh – Director, Australian Cotton Shippers Association
- Andrew Wilson - Director, Australian International Movers Association



Sean Richards, Executive General Manager, Visy Logistics

- Peter Morgan – CEO, Australian Wool Processors and Exporters
- Olga Harriton- Vice-Chair - Global Logistics Manager- Manildra Group
- Travis Brooks-Garrett – Secretariat APSA

