



Australian Maritime Digest

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Contents

Editorial.....	4
Message from the AAMA Board.....	4
Establishment of a National Infrastructure Committee of Federal Cabinet.....	4
Corporate Supporters.....	5
Maritime Australia Limited.....	5
Australasian Hydrographic Society.....	5
Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).....	5
Australian Marine Environment Protection Association (AUSMEPA).....	5
Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA).....	5
GW Marine Consultants Pty Ltd.....	5
Australian Maritime College.....	5
Maritime Defence, Customs & Border Protection.....	6
Sailor rescued from HMAS Armidale off North West Shelf.....	6
Japan to create amphibious force modeled after USMC.....	6
HMAS Yarra recognised for extraordinary acts of gallantry in 1942.....	6
HMAS Darwin rescues 13 off the coast of Pakistan.....	6
Canadian navy ship towed to Hawaii after fire.....	7
US Quadrennial Defense Review Charts Strategy Evolution.....	7
Blast at Indonesian navy arsenal kills 1, wounds 86.....	7
Senate Inquiry into the Breach of Indonesian Territorial Waters.....	7
India seeks deeper engagement with ASEAN on maritime security.....	7
ANAO Report - Air Warfare Destroyer Program.....	7
Update to investigation into allegations of inappropriate behaviour in HMAS Ballarat.....	7
Trilateral Indian Ocean Region (IOR) security grouping meeting outcomes.....	7
US Navy plans to retire all frigates by end of 2015.....	7
French and Australian naval ships seize large quantity of cannabis resin.....	7
RAAF aircraft join Malaysian aircraft search and rescue effort.....	8
Triton Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to boost maritime surveillance capabilities.....	8
Illegal foreign fishing vessels intercepted.....	8
HMAS Melbourne returns from billion dollar drug bust mission.....	8
Maritime Powers Regulation 2014.....	8
Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014.....	8
Immigration and Border Protection (Spent and Redundant Instruments) Repeal Regulation 2014.....	8
Australia assumes responsibility for coordinating southern Indian Ocean search for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.....	8
HMAS Darwin seizes \$137 million of cannabis resin after high-speed pursuit in Gulf of Aden.....	8
Defence Minister to attend the Jakarta International Defence Dialogue.....	9
USN Littoral Combat Ship replacement task force named.....	9
Australia calls for closer cooperation at the Jakarta International Defence Dialogue.....	9
Navy Seahawk supports rescue near Mallacoota.....	9
Border Protection Command (BPC) personnel bravery awards.....	9
U.S. military can't conduct amphibious operations in the Pacific.....	9
Capability and Technology Demonstrator Program investment to develop future defence technology.....	9
RAN appointed chair of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) group of nations.....	9
Senate Committee report - Breaches of Indonesian territorial waters.....	9
New Chief of Joint Operations announced.....	10
Migration Regulations 1994 - Specification of Specified Place - IMMI 14/030.....	10
HMAS Toowoomba joins search for Malaysia Airlines flight 370.....	10
Air Chief Marshal Houston to lead Joint Agency Coordination Centre to coordinate Australian support for MH370 search.....	10
ADV Ocean Shield sails with MH370 locator equipment.....	10
China Seas Developments – March.....	10
Operation Sovereign Borders updates – March.....	11
Shipping, Shipbuilding & Ports.....	11
GBRMPA media response - Abbot Point documents.....	11
Rolls-Royce Ocean Drones Challenge Shipping Industry.....	11
Sydney Overseas Passenger Terminal Upgrade.....	11
ATSB Final Report - Crew member fatality - bulk carrier Nireas off Gladstone, QLD, on 20 March 2013.....	11
Ship Finance: Traditional and Modern Methods in an Era of Change.....	11
Ocean Signal appoints All Sat Communications in Australia.....	12
Ocean Tanker Group Fined \$1.2 Million After Liquid Freight Carrier Discharges Pollutants off USA.....	12
Applications open - Australasian Hydrographic Society Education Award 2014.....	12
Increased throughput at Port Hedland.....	12
ANAO Report - Air Warfare Destroyer Program.....	12
Baltic Exchange Capesize Index 2014 trial clarification.....	12
Pakistan's ports asked to boost coal handling capacity.....	12
Sri Lanka to acquire Pakistani shipping services.....	12

Third consecutive annual increase in Suez Canal tolls	13
Two new books on Cockatoo Island's shipyard story	13
Port Hedland advanced ship navigation and maritime simulation facility training	13
Hi-tech patrol vessel boosts safety in Port Philip Bay	13
Anglo American pull out of the Abbot Point coal terminal	13
New National Plan ensures effective response to maritime emergencies	13
Productivity Commission releases draft report on Public Infrastructure	13
How Will Ocean Bulk Freight and Container Shipping be Powered in Future?	13
House of Reps Committee Inquiry into Infrastructure Planning and Procurement	13
Device to bridge the digital divide between land and sea mobile behavior	13
Piracy incidents in the Malacca Straits	14
Maritime Powers Regulation 2014	14
Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014	14
Extension of Time for Independent Review into Gladstone bund wall	14
Southern Indian Ocean search for Malaysian Airlines Flt MH370	14
Senate Committee report: Infrastructure Australia Amendment Bill 2013	14
Danish Bunker Fuel Specialist to expand in Australia	14
USN Littoral Combat Ship replacement task force named	14
Shagang Shipping arrests HNA Group vessel in Australia	14
ATSB Report - Fall from the pilot ladder - chemical tanker Golden Concord, Goods Island, Torres Strait	14
Trends: Infrastructure and Transport to 2030	15
New confidential ATSB reporting web page	15
Establishment of a National Infrastructure Committee of Federal Cabinet	15
LNG sector now offering golden hellos to LNG seafarers to come ashore	15
Applications sought for two International Marina Scholarships for 2014	15
Gladstone Port safety to be improved with world class technology	15
Quarantine Legislation Amendment (2014 Measures No. 1) Proclamation 2014	15
Senate inquiry into Great Barrier Reef	15
ACCC not to oppose MIRRAT proposed lease to operate automotive terminal at Port of Melbourne	15
Beware spurious oil fraud claims	16
Senate report - Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Submarine Cable Protection) Bill 2013	16
Melbourne – the most productive port in Australia	16
Concerns with IMO Ballast Water Convention Can Be Addressed by IMO MEPC Resolution, Suggests ICS	16
Release of national environmental standards for One-Stop Shop reforms	16
Strait of Bab el-Mandeb Provides Latest Target for Pirates	16
AMSA holds grave concerns held for fishing vessel near Antarctica	16
ATSB preliminary report - Unintentional release of the freefall lifeboat from the bulk carrier Aquarosa	16
World Shipping Outlook – March	16
UN, US & EU Sanctions on Iranian shipping – March developments	17

Fisheries..... 17

Funding to further support our sustainable fisheries	17
Draft Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Plan Amendments	17
Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Total Allowable Catch (Quota Species) Determination 2014	17
Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery Overcatch and Undercatch Determination 2014	17
Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Total Allowable Catch (Non-Quota Species) Determination 2014	17
Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Overcatch and Undercatch Determination 2014	17
AFMA GoFish improvements	17
Deal on Mackerel in the North-East Atlantic	17
Fishing Overcapacity: EU says it's time to move forward at global level	17
Maritime Powers Regulation 2014	18
Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014	18
Proposed changes to the Upper-Slope Dogfish Management Strategy for the power handline method	18
EU takes concrete action against illegal fishing	18
Renee Vajtauer appointed as new Executive Officer for Commonwealth Fisheries Association	18

Resource Exploration & Development 18

GBRMPA media response - Abbot Point documents	18
Productivity Commission releases Mineral and Energy Resource Exploration Report	18
Senate Inquiry into Environmental Offsets	19
Pakistan's ports asked to boost coal handling capacity	19
Maritime Powers Regulation 2014	19
Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014	19
Streamlining Offshore Petroleum Environmental Approvals	19
Senate Inquiry - Australia's future activities and responsibilities in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic waters	19
Senate inquiry into Great Barrier Reef	19
Migration Amendment (Offshore Resources Activity) Repeal Bill 2014	19
Release of national environmental standards for One-Stop Shop reforms	19

Marine Science & Environment..... 20

GBRMPA media response - Abbot Point documents	20
State of the Climate 2014: A clear picture of Australia's climate	20
Ocean's Biggest Current Carries More Water Than Thought	20
Monitoring of Southern Ocean whaling continues	20
Productivity Commission releases Mineral and Energy Resource Exploration Report	20
WA Shark Mitigation to undergo full assessment	20
Ocean Tanker Group Fined \$1.2 Million After Liquid Freight Carrier Discharges Pollutants off USA	20
Funding to further support our sustainable fisheries	20
Applications open - Australasian Hydrographic Society Education Award 2014	20

