

# APSA's expanded role to ensure the sustainability of importers and exporters

By SEAN RICHARDS, APSA Chair

Welcome to the Winter 2019 edition of Across Borders and let me start by providing a very short self-introduction.

My wife, Sherene and I are both South African born and have been married for almost 25 years. We emigrated to Australia in 2008 with our two, then, tweenies and have honestly never looked back – Australia is an absolutely fantastic country in which to live and raise kids. Notwithstanding our individual and collective trials and tribulations, Australians should never lose sight of the fact that as a country, nation and society, we are extremely privileged and fortunate.

On the work front, I am very fortunate to be tasked with leading Visy Logistics (servicing the Global Logistics freight task for Visy Industries and a substantial, and rapidly growing, external customer base). My role offers a very, very unique perspective of the challenges facing the logistics market in that I am able to look through the dual lens of being a substantial freight generator (where tyranny of distance and endemic supply chain inefficiencies make it challenging to thrive in a very competitive global market) and an open market, logistics service provider and competitor (where the appropriate blend of OHSE&C, solutions, productivity, service and cost mean the difference between enabling or frustrating sales) - in an environment where, all too often, the playing fields are not level.

My aim is to bring this perspective (and the relevant learnings and respective agendas) to my role as the Chair of the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA). Together with the APSA Board

and your robust active participation, we aim to influence activities, initiatives and outcomes which deliver a meaningful contribution to the sustainable growth, profitability and competitiveness of our membership.

Travis Brooks-Garrett in recent posts and publications has introduced the newly elected APSA Board and I would like to offer my personal welcome to each and every one of them and my sincere gratitude for their acceptance of their nominations.

We are all extremely fortunate to have accepted our nominations at a time when APSA is an association of growing relevance. I recall a time, not so long ago, when APSA was not nearly as active and influential and we owe much of the positive transition to the forward thinking and pragmatic efforts of our outgoing Chair, Paul Blake. Paul, it was a pleasure working with you and, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank you for your leadership and sincerely wish you everything of the best in your future endeavours.

Looking forward, one of the most significant developments of late has been APSA's appointment by the Hon. Michael McComarck MP, as the "inbound peak body" now representing importers as well as exporters, under Part X of the Competition and Consumer Act. This broadened scope brings significant responsibilities and has therefore necessitated the review of the relationship between APSA and Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA). More to the point, the Board is currently looking to extend the Secretariat appointment of FTA and is working with the latter on the development of a 5 year plan, focussing on continuity, the articulation of key deliverables and how best to organise

and focus APSA to the best benefit of its members within the broadened scope.

Our intent will be to build on the solid foundation that APSA and FTA have built in recent times and to work with key Industry stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of importers and exporters. On a personal note, I certainly do not see the need for acrimonious relationships or strategies, but, in the fullness of time, I can only accept an end state environment in which the considerations of the producers of freight are positively, front of mind and agenda when policy, infrastructure, price and service capability/solutions are determined.

We will keep you posted of developments.

Lastly, on the "today and now" front, key areas receiving attention are, inter alia:-

- **PRSN / Port of Melbourne Rail Solution / MSIS.** APSA have been working with the Port of Melbourne and the Victorian Government to ensure that shippers interests are being considered in the development of rail solutions. There have been some really positive developments which Travis will communicate in due course;
- **BMSB continues to be a significant issue for importers.** FTA / APSA have lodged a submission, representing the interests of cargo owners and logistics service providers. Updates to follow;
- **Infrastructure charges.** APSA advocated for an Inquiry, which the Victorian Government is currently delivering. Unfortunately, the same progress has not been made in NSW but we will continue with our efforts. Updates to follow;

- **Shipping Inquiry.** APSA had the privilege to present evidence to the Senate Committee Inquiry into the policy, regulatory, taxation, administrative and funding priorities for Australian shipping. APSA secretariat, Travis Brooks-Garrett, presented to the Senate Committee on behalf of the APSA Board, addressing matters including the lack of regulatory protection for Australian shippers, difficulties in disputing unfair charges, the consolidation of foreign shipping lines and the continuing issue of terminal handling charges and terminal infrastructure surcharges. The evidence was very well received by the senators with the final recommendations of the Committee due in August;

- **Bill to ban cotton exports.** From an advocacy standpoint, APSA was proud to support the Australian Cotton Shippers Association (ACSA) in preparing their submission to the Senate Committee Inquiry into the Export Control Amendment (Banning Cotton Exports to ensure water security) Bill

2018. The Bill proposed to ban cotton exports entirely; a move that would have significant consequences not only for cotton growers and cotton exporters, but also other water use export commodities, including Australia's rice and meat industries. APSA and ACSA used the opportunity to showcase the great sustainability initiatives already being led by the Australian cotton industry, as well as the potential breach of Australia's trade obligations. APSA made representations to the Minister's office and will continue to support our cotton exporters as vital contributors to the Australian economy;

- **Australian Trusted Trader.** FTA / APSA is working with the Department of Home Affairs and our members to make sure that the ATT benefits are meaningful and that new benefits are forthcoming. Updates to follow; and
- **Part X negotiations.** APSA has commenced a negotiation with the new NEMO service, requesting minimum



Sean Richards (APSA), the Hon Melissa Horne MP (Victorian Minister for Ports and Freight) and Travis Brooks-Garrett (FTA/APSA)

notification periods for new charges & service changes.

There are, indeed, challenging but exciting times ahead of us and we look forward to your active and ongoing support.



Australian Peak Shippers Association Inc. (APSA)

# SWIFT CONTAINER SERVICES



**Are you in need of upgrading your current transport service provider ?**

At Swift Container Services we offer a service level unmatched by any other wharf carrier in Sydney. A service level that has seen us grow to become Sydney's largest direct to client container service provider.

Commitment to service and constant communication with our clientele is also what separates us from the rest. We have the ability to deliver your container via skel trailer, drop trailer, B Double, sideloader and our HML accredited fleet.

Our HML fleet allows us to legally deliver overweight containers directly to your client and avoiding costly via yard, unpack and redelivery charges.

When you require the job done right the first time, every time, on time and on budget, please contact us today and get in front of your competitors.



P: (02) 9642 1549  
E: michael@swiftrans.com.au  
www.swiftrans.com.au