El Nino ocean warming “watch” issued.....	21
Ocean Depths Feel Impact of Global Warming.....	21
Senate Inquiry into Environmental Offsets.....	21
Anglo American pull out of the Abbot Point coal terminal.....	21
New National Plan ensures effective response to maritime emergencies.....	21
Maritime Powers Regulation 2014.....	21
Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014.....	21
Extension of Time for Independent Review into Gladstone bund wall.....	21
Streamlining Offshore Petroleum Environmental Approvals.....	21
Deep ocean current may slow due to climate change.....	22
New Zealand and Australia to work together on “Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction”.....	22
Senate Inquiry - Australia’s future activities and responsibilities in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic waters.....	22
Senate inquiry into Great Barrier Reef.....	22
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Heard Island and McDonald Islands) Proclamation 2014.....	22
Nominations called for Prime Minister’s Prizes for Science.....	22
Concerns with IMO Ballast Water Convention Can Be Addressed by IMO MEPC Resolution, Suggests ICS.....	22
Release of national environmental standards for One-Stop Shop reforms.....	22
Public consultation on Australia’s Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity.....	22
IPCC Fifth Assessment Report on Climate Change released.....	22
International Court of Justice finds for Australia against Japanese whaling research program.....	23

Letters to the Editor..... 25

Conferences & seminars..... 25

7-11 April 2014 – XXII International Maritime Pilots' Association Congress – Panama.....	25
9-10 April 2014 - 6th Offshore Support Vessels Summit – Aberdeen, UK.....	25
9-10 April 2014 - Developing Specialist Wind Vessels Summit 2014 – Aberdeen, UK.....	25
22-24 April 2014 - Strategic Offshore Asset Life Extension – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.....	25
23-24 April 2014 - Structural Life Extension for Offshore Installation and Marine Vessels – Abu Dhabi, UAE.....	25
1-4 May 2014 – Australian Maritime Museums Conference – Queenscliff, VIC.....	25
6 May 2014 - Marina management software seminar – Sydney.....	25
21-22 May 2014 - QLD Marina Study Tour – Brisbane and the Gold Coast.....	25
7-11 June 2014 – World Aquaculture Conference – Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide.....	25
7-11 July 2014 - Australian Marine Sciences Association Conference – Canberra.....	25
29-30 July 2014 - Defence and Industry Conference - Adelaide.....	26
17-18 September 2014 - 10th Ballast Water Management Summit – Singapore.....	26
13-14 October 2014 – Intermanager AGM 2014 to run alongside ship management conference – Singapore.....	26
16-18 October 2014 - 3rd Annual World Congress of Ocean & Investment and Trade Fair-2014 – Dalian, China.....	26
29-30 October 2014 - 11th Ballast Water Management Summit – Hamburg.....	26
27-31 October 2014 – Euronaval – Paris Le Bourget, France.....	26
3-5 May 2015 – Marine15 recreational marine business and safety conference – Gold Coast.....	26
2-4 February 2016 – 2016 Pacific International Maritime Exposition – Sydney Exhibition Centre, Glebe Island.....	26

EDITORIAL

Australian Association for Maritime Affairs

The objectives of the Australian Association for Maritime Affairs are to generate greater public awareness of maritime affairs, and to encourage well-informed decision making on maritime issues.

www.aama.asn.au

Message from the AAMA Board

AAMA Members will be aware that the AAMA Board has been concerned that the Association will have insufficient funds to continue operating and supplying its publications – this *Digest* and the *Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs* (AJMOA) – through 2014-15. There have been no responses to the Board's recent appeals for funding or sponsorship so the Board has decided to recommend placing the Association into, in effect, caretaker mode from 1 April and to close it formally from 30 June 2014.

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the AAMA will be called for June to consider a motion from the Board that the Association be closed from 30 June 2014. Details of the exact time and venue will be published in the 1 May 2014 *Australian Maritime Digest*, as the formal journal of the AAMA and thus received by all AAMA Members.

Arrangements have been made to continue supplying subscription copies of the *Digest* and AJMOA until 30 June 2014. From that date, the Board plans that the *Digest* will cease and AJMOA subscriptions will be managed entirely by Taylor & Francis.

The Board obviously regrets having to close the Association after more than 30 years but must respond to the realities of the situation.

Richard Griffiths
Board Member

Establishment of a National Infrastructure Committee of Federal Cabinet

While most readers would agree with the importance of sensible and adequate investment in national infrastructure, the [establishment](#) of this Cabinet Committee by the Prime Minister seems to have occurred at an awkward (premature?) time. There is a Productivity Commission [inquiry](#) still underway, a House committee [inquiry](#) into Infrastructure Planning and Procurement, and the [Infrastructure Australia Amendment Bill 2013](#) is still before the Parliament to change the structure and governance of Infrastructure Australia. That's a lot of balls to have in the air and, even assuming that the Government has a coherent plan to coordinate all the resulting changes, small timing discrepancies in the implementation of their outcomes could create almost immediate financial and administrative friction, without starting to consider any deliberate attempts to throw spanners into the works.

The proposals put to State Treasurers by the Commonwealth at the 28 March meeting of Commonwealth and State Treasurers, to use the funds raised by privatising State assets, augmented by an additional 15% from the Commonwealth, to provide a pool of funds to invest in infrastructure projects, does not appear to address the issue of “Who, ultimately, decides *which* infrastructure projects?”, let alone how to take up that offer in the two years for which proposals will be open for consideration. Bilateral deals between the Commonwealth Treasurer and individual States are unlikely to calm the suspicions of the other States, and the presence of the new National Infrastructure Committee of Federal Cabinet, as an apparent financial overlord, is likely to heighten States' paranoia about who makes decisions to spend what is, largely, State money.

Readers can probably sympathise with the frustration of successive ministers and governments, State as well as Commonwealth, as they chafe at the snails' pace progress of infrastructure projects. However infrastructure projects are unlikely to be expedited by the direct involvement of politicians, whose views change and whose political shelf lives are normally much shorter than the gestation period of most major infrastructure projects.

Even the strongest of personal opinions are unlikely to prevail in the longer term against at least some Commonwealth/State Treasuries, unless backed up by good cost-benefit analysis, sustained backroom negotiations skills, and even bi-partisanship, skills and attitudes which sometimes seem in short supply. As Mr Hockey said at his press conference “Yes, well the State Treasuries are coming to Canberra to look at the business case, to fully analyse the proposal and then to make a final decision and this is up to the States.”

Alas, few Federal Cabinet Committees established in the last couple of decades have seemed able to sustain the attention, let alone support, of their proponents unless they attracted consistent, almost suicidal, Prime Ministerial commitment irrespective of the political crisis *de jour*, so your Editor has a feeling, after closely watching such initiatives for over 30 years, that this Cabinet Committee has a half-life of somewhat less than the prime ministerial life of the current Prime Minister.

All of which probably means delays for, rather than expedition of, national maritime infrastructure projects.

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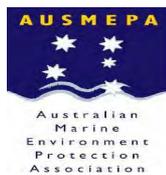
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Sailor rescued from HMAS Armidale off North West Shelf

Defence [reported](#) “Following a combined operation yesterday [1 Mar] involving a range of government and private agencies, a Royal Australian Navy sailor is now resting in hospital in Broome, Western Australia, following a casualty evacuation operation in Australia’s far North West Shelf region.”

Japan to create amphibious force modeled after USMC

The US *Navy Times* [reported](#) “The Japanese military plans to create a force of about 3,000 troops modeled after the U.S. Marine Corps and capable of rapidly launching amphibious missions, the Wall Street Journal reported Monday [3 Mar].”

HMAS *Yarra* recognised for extraordinary acts of gallantry in 1942

Defence [announced](#) “Proud descendants of the Ship’s Company of HMAS *Yarra* (II) looked on today [4 Mar] as Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Ray Griggs AM CSC RAN proudly accepted a Unit Citation for Gallantry, awarded to the crew of HMAS *Yarra* (II) for acts of extraordinary gallantry in action in 1942. Presented by Her Excellency, the Honourable Quentin Bryce AC CVO, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, the award serves as a poignant reminder of the service and sacrifice of Navy personnel past and present.”

HMAS *Darwin* rescues 13 off the coast of Pakistan

Defence [reported](#) “Only 10 days into her operational deployment, HMAS *Darwin*, in cooperation with Pakistan Maritime Security Agency Ship MSS *Nusrat*, has come to the rescue of 13 fishermen found adrift at sea off Pakistan. The men were discovered last Saturday, 1 March. The men, who claimed to be Iranian nationals, said they had been drifting for five days in international waters after their boat was reportedly struck by an unknown vessel and sank.”

Canadian navy ship towed to Hawaii after fire

The US *Navy Times* [reported](#) “A U.S. Navy ocean tug on Tuesday was towing a Canadian navy ship with nearly 300 crew members on board to Hawaii’s Pearl Harbor after an engine fire left 20 sailors with minor injuries. HMCS Protecteur was in the Pacific Ocean north of Hawaii when the fire broke out last week, the Canadian navy said.”

US Quadrennial Defense Review Charts Strategy Evolution

The US Department of Defense [released](#) its [Quadrennial Defense Review](#), saying “the congressionally mandated QDR is an opportunity for Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to lay out his vision and for the department, to refine defense strategy and to tell how the Defense Department will adapt the joint force to support it.” At page IX of the Executive summary it says “Preserving Naval capacity to build security globally and respond to crises. Through an aggressive effort to reduce acquisition costs and temporary ship lay-ups, the Navy will modernize its fleets of surface ships, aircraft, and submarines to meet 21st century threats. We must ensure that the fleet is capable of operating in every region and across the full spectrum of conflict. No new negotiations beyond 32 Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) will go forward, and the Navy will submit alternative proposals to procure a capable and lethal small surface combatant. If sequestration-level cuts are imposed in FY2016 and beyond, the USS George Washington aircraft carrier would need to be retired before scheduled refueling and overhaul. The Department will have to make this decision, which would leave the Navy with ten carrier strike groups, in the 2016 budget submission.”

[If any reader thinks that sounds ominous, they should read what it says of the US Army and Air Force; the USMC seems relatively sheltered - Editor]

Blast at Indonesian navy arsenal kills 1, wounds 86

Stars and Stripes quoted AP to [report](#) “An explosion at an Indonesian navy ammunition warehouse on Wednesday [5 Mar] killed one man and injured more than 80 other navy personnel, the military said. The blast at the navy's amphibious special forces unit north of Jakarta happened while navy personnel were trying to extinguish a fire caused by a short circuit, said military spokesman Iskandar Sitompul.”

Senate Inquiry into the Breach of Indonesian Territorial Waters

The Senate has [referred](#) this matter to its Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee for inquiry and report. The committee is seeking written submissions from interested organisations and individuals. The reporting date is **27 March 2014**.

India seeks deeper engagement with ASEAN on maritime security

The *Economic Times* [India] [reported](#) “India today [6 Mar] sought deeper engagement with the 10-nation [ASEAN](#) on maritime security to deal with challenges of terrorism and [piracy](#), saying such partnership would help maintain peace and stability in the region. In his address at 'Delhi Dialogue VI' -- the sixth edition of the annual ASEAN-India dialogue, External Affairs Minister [Salman Khurshid](#) said there should be enhanced cooperation between the two sides in combating transnational crimes.”

ANAO Report - Air Warfare Destroyer Program

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) [released](#) this [report](#), saying “The objective of the audit was to report on the progress of the current phase of the Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) Program, which is known as SEA 4000 Phase 3–Build. This phase commenced in June 2007, and covers the finalisation of the detailed design, the signing of the Alliance and Platform System Design contracts, and the construction and delivery of the ships by the Industry Participants to the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO).” [If a project starts after a gap of several years since the previous major shipbuilding project, and if the production run is for only three ships, and if the work is to be spread across several shipbuilders in different States, and if the foreign ship designer is not part of the project team, one *might* expect far worse outcomes than are reported here – Editor]

Update to investigation into allegations of inappropriate behaviour in HMAS Ballarat

Defence [announced](#) “The evidence gathered by ADFIS [Australian Defence Force Investigative Service] was referred for review to the Director of Military Prosecutions (DMP) which is an independent body similar in function to the civilian Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). The DMP has found that there is insufficient evidence to provide a reasonable prospect of conviction in relation to the allegations. The Inquiry Officer, appointed by the Chief of Navy, will now conclude the Administrative Inquiry to determine if administrative action is warranted and to identify any broader procedural or cultural issues that may require further action by Navy.”

Trilateral Indian Ocean Region (IOR) security grouping meeting outcomes

Business Standard [India] [reported](#) “A trilateral Indian Ocean Region (IOR) security grouping has "achieved a great deal" in practical cooperation and is set to expand with the addition of two more island nations, it was announced here Thursday [6 Mar].” and “We had invited Mauritius and the Seychelles to attend as observers. Both said they were interested and would like to join.”

US Navy plans to retire all frigates by end of 2015

The US *Navy Times* [reported](#) “The steady decline of the fleet’s frigate force is being stepped up, and it’s looking like the last ship, previously scheduled to inactivate in 2020, will leave service by the end of 2015.” [It could mean that the USN sees relatively less value in this size/capability of warship, or it could mean that frigates provided by its theatre allies will assume greater importance – Editor]

French and Australian naval ships seize large quantity of cannabis resin

Defence [reported](#) “In a combined French and Australian operation, naval ships seized and destroyed almost 650 kilograms of cannabis resin hidden aboard a smuggling skiff in the Red Sea. After HMAS *Darwin* intercepted the skiff, her boarding party discovered the cannabis resin in 120 plastic packages concealed in hessian bags labelled ‘Basmati Rice’. The skiff was initially detected by a French

maritime patrol aircraft, with coordination and direction provided by the French Ship (FS) *Jean Bart* and HMAS *Darwin*'s Seahawk helicopter.”

RAAF aircraft join Malaysian aircraft search and rescue effort

Defence [announced](#) “The Australian Defence Force will send two RAAF AP-3C Orion aircraft to Malaysia to assist in the search and rescue effort for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370. Both the Orion aircraft are based in Darwin, one aircraft departed tonight [9 Mar] for RAAF Butterworth in Malaysia where it will be based to conduct its search activities. The second Orion aircraft is scheduled to depart on Monday morning.”

Triton Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to boost maritime surveillance capabilities

The Prime Minister, Mr Abbott, [announced](#) “The Government has committed to the acquisition of the highly-capable Triton Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), subject to the successful completion of the US Navy development programme currently under way. These aircraft will patrol Australia’s vast ocean approaches, and work closely with other existing and future Australian Defence Force assets to secure our ocean resources, including energy resources off northern Australia, and help to protect our borders.”

Illegal foreign fishing vessels intercepted

The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service [announced](#) “Border Protection Command (BPC), working closely with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) and the Royal Australian Navy, has apprehended four foreign fishing vessels with a total of 58 crew approximately 180 nautical miles North West of Darwin.”

HMAS Melbourne returns from billion dollar drug bust mission

Defence [reported](#) “A crowd of well-wishers today joined Prime Minister Tony Abbott, Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert and Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Ray Griggs AO, CSC, RAN at Garden Island, Sydney to welcome home HMAS *Melbourne* from a successful Middle East mission. The crew of 232 spent Christmas at sea, patrolling sea lanes to provide safe passage to legitimate mariners. Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert congratulated the ship’s company of HMAS *Melbourne* on her successful deployment, which saw her intercept more than \$1 billion in illegal drugs.”

Maritime Powers Regulation 2014

The Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “prescribes Commonwealth laws in respect of which enforcement and monitoring powers could be exercised by maritime officers, a range of international agreements and decisions, which enable the exercise of maritime powers by a maritime officer if the authorising officer suspects, on reasonable grounds, that the agreement or decision applies to a particular vessel, installation or aircraft, Commonwealth laws that could be enforced by maritime officers in Australia’s contiguous zone to investigate or prevent a contravention of a customs or immigration law occurring in Australia, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of a vessel, installation or aircraft, after boarding the vessel, installation or aircraft; and, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of the land, after entering onto the land.” [The laws are prescribed at Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the regulation and, in addition to migration, customs and maritime transport Acts and agreements, include fishing and environmental laws – Editor]

Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014

Associated with the *Marine Powers Regulation 2014*, the Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “amends the *Customs Regulations 1926* to prescribe the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* for the purposes of new subsection 228(2) of the *Customs Act 1901* (the Act) and the *Maritime Powers Act 2013* for the purposes of new subsection 228(3) of the Act. The Regulation also removes references in the *Customs Regulations 1926* to provisions in the Act which will be repealed by the *Maritime Powers (Consequential Amendments) Act 2013*.”

Immigration and Border Protection (Spent and Redundant Instruments) Repeal Regulation 2014

The Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “repeals 270 spent and redundant instruments administered by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.” [270! Sounds like it warrants careful reading by immigration lawyers – Editor]

Australia assumes responsibility for coordinating southern Indian Ocean search for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370

The Prime Minister, Mr Abbott, [announced](#) “Earlier today [17 Mar] the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Najib Tun Razak, telephoned me to update the Australian Government on the search for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. In light of developments in the investigation he requested that Australia assume responsibility for coordinating that part of the search effort that is now focusing on the southern Indian Ocean. I told Prime Minister Najib that Australia stands with Malaysia at this very difficult time and would be pleased to take on this additional responsibility. The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) will take the lead in coordinating the search effort in the southern Indian Ocean through its Rescue Coordination Centre – Australia, supported by the Australian Defence Force and other contributing agencies.”

HMAS Darwin seizes \$137 million of cannabis resin after high-speed pursuit in Gulf of Aden

Defence [reported](#) “HMAS *Darwin* has seized and destroyed more than three tonnes of cannabis resin with an estimated street value of \$137 million dollars. The drugs were found hidden aboard a skiff in the Gulf of Aden on 16 March 2014.

Defence Minister to attend the Jakarta International Defence Dialogue

The Defence Minister, Senator Johnston, [announced](#) “Today [18 Mar] I will travel to Jakarta, Indonesia, to attend the fourth Jakarta International Defence Dialogue at the invitation of Indonesian Minister for Defence, Dr Purnomo Yusgiantoro. I will be accompanied by Chief of Defence Force, General David Hurley AC, DSC; Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Ray Griggs AO, CSC, RAN; and Air Commander Australia, Air Vice Marshal Mel Hupfeld DSC. The Jakarta International Defence Dialogue (JIDD) is an important regional security dialogue which this year has the central theme of maritime security in the region. I will join panelists from India, Japan, Indonesia, Republic of Korea and Australia to speak on the emergence of the Indo-Pacific. This is the first time an Australian Defence Minister has participated in the JIDD.”

USN Littoral Combat Ship replacement task force named

In a story with implications for both current and prospective Australian shipbuilders and consortia, the US *Navy Times* [reported](#) “The effort to re-evaluate the Navy’s small surface combatant program is underway under the direction of a new Small Surface Combatant Task Force (SSCTF). As directed Feb. 24 by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, the task force will examine the littoral combat ship (LCS) and compare it with other designs, all with a goal to buy “a capable and lethal small surface combatant generally consistent with the capabilities of a frigate.””

Australia calls for closer cooperation at the Jakarta International Defence Dialogue

In a speech at the Dialogue, the Defence Minister, Senator Johnston, [said](#), *inter alia*, “I have to acknowledge that there are some difficult aspects in our current relationship that are slowing down our ability to cooperate more closely. I regret that is the case, but I also know that both countries are working hard to clarify and resolve this situation. Ladies and gentlemen, I think it is vital for both our countries that we work hard to develop a closer partnership which strengthens both our countries’ national interests. Australia and Indonesia are at our best when we cooperate. Whatever the momentary fluctuations in our relationship, we will be better off if we commit to help bring out the best in each other. That is a far better legacy to leave for future generations. Australia’s interest is in having Indonesia as a strong, cohesive neighbour, with a high-quality Defence force able to promote Indonesia’s interests. That is the best Indonesia for Australia, a strong neighbour, a close friend and a partner in security.”

Navy Seahawk supports rescue near Mallacoota

Defence [reported](#) “Royal Australian Navy assets on both sides of Australia were active last night [23 Mar] in Search and Rescue operations. As HMAS *Success* continued her mission searching for missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370, a Navy Seahawk helicopter from 816 Squadron was sent to assist in locating seafarers who had activated a distress beacon offshore on the east coast.”

Border Protection Command (BPC) personnel bravery awards

The Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, the Hon. Scott Morrison, [congratulated](#) Border Protection Command (BPC) personnel involved in the Christmas Island SIEV 221 tragedy of 15 December 2010, who were awarded a Group Bravery Citation by the Governor-General of Australia, the Hon. Quentin Bryce AC CVO. 17 BPC personnel were today awarded the citation for their involvement in the rescue of 42 people from the suspected illegal entry vessel as it went down off Christmas Island.

U.S. military can’t conduct amphibious operations in the Pacific

Stars and Stripes [reported](#) “The [US] Navy and Marines do not have enough assets to carry out a contested amphibious operation in the Pacific if a crisis arises, the top commander of U.S. forces in the region told lawmakers Tuesday [25 Mar].”

Capability and Technology Demonstrator Program investment to develop future defence technology

The Minister for Defence, Senator David Johnston, and the Assistant Minister for Defence, Mr Stuart Robert [announced](#) a multimillion dollar investment to develop future defence technology in Australia. Up to \$13 million has been committed under Round 18 of the Capability and Technology Demonstrator Program. Seven technology proposals from Australian companies and universities have been selected this year to demonstrate possible defence applications including: software for rapid submarine communications; a sound deadener to improve submarine stealth by reducing exhaust noise from diesel engines; a portable global wideband satellite communications terminal suitable for smaller ships; technology to improve the processing performance of maritime radars; and a miniature radio frequency kit for next generation decoys used to protect ADF platforms from missiles.

RAN appointed chair of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) group of nations

Defence [reported](#) “The Royal Australian Navy will from today [27 Mar] chair the group of world navies whose nations share boundaries with the Indian Ocean.” and “IONS was established in 2008 as a forum to increase maritime cooperation among the littoral states of the Indian Ocean region.” and “The IONS chair position rotates biennially through the four regional sub groups.”

Senate Committee report - Breaches of Indonesian territorial waters

The Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee tabled its [report](#) into this matter. Recommendation 1 reads “The committee recommends that the government consider the apparent conflict between its key policy constraints, especially in light of the difficult decisions that Navy and Customs captains are required to make as part of OSB [Operation Sovereign Borders].”

New Chief of Joint Operations announced

The Chief of the Defence Force, General David Hurley, AC, DSC, [announced](#) Rear Admiral David Johnston, AM, RAN, will succeed Lieutenant General Ash Power AO, CSC as the Chief of Joint Operations Command. Rear Admiral Johnston will be promoted to Vice Admiral on 4 April and will commence his appointment on 20 May 2014.

Migration Regulations 1994 - Specification of Specified Place - IMMI 14/030

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection made this [specification](#) [?? instrument?], which “operates to specify places where personal identifiers are to be provided in accordance with Subparagraph 2.04(3)(b)(ii) and Sub-subparagraph 2.08AC(4)(a)(ii)(B) of the Migration Regulations 1994.” [See also the *Maritime Powers Regulation 2014* above - Editor]

HMAS Toowoomba joins search for Malaysia Airlines flight 370

Defence [announced](#) “The Royal Australian Navy ship HMAS Toowoomba will depart Fleet Base West near Perth today [29 Mar], to join the international search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. The Anzac-class frigate has been diverted from other operational tasks to join the search. It will carry a S-70B2 Seahawk helicopter which was flown from the RAN’s Naval Air Station HMAS Albatross by a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) C-17A Globemaster on Friday night.” and “HMAS Toowoomba joins the Royal Australian Navy supply ship HMAS Success which remains on station in the search area, after leaving Western Australia on 22 March. The Australian Defence Vessel Ocean Shield is scheduled to depart from Fleet Base West on Sunday.”

Air Chief Marshal Houston to lead Joint Agency Coordination Centre to coordinate Australian support for MH370 search

The Prime Minister, Mr Abbott, [announced](#) “I am pleased to announce that Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AC AFC will lead a new Joint Agency Coordination Centre (the JACC) that will be based in Perth to coordinate the Australian Government's support for the search into MH370.” and “The JACC will ensure that the search being coordinated by AMSA and ATSB is reinforced by strong liaison with all the relevant stakeholders, including the families of the passengers. The JACC will provide a single contact point for families to gain up-to-date information and travel assistance including visa services, accommodation advice, interpreter services and counselling.”

ADV Ocean Shield sails with MH370 locator equipment

Defence [reported](#) “Today [30 Mar] the Australian Defence Vessel Ocean Shield is being fitted with specialist underwater search and location equipment and embarking personnel, to support search operations in the Southern Indian Ocean for Malaysia Airlines MH370. Ocean Shield has been fitted with United States Navy (USN)-supplied specialist equipment that includes a Towed Pinger Locator (TPL-25) and a Bluefin-21 Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV).”

China Seas Developments – March

PressTV [Iran] [reported](#) “The Indonesian National Defense Forces (TNI) says Jakarta will increase its presence around the Natuna waters in the South China Sea as a preemptive measure to avert instability in the area.”

FirstPost [India] [reported](#) “China will increase military spending by 12.2 percent this year to 808.23 billion yuan, the government said on Wednesday [5 Mar], partly to beef up coastal and air defences and to develop more high-tech weapons.”

WantChinaTimes [Taiwan] [reported](#) “Major General Qiao Liang of the People's Liberation Army Air Force told the news website of Hong Kong-based Phoenix Television on Mar. 4 that China's defense budget will not exceed 2% of the nation's overall GDP.”

InterAksyon [The Philippines] [reported](#) “The Philippines is to upgrade a navy base facing disputed South China Sea waters to serve the extra ships being acquired to protect its territory, the military said Thursday [6 Mar]. Navy spokesman Lieutenant-Commander Gregory Fabric said the military would build a 500-million-peso (\$11.2 million) port at Ulugan Bay, the Philippine military base nearest to the Spratly Islands.”

Xinhua [China] [reported](#) “China is willing to work with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ([ASEAN](#)) to formulate a code of conduct (COC) for the [South China Sea](#), Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said on Friday [7 Mar]. Qin's comment came ahead of the 10th joint working group meeting between China and ASEAN on the implementation of the declaration on the conduct (DOC) of parties in the South China Sea. The meeting will be held on March 18 in Singapore.”

Solar News [The Philippines] quoted Reuters to [report](#) “Chinese patrols enforcing disputed new fishing rules in the South China Sea are apprehending foreign boats on a weekly basis, Communist Party officials said on Thursday [6 Mar].”

WantChinaTimes [Taiwan] [reported](#) “Constructing ports in the disputed Spratly islands can make rescue operations more feasible in the South China Sea, admiral Yin Zhuo of China's PLA Navy said in response to the ongoing search for the 227 passengers and 12 crew members aboard missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, reports the Beijing-based *China.org*.” [That's a very long bow to draw – Editor]

The Indian Express [reported](#) “The Philippines protested on Tuesday [11 Mar] actions by the Chinese coast guard that prevented delivery of supplies to a small group of Filipino soldiers guarding a shoal in a disputed area in the South China Sea. Manila calls China action in disputed waters an “urgent threat””

And to demonstrate the seriousness of the real issues, just-style.com [reported](#) “Footwear imports [sic] into the South China Sea could become slower and more expensive if local tensions continue to escalate, warns a new report. The Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA) pointed out that, with more than 95% of footwear shipped into the US coming through the South China Sea, continued skirmishes could have “major implications” for speed to market and transit costs.”

Radio Australia [reported](#) “The Philippine navy is reported to have air-dropped food and water to soldiers on a grounded transport ship, after Chinese patrol vessels blocked its supply ships last weekend [8-9 Mar] in the South China sea.”

The US *Navy Times* [reported](#) “The Philippines on Friday [14 Mar] rejected a Chinese demand that it remove a grounded navy ship from a disputed shoal in the South China Sea, saying the vessel is a permanent government outpost.”

abs-cbn.com [The Philippines] [reported](#) “Taiwan hopes to conclude a fishery cooperation agreement with the Philippines next month to better protect the lives of Taiwanese fishermen in disputed areas of the South China Sea, Foreign Minister David Lin said Thursday [20 Mar]. Speaking in a press briefing, Lin said Taipei and Manila have already reached a consensus on cooperation in law enforcement in the disputed waters, which he hopes will be enshrined in the agreement before the fishing season begins next month.” [Quite how much ice that will cut with China is a matter for conjecture – Editor]

Bloomberg *Businessweek* [reported](#) “President Barack Obama sought to encourage Chinese criticism of Russia on Ukraine, while Chinese President Xi Jinping pressed Obama about a reported U.S. breach of the servers of China’s largest phone-equipment maker, as the leaders met today [24 Mar]. During their talks in the Netherlands while attending the Nuclear Security Summit, Obama also raised concerns about China holding up visas for U.S. news organizations and told Xi he wants the U.S., China and other Asian nations to resolve competing claims in the South China Sea to ease tensions there.”

The Washington Times [reported](#) “China is waging political warfare against the United States as part of a strategy to drive the [U.S. military](#) out of Asia and control seas near its coasts, according to a [Pentagon](#)-sponsored study.”

Bloomberg *Businessweek* [reported](#) “President Xi Jinping defended the buildup of China’s armed forces, saying that the nation will never seek “hegemony or expansion” in the Asia-Pacific region even as it steps up its diplomatic and military presence.”

The Fresno Bee [USA] [reported](#) “A Philippine government ship slipped past a Chinese coast guard vessel and brought food and fresh troops to a marooned navy ship used as a base by Filipino troops to bolster the country's territorial claims in the disputed South China Sea. Saturday's [29 Mar] incident was witnessed by journalists who were invited by the Philippines military to accompany the resupply mission.”

Operation Sovereign Borders updates – March

The Minister for Immigration and Border Protection released these updates: [7 Mar](#), [14 Mar](#), [21 Mar](#), [28 Mar](#)

SHIPPING, SHIPBUILDING & PORTS

GBRMPA media response - Abbot Point documents

The Chairman of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) issued a [statement](#) on Abbott Point dredge spoil documents released under FOI, saying “All of the documents released under this FOI are preliminary working drafts which were never submitted to the delegate, the senior manager responsible for GBRMPA’s decision, for consideration. As such they do not represent the views of the agency.”

Rolls-Royce Ocean Drones Challenge Shipping Industry

Valley News [New Hampshire USA] quotes Bloomberg to [report](#) “In an age of aerial drones and driver-less cars, Rolls-Royce Holdings is designing unmanned cargo ships.” [CSIRO was reportedly researching something similar 4-5 years ago – Editor]

Sydney Overseas Passenger Terminal Upgrade

Sydney Ports [announced](#) “[NSW] Roads and Ports Minister Duncan Gay has revealed plans for a major upgrade of Sydney’s Overseas Passenger Terminal (OPT) to meet the demands of the booming cruise industry. The OPT upgrade at Circular Quay will begin in May this year – during the cruise low season – with most of the critical works completed by September.”

ATSB Final Report - Crew member fatality - bulk carrier *Nireas* off Gladstone, QLD, on 20 March 2013

The Australian Transport Safety Authority (ATSB) [issued](#) its final [report](#). On 20 March 2013, an engineer on board the bulk carrier *Nireas* was carrying out the routine task of draining water from the ship’s main air receiver when the air receiver drainage pot observation window exploded. The engineer was fatally injured by flying debris from the observation window. The ATSB investigation found that the drainage pot observation window glass exploded when it was exposed to the air receiver pressure. This pressure accumulated in the drainage pot because the water being drained restricted the flow into and through the pot outlet line. During the course of the investigation, it was brought to the attention of the ATSB that similar designs of drainage systems had been, and continued to be, fitted in ships by various shipyards around the world.

The ATSB later [announced](#) “Owners of certain ships are being warned of a dangerous drainage system modification that contributed to the death of an engineer.”

Ship Finance: Traditional and Modern Methods in an Era of Change

The Maritime Executive published this informative blog [article](#) by John Nikolaou. Its key point seems to be: “Today, institutional investors such as private equity and hedge funds have emerged and play a key role in the shipping industry. From 2010 to 2013 nearly \$15.6 billion in private equity funds were invested, while \$5 billion of shipping loans changed hands during the latest year.” [That’s for the ships themselves; the article does not really address the effects of hedge funds investing in and manipulating (by such operational devices as slow steaming) the spot prices of bulk commodities carried in some types of ships – Editor]

Ocean Signal appoints All Sat Communications in Australia

mysailing.com.au [reported](#) “The manufacturer's [sic] who claim the world's smallest personal locator beacon, UK-based Ocean Signal, have announced the appointment of All Sat Communications as its new distributor in Australia. The Melbourne-based company specialising in satellite communications, will have exclusive responsibility for marketing and supplying Ocean Signal's rescueME PLB1 to the outdoor, marine, aviation and industry-based markets.”

Ocean Tanker Group Fined \$1.2 Million After Liquid Freight Carrier Discharges Pollutants off USA

The Handy Shipping Guide [reported](#) “Singapore based bulk liquid freight carrier [Odfjell Asia II Pte](#), a subsidiary of the Norwegian based Odfjell Group, plus one of the company's senior crew members, have pleaded guilty in federal court in Hartford, Connecticut, for violating the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships ([APPS](#)) on charges related to the illegal discharge of waste oil and oil-contaminated waste water.”

Applications open - Australasian Hydrographic Society Education Award 2014

The Australasian Hydrographic Society (AHS) 2014 award is now open to students studying, or proposing to study, within a broad range of maritime disciplines including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Hydrography - Nautical Charting - Surveying at Sea
- Coastal Studies - Coastal Zone Management
- Offshore Resource Surveys and Management
- Port Development and Maritime Engineering
- Law of the Sea
- Marine Cartography
- Environmental Studies
- Marine Geology and Geophysics

The award is for the amount of **AUD\$3500.00**, and is provided at the beginning of each year, during January to March. For details, click [here](#).

Increased throughput at Port Hedland

The Port Hedland Port Authority [announced](#) “The latest statistics from the Port Hedland Port Authority (PHPA) show a 39% increase in throughput for the month of February, compared to the previous year. The PHPA recorded a total throughput of 28.4 million tonnes (Mt) for February 2014, compared to 20.4 Mt in February 2013. The PHPA's Utah Point Multi-User Bulk Export facility recorded a total monthly throughput of 1.3 Mt, a 69% increase from the previous year. Financial year-to-date figures show total throughput at 230.7 Mt, a 29% increase on the previous year.”

ANAO Report - Air Warfare Destroyer Program

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) [released](#) this [report](#), saying “The objective of the audit was to report on the progress of the current phase of the Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) Program, which is known as SEA 4000 Phase 3–Build. This phase commenced in June 2007, and covers the finalisation of the detailed design, the signing of the Alliance and Platform System Design contracts, and the construction and delivery of the ships by the Industry Participants to the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO).” [If a project starts after a gap of several years since the previous major shipbuilding project, and if the production run is for only three ships, and if the work is to be spread across several shipbuilders in different States, and if the foreign ship designer is not part of the project team, one *might* expect far worse outcomes than are reported here - Editor]

Baltic Exchange Capesize Index 2014 trial clarification

Further to its announcement in December about the trial of the new index, the Baltic Exchange [said](#) “The Baltic Exchange has clarified that the short-term suspension of the Baltic Capesize Index 2014 (BCI_2014) has no impact on the trial of its new suite of timecharter routes or the Capesize 2014 timecharter average. The routes, based on a 180,000dwt vessel, continue to be reported on a trial basis. However, the trial calculation of BCI 2014 has been observed to produce an unsatisfactory result. The calculation of the trial BCI 2014 itself has therefore been suspended whilst a new mathematical formula is applied. This does not affect the reporting of the current BCI, its component parts or the timecharter average.”

Pakistan's ports asked to boost coal handling capacity

In a story with obvious implications for coal *exporting* nations, *Carbon Positive* [Pakistan] [reported](#) “Minister for Ports and Shipping Kamran Michael said that work is going on at fast track to increase coal handling capacity of all the ports to meet the expected surge in its demand from upcoming power plants across the country.” [This relates to chronic problems with Pakistan's electricity generating industry – Editor]

Sri Lanka to acquire Pakistani shipping services

Business Recorder [Pakistan] [reported](#) “Sri Lanka is to sign an agreement with Pakistan, next month, to acquire the country's national shipping line's services for its all seaborne trade, said Ports and Shipping Minister, Kamran Michael. "Sri Lankan government has formally approached the government to sign an agreement for acquiring Pakistan's shipping services for its seaborne trade," he said at an informal meeting with newsmen on Thursday night [6 Mar] at his resident [sic].”

Third consecutive annual increase in Suez Canal tolls

InterManager [reported](#) “The Round Table of international shipping associations has protested against the third consecutive annual increases in Suez Canal tolls, saying carriers are “dismayed” by steep hikes with a short notice period. Having raised tolls by 3% in 2012 and 5% in 2013, the Suez Canal Authority announced in early February that transit fees would be increased by more than 4% for vessels larger than 20,000 dwt in the dry bulk and energy sectors from May.”

Two new books on Cockatoo Island’s shipyard story

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust [announced](#) the publication of two new books about Cockatoo Island’s unique role in Australia’s maritime history. Written by John Jeremy, CEO of the Cockatoo Island Dockyard from 1981-1991, and generously illustrated with hundreds of rarely-seen archival photos and plans, these books tell the definitive story of Cockatoo Island’s legacy as Australia’s leading dockyard and shipbuilding site for over 130 years.

Port Hedland advanced ship navigation and maritime simulation facility training

Port Hedland Port Authority [announced](#) “a partnership with international maritime research and engineering consultancy HR Wallingford, who operates an advanced ship navigation and maritime simulation facility in Fremantle, to provide ongoing support and training for the PHPA’s marine operations team.”

Hi-tech patrol vessel boosts safety in Port Philip Bay

Port of Melbourne Corporation [says](#) it “has strengthened its water patrol capability as part of the ‘Steer Clear’ boating safety campaign with the deployment of its new hi-tech vessel MV Lonsdale, officially launched by Minister for Ports David Hodgett today [10 Mar].”

Anglo American pull out of the Abbot Point coal terminal

The Australian Greens [said](#) “Anglo American’s decision, to join BHP, Rio Tinto and Lend Lease in pulling out of the Abbot Point coal terminal, is further evidence the project is economically unviable as well as environmentally disastrous.”

New National Plan ensures effective response to maritime emergencies

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) [announced](#) “Australian industry, state and federal governments have endorsed a new National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies. The plan sets out the cooperative arrangements between governments and industry to respond to maritime pollution and shipping casualty incidents.”

Productivity Commission releases draft report on Public Infrastructure

The Productivity Commission [released](#) its Draft Report, inviting further public submissions. [Volume 1](#) contains the Overview, Draft recommendations, findings and information requests, and Chapters 1 to 7. [Volume 2](#) contains Chapters 8 to 14 and appendices. It said “The overriding message of this draft report is the need for a comprehensive overhaul of processes in the assessment and development of public infrastructure projects. There are numerous examples of poor value for money arising from inadequate project selection. Without reform, more spending will simply increase the cost to users, taxpayers, the community generally, and the provision of wasteful infrastructure.”

How Will Ocean Bulk Freight and Container Shipping be Powered in Future?

The *HandyShippingGuide* [reported](#) “Whilst many in the shipping industry chatter excitedly about hybrid and LNG technology a new report on marine fuels, published by two bodies which together pack in a wealth of knowledge on the subject, now takes a more considered view of how the bulk cargo, container shipping and tanker freight trade will be powered in the future. Research undertaken by [Lloyd’s Register](#) and University College London’s [Energy Institute](#) explores in great depth the drivers for the future energy mix in shipping in 2030. This week’s report, [Global Marine Fuel Trends 2030](#), looks at the fuel demand for a sector which accounts for approximately 70% of the global shipping industry’s energy requirement.”

House of Reps Committee Inquiry into Infrastructure Planning and Procurement

The Reps Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications [announced](#) “On Tuesday 4 March 2014 the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, The Hon Warren Truss MP, asked the Committee to inquire into and report on Infrastructure Planning and Procurement. The Committee invites interested persons and organisations to make submissions addressing the terms of reference by **Friday 11 April 2014**. Please refer to our brochure called [preparing a submission](#) for more information.” [This parallel inquiry may muddy the waters and obscure the Productivity Commission’s inquiry – Editor]

Device to bridge the digital divide between land and sea mobile behavior

Maritime Communications Partner (MCP) [announced](#) the launch of VAVE, a unique digital business enablement platform for the cruise and ferry industry. The news follows the successful completion of an eight-month technical trial on the Corsica Sardinia vessel Mega Express Five. VAVE (Value Added Voyage Experience) has been conceived to bridge the digital divide between land and sea mobile behavior. By utilizing a vessel’s GSM signal and Wi-Fi network it creates a ship-wide ‘onboard cloud’ that all mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops etc.) fall under. Users can then access a range of services – such as free messaging (if desired) over Wi-Fi, or onboard retail/booking systems – while shipowners can target individual handsets with personalized messages.

Piracy incidents in the Malacca Straits

InterManager [reported](#) “Three separate incidents since the beginning of March this year in the Straits of Malacca are probably the work of the same group of robbers, according to a report from Singapore-based piracy and robbery information group Recaap.”

Maritime Powers Regulation 2014

The Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “prescribes Commonwealth laws in respect of which enforcement and monitoring powers could be exercised by maritime officers, a range of international agreements and decisions, which enable the exercise of maritime powers by a maritime officer if the authorising officer suspects, on reasonable grounds, that the agreement or decision applies to a particular vessel, installation or aircraft, Commonwealth laws that could be enforced by maritime officers in Australia’s contiguous zone to investigate or prevent a contravention of a customs or immigration law occurring in Australia, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of a vessel, installation or aircraft, after boarding the vessel, installation or aircraft; and, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of the land.” [The laws are prescribed at Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the regulation and, in addition to migration, customs and maritime transport Acts and agreements, include fishing and environmental laws – Editor]

Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014

Associated with the *Marine Powers Regulation 2014*, the Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “amends the *Customs Regulations 1926* to prescribe the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* for the purposes of new subsection 228(2) of the *Customs Act 1901* (the Act) and the *Maritime Powers Act 2013* for the purposes of new subsection 228(3) of the Act. The Regulation also removes references in the *Customs Regulations 1926* to provisions in the Act which will be repealed by the *Maritime Powers (Consequential Amendments) Act 2013*.”

Extension of Time for Independent Review into Gladstone bund wall

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, [announced](#) “Following a request from the independent panel, I have agreed to extend the timeframe to conduct the review of the bund wall at the Port of Gladstone. The independent panel's co-chairs, Anthea Tinney and Dr Andrew Johnson, have advised that the volume of material to be reviewed and the range of background work required is such that another month is required to finalise the task.” and “I expect the independent panel to provide me with a final report at the end of April.”

Southern Indian Ocean search for Malaysian Airlines Flt MH370

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) [released](#) a series of updates on the search it was coordinating in the southern Indian Ocean for the missing Malaysian Airlines Flight MH370.

Senate Committee report: Infrastructure Australia Amendment Bill 2013

The Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport tabled its [report](#) into this bill, which changes the governance structure of Infrastructure Australia, and recommended that the Bill be passed in its current form.

Danish Bunker Fuel Specialist to expand in Australia

The *Handy Shipping Guide* [reported](#) “Despite all the talk of new fuels suitable to power the world’s ocean bulk freight and container shipping fleets traditional heavy oil is likely to remain the staple diet of most marine vessels for the foreseeable future and [OW Bunker](#), founded and headquartered in Denmark continues to expand its global operations with recent developments in the US and Australia.”

USN Littoral Combat Ship replacement task force named

In a story with implications for both current and prospective Australian shipbuilders and consortia, the US *Navy Times* [reported](#) “The effort to re-evaluate the Navy’s small surface combatant program is underway under the direction of a new Small Surface Combatant Task Force (SSCTF). As directed Feb. 24 by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, the task force will examine the littoral combat ship (LCS) and compare it with other designs, all with a goal to buy “a capable and lethal small surface combatant generally consistent with the capabilities of a frigate.””

Shagang Shipping arrests HNA Group vessel in Australia

Just to remind readers who may be unfamiliar with the long arm and “internationality” of maritime and admiralty law, [Navigate Response](#) has issued a statement on behalf of Shagang Shipping “Hong Kong company Shagang Shipping has successfully obtained an order for the arrest of the HNA Group controlled vessel *MV Bulk Peace* from the Western Australia District Registry. The move is part of a long-running legal campaign seeking USD 66.4m from HNA Group, which has failed to honour its guarantee and comply with its contractual obligations surrounding the 2008 hire of the vessel *MV Dong-A Astrea*.” and “A High Court hearing in London is scheduled for 9 February 2015.”

A 31 March statement went on to announce “Hong Kong company Shagang Shipping has successfully obtained an order (28 March 2014) for the arrest of the HNA Group controlled 1999 built, 163,346 GT crude oil tanker M/V ‘GC Guangzhou’ at the Port of Gwangyang (Yeocheon) in South Korea.” [The long arm of the Law, indeed - Editor]

ATSB Report - Fall from the pilot ladder - chemical tanker *Golden Concord*, Goods Island, Torres Strait

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) [released](#) its report into this July 2013 incident. It found “The ATSB identified that a number of risk controls designed to limit the likelihood of an error resulting in an accident had been compromised. These included: the

use of a deck party on board the ship to assure the safety of the ladder and manropes, clear and standardised communication protocols between the pilot and the pilot launch crew and the provision of information to pilot launch crews to assist in recognising the correct pilot ladder arrangements for each pilot.”

Trends: Infrastructure and Transport to 2030

The Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Mr Truss, [released](#) this [publication](#). The Department said “Australia's infrastructure and transport outlook has been mapped with the release today [19 Mar] of *Trends: Infrastructure and Transport to 2030*. The report outlines the challenges and opportunities faced by the infrastructure and transport sector now and into the future.” [But doesn't seem to address shipping or ports – Editor]

New confidential ATSB reporting web page

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) [announced](#) “A new web page featuring de-identified confidential reports on aviation, maritime and rail safety concerns is now available on the ATSB website. The ATSB's confidential reporting scheme, REPCON, allows people with safety concerns to report them confidentially to the ATSB without fear of being identified. These confidential reports often contain valuable information that can help industry address unsafe procedures, practices or conditions.”

Establishment of a National Infrastructure Committee of Federal Cabinet

The Prime Minister, Mr Abbott, [announced](#) “To ensure the highest level of oversight and accountability, I will Chair a National Infrastructure Committee of Federal Cabinet. Members will include the Deputy Prime Minister, the Treasurer, the Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and the relevant departmental Secretaries. It will provide recommendations to Cabinet on infrastructure projects and policy. Importantly, the Committee will be charged with driving and assessing the progress of major projects and will act as the direct line of accountability for Commonwealth infrastructure delivery.” [It will be interesting to see whether Ministers have the personal stamina and longevity necessary to initiate and then complete major infrastructure projects – Editor]

LNG sector now offering golden hellos to LNG seafarers to come ashore

Faststream Recruitment Group [said](#) “The LNG sector is for the first time offering inducements to experienced LNG seafaring officers to come ashore and manage their ships according to international recruitment agency Faststream. The move comes as the shipping industry seeks personnel to man and manage its growing fleet of LNG carriers, whilst facing stiff competition for staff from the growing floating LNG production sector. Speaking at the Gastech Exhibition in Korea, Faststream managing director Mark Charman said that 127 new LNG vessels were currently under order each needing officers, ratings and experienced shore-based technical superintendents. These 127 vessels will need an estimated 2000 officers to serve on them.”

Applications sought for two International Marina Scholarships for 2014

The Global Marina Institute (GMI) [said](#) two international scholarships are available this year to attend Advanced Marina Management (AMM) courses in Australia and the UK. The recipient of the British Marine Federation (BMF) MarineTek International Scholarship will travel to Australia to participate in the Marina Industries Association (MIA) AMM course in Sydney 14 – 19 September. The recipient of the MIA Bellingham International Scholarship will travel to the UK to participate in the AMM course 26 – 31 October on the South Coast of England. Application forms for the scholarship are available on the GMI website www.globalmarinainstitute.net

Gladstone Port safety to be improved with world class technology

The Toowoomba *Chronicle* [reported](#) “Safety will be improved at Gladstone, Bundaberg and Alma ports with the introduction of world-class technology to track shipping movements. The state-of-the-art vessel traffic service will assist in monitoring ships to safely transit the Port of Gladstone and surrounding waters as the Curtis Island LNG facilities go live over the coming months.”

Quarantine Legislation Amendment (2014 Measures No. 1) Proclamation 2014

The Governor-General made this [proclamation](#), which “removes the Readers' Guides from each proclamation to reflect current legislative drafting practice, aligns the names of ports listed in Quarantine Proclamation, the Christmas Island Proclamation and the Cocos Islands Proclamation with the names of ports appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) under subsection 15(1) of the Customs Act 1901 (Customs Act), removes prescriptive requirements in the Quarantine Proclamation for the import of cats and dogs from New Zealand, and updates the species of seeds in Schedule 5 to the Quarantine Proclamation that may be imported into mainland Australia without a permit.”

Senate inquiry into Great Barrier Reef

On 25 March 2014, the Senate [referred](#) “The adequacy of the Australian and Queensland Governments' efforts to stop the rapid decline of the Great Barrier Reef.” to the Environment and Communications References Committee for inquiry and report. Submissions should be received by **2 June 2014**. The reporting date is **25 June 2014**.

ACCC not to oppose MIRRAT proposed lease to operate automotive terminal at Port of Melbourne

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) [announced](#) “that it will not oppose the proposed acquisition by Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal (MIRRAT) of a long-term lease to operate the Webb Dock West automotive terminal at the Port of Melbourne and currently under the control of the Port of Melbourne Corporation, after accepting a court-enforceable undertaking. The undertaking seeks to address the ACCC's competition concerns should MIRRAT be successful in its bid to redevelop the automotive terminal at Webb Dock West, and operate the terminal on an open access basis until 30 June 2040”

Beware spurious oil fraud claims

The International Chamber of Commerce's International Maritime Bureau [said](#) "There are fears that shipowners are facing new dangers from criminal gangs making spurious oil fraud claims. The 'victims'/fraudsters try to extort money from owners by bringing action against them for failing to deliver cargoes of oil they allegedly own. Such scams were previously confined to West Africa but now appear to have spread to other countries, as a case reported recently to the ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) shows."

Senate report - Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Submarine Cable Protection) Bill 2013

The Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee tabled its [report](#) into the provisions of this bill, recommending that the bill be passed.

Melbourne – the most productive port in Australia

The Port of Melbourne [claimed](#) "The Port of Melbourne has retained its position as the nation's most productive port according to key indicators published by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) and reported by Lloyds List Australia. The Port of Melbourne set the benchmark for container lifts for every hour ships spend at berth averaging 48.1 lifts per hour compared to Sydney on 40.5 lifts per hour. Similarly, average container lifts per ship visit in 2012-13 was 1418.6 in Melbourne, well ahead of Sydney on 1330.8. While nearly a quarter of ships visiting Port Botany waited at anchorage for more than 2 hours, Melbourne's rate of only 5.6% of vessels waiting at anchor was the best in the country."

Concerns with IMO Ballast Water Convention Can Be Addressed by IMO MEPC Resolution, Suggests ICS

The International Chamber of Shipping [said](#) "In advance of next week's [31 Mar – 4 Apr] meeting of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has [suggested](#) a number of steps by which IMO Member States might address implementation problems associated with the Ballast Water Management Convention, which has yet to enter into force."

Release of national environmental standards for One-Stop Shop reforms

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, [announced](#) "Today [28 Mar] the Government is releasing the accreditation standards for environmental approvals. The [release](#) of the *Standards for Accreditation of Environmental Approvals under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is an important step in progressing the One-Stop Shop policy reform." and "The One-Stop Shop policy will create a single environmental approval process that satisfies both state and Commonwealth requirements."

Strait of Bab el-Mandeb Provides Latest Target for Pirates

The *Handy Shipping Guide* [reported](#) "With pirate attack statistics at [their lowest levels](#) for six years, a fact attributed to the steep decline in incidents reported off Somalia, a worrying trend has started to emerge, this time in the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb, a key chokepoint in international shipping which connects the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and which is now witnessing an upsurge of reports of possible pirate activity."

AMSA holds grave concerns held for fishing vessel near Antarctica

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) [said](#) "The civil jet and Royal Australian Air Force P3 Orion tasked by AMSA to locate the source of an emergency distress beacon signal have not been able to locate the vessel associated with the beacon. Grave concerns are held for the crew. Early on Sunday 30 March, AMSA detected the emergency beacon signal in the Southern Indian Ocean near Antarctica around 3,241 km southwest of Perth and 648 km north of the Antarctic mainland in the Australian Search and Rescue Region. It is understood the beacon is registered to a 75-metre Tanzanian-flagged fishing support vessel."

ATSB preliminary report - Unintentional release of the freefall lifeboat from the bulk carrier *Aquarosa*

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) preliminary [report](#) found "The ATSB's initial analysis of the incident indicates that the lifeboat release mechanism was not fully and correctly reset after it was last exercised and that the hook was released when the engineer topped up the release system hydraulic oil reservoir and manually operated the pump to pressurise the system. Initial analysis also indicates that the two simulation wires, which were designed to hold the lifeboat when the hook was released during a simulated release, failed at a load significantly below their rated safe working load."

World Shipping Outlook – March

As a reference point for many of the following reports on the world shipping outlook, here is the [Baltic Dry Index](#).

The *Maritime Executive* [reported](#) "According to global legal practice Norton Rose Fulbright's fifth "The Way Ahead" Transport Survey the shipping sector is anticipating a recovery. Two-thirds (66 per cent) of respondents from the global shipping sector expect freights to rise, and almost half (45 per cent) expect the allocation of available funds to investment rather than operating costs to increase."

The *Market Realist* [reported](#) "Crude tankers, used to haul crude (unrefined) oil across water, lagged dry bulk shippers in the first two quarters of 2013. But as we approached the latter half of 2013, some cyclical indicators were showing signs that maybe tankers and shipping rates would bottom out."

Reuters [reported](#) "Deliveries of new gas tankers have created a glut that is threatening to tip some operators into losses, just as other shipping markets emerge from their worst downturn in decades."

The Port of Los Angeles reported “February overall [volumes](#) decreased 8.9 percent compared to February 2013. The decrease is due in part to the Chinese New Year, which closed many factories in Asia for two to three weeks in February. Last year, the holiday had a negative impact on March container volumes.”

The *New Straits Times* [reported](#) “Malaysia's shipping industry is in urgent need of financial help to maintain capacity, expand fleet, service loans and meet overhead expenses amid the drop in cargo volumes.”

UN, US & EU Sanctions on Iranian shipping – March developments

The Daily Star [Lebanon] reported “Unknown assailants in a speedboat shot at a merchant vessel as it sailed through the [Strait of Hormuz](#) between [Iran](#) and [Oman](#) on Sunday [30 Mar], the [NATO Shipping Centre](#) (NSC) said.”

FISHERIES

Funding to further support our sustainable fisheries

The Minister for Agriculture, Mr Joyce, and his Parliamentary Secretary, Senator Colbeck, [announced](#) “The Australian Government today reaffirmed its commitment to further develop our sustainable fishing sector, delivering on a 2013 election promise to recognise OceanWatch as natural resource management (NRM) organisation. OceanWatch Australia Ltd has been granted \$439,836 as part of the National Landcare Programme to continue promoting best-practice harvesting practices and help increase long term returns to Australian fishers, including work to enhance fish habitats and improve water quality in estuaries and coastal marine environments.” [It is hard to believe that \$439,836 is a significant amount to address the problems - Editor]

Draft Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Plan Amendments

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority [announced](#) “AFMA intends to determine amendments to the [Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Plan 2002](#) to reduce the season opening notification period from 28 days to 7 days. Subsection 27(4) of the Management Plan requires AFMA to give a notice to quota statutory fishing right holders at least 28 days before the start of the season. This amendment will reduce that notification period to 7 days. In accordance with section 17(2) of the [Fisheries Management Act 1991](#), AFMA invites those interested to provide written submissions on the draft amendments to the Plan by **5pm on 5 April 2014**.”

Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Total Allowable Catch (Quota Species) Determination 2014

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority made this [Determination](#), which “determines the total allowable catch for quota species in the fishery for the 2014 fishing year commencing on 1 May 2014 and concluding on 30 April 2015.”

Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery Overcatch and Undercatch Determination 2014

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority made this [Determination](#), which “determines the amounts and percentages for each quota species in relation to undercatch and overcatch for the fishing season commencing on 1 February 2014 and concluding on 31 January 2015.”

Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Total Allowable Catch (Non-Quota Species) Determination 2014

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority made this [Determination](#), which “determines the total allowable catch for two non quota species in the fishery for the 2014 fishing year commencing on 1 May 2014 and concluding on 30 April 2015.”

Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Overcatch and Undercatch Determination 2014

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority made this [Determination](#), which “determines the amounts and percentages for each quota species in the fishery in relation to overcatch and undercatch for the 2014 fishing year.”

AFMA GoFish improvements

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority [announced](#) it has made some significant changes to GoFish. Registered GoFish users can now: renew permits online; set up recurring leases; and change passwords online. Registering a lease is now easier with the requirement for the lessee to complete leasing forms removed. All of these changes will be in place by the end of March 2014.

Deal on Mackerel in the North-East Atlantic

In a development with possible implications for other international fisheries, the European Commission [said](#) “The European Commission welcomes the five-year arrangement for mackerel in the North-East Atlantic, which was reached in London on 12 March between the EU, Faroe Islands and Norway. The arrangement, which makes room for another Coastal State to join at a later stage, establishes a number of important principles, including a commitment to sustainable fisheries, a sharing between the Parties, and a commitment to establish a new long-term management plan in 2014 following ICES advice.

Fishing Overcapacity: EU says it's time to move forward at global level

In a speech, the EC Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries [said](#) “We need to put the problem of excessive fishing power back on the map, back on the international agenda. We need a renewed political will. And we should agree on the way forward. We should

discuss, benchmark, create alliances. These are all necessary steps towards any political solution. They are the prelude to proper, reasoned action. And it is high time we start.”

Maritime Powers Regulation 2014

The Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “prescribes Commonwealth laws in respect of which enforcement and monitoring powers could be exercised by maritime officers, a range of international agreements and decisions, which enable the exercise of maritime powers by a maritime officer if the authorising officer suspects, on reasonable grounds, that the agreement or decision applies to a particular vessel, installation or aircraft, Commonwealth laws that could be enforced by maritime officers in Australia’s contiguous zone to investigate or prevent a contravention of a customs or immigration law occurring in Australia, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of a vessel, installation or aircraft, after boarding the vessel, installation or aircraft; and, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of the land, after entering onto the land.” [The laws are prescribed at Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the regulation and, in addition to migration, customs and maritime transport Acts and agreements, include fishing and environmental laws – Editor]

Customs Amendment (Maritime Powers Consequential Amendments) Regulation 2014

Associated with the *Marine Powers Regulation 2014*, the Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “amends the *Customs Regulations 1926* to prescribe the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*, the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* for the purposes of new subsection 228(2) of the *Customs Act 1901* (the Act) and the *Maritime Powers Act 2013* for the purposes of new subsection 228(3) of the Act. The Regulation also removes references in the *Customs Regulations 1926* to provisions in the Act which will be repealed by the *Maritime Powers (Consequential Amendments) Act 2013*.”

Proposed changes to the Upper-Slope Dogfish Management Strategy for the power handline method

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) [announced](#) “Following recent scientific advice which suggests a high survival rate for Harrison’s Dogfish when caught by power handline, AFMA is proposing the following amendments to the current power handline management arrangements:

- removing the 100% monitoring provisions (the normal 10% observer coverage requirements will still apply)
- removing the three dogfish trigger limit (a higher trigger limit may still apply) and associated move on provisions in some of the closures implemented under the strategy.

AFMA is interested in your comments on this proposal. The proposed amendments will be sent to the Department of Environment for their assessment and approval. Email your comments to Ryan.Keightley@afma.gov.au”

EU takes concrete action against illegal fishing

The European Commission [announced](#) “Following a Commission proposal, the Council of Ministers has today decided to list Belize, Cambodia and Guinea-Conakry as countries acting insufficiently against illegal fishing. After several warnings, measures will now come into effect against the three countries to tackle the commercial benefits stemming from illegal fishing. This means that imports into the EU of any fisheries products caught by vessels from these countries will now be banned, whilst EU vessels will not be allowed to fish in these countries’ waters. It is the first time that measures of this type are adopted at EU level.”

Renee Vajtauer appointed as new Executive Officer for Commonwealth Fisheries Association

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) [noted](#) that “Renee has recently been appointed as the Executive Officer for the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA). CFA is the peak body representing the collective rights, responsibilities and interests of a diverse commercial fishing industry in Commonwealth regulated fisheries. The CFA was formed in April 2002 as a non-profit organisation.”

RESOURCE EXPLORATION & DEVELOPMENT

GBRMPA media response - Abbot Point documents

The Chairman of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) issued a [statement](#) on Abbott Point dredge spoil documents released under FOI, saying “All of the documents released under this FOI are preliminary working drafts which were never submitted to the delegate, the senior manager responsible for GBRMPA’s decision, for consideration. As such they do not represent the views of the agency.”

Productivity Commission releases Mineral and Energy Resource Exploration Report

The Productivity Commission [announced](#) “This [report](#) was released on 5 March 2014 and provides a description of resource exploration, the role of governments and examines the exploration licencing process. It summarises the regulatory approvals that explorers are required to obtain in order to undertake mineral and energy resource exploration, specifically in relation to land access, Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage, environment and public geoscience information. It also assesses non-financial barriers relating to workforce issues — labour skills, workplace relations and workplace health and safety.”

Senate Inquiry into Environmental Offsets

On 5 March, the Senate [referred](#) “the history, appropriateness and effectiveness of the use of environmental offsets in federal environmental approvals in Australia” to the Environment and Communications References Committee for inquiry and report. Submissions should be received by **4 April 2014**. The reporting date is **16 June 2014**.

Pakistan's ports asked to boost coal handling capacity

In a story with obvious implications for coal *exporting* nations, *Carbon Positive* [Pakistan] [reported](#) “Minister for Ports and Shipping Kamran Michael said that work is going on at fast track to increase coal handling capacity of all the ports to meet the expected surge in its demand from upcoming power plants across the country.” [This relates to chronic problems with Pakistan's electricity generating industry – Editor]

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Streamlining Offshore Petroleum Environmental Approvals

The Departments of [Industry](#) and [Environment](#) released a [Regulation Impact Statement](#) on the measures taken to streamline the duplication of the regulation of petroleum and greenhouse gas activities in Commonwealth waters that were likely to impact on matters of national environmental significance - as defined in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) – that are were subject to regulation under both the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006 (OPGGGS Act) and the EPBC Act. [See also NOPSEMA's [position](#).]

Senate Inquiry - Australia’s future activities and responsibilities in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic waters

The Senate Standing Committee Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee [announced](#) “On 24 March 2014, the Senate referred the [sic] Australia’s future activities and responsibilities in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic waters to the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee for inquiry and report. Submissions closing date has not yet been set. The reporting date is **15 May 2014**.”

Senate inquiry into Great Barrier Reef

On 25 March 2014, the Senate [referred](#) “The adequacy of the Australian and Queensland Governments' efforts to stop the rapid decline of the Great Barrier Reef.” to the Environment and Communications References Committee for inquiry and report. Submissions should be received by **2 June 2014**. The reporting date is **25 June 2014**.

Migration Amendment (Offshore Resources Activity) Repeal Bill 2014

The Minister for Immigration and Border Protection introduced this [bill](#) into Parliament. It repeals the Act, which would have required non-citizens working in the offshore resources industry to hold a valid visa, regardless of whether they are actually working on a resource installation or not.

The Senate then referred the bill to its Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee for [inquiry](#) and report. The closing date for submissions is **28 April 2014**. The reporting date is **6 June 2014**.

Release of national environmental standards for One-Stop Shop reforms

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, [announced](#) “Today [28 Mar] the Government is releasing the accreditation standards for environmental approvals. The [release](#) of the *Standards for Accreditation of Environmental Approvals under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is an important step in progressing the One-Stop Shop policy reform.” and “The One-Stop Shop policy will create a single environmental approval process that satisfies both state and Commonwealth requirements.”

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State of the Climate 2014: A clear picture of Australia’s climate

The CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology [released](#) a definitive [report](#) on observed changes in long term trends in Australia’s climate. Bureau Chief Executive Dr Rob Vertessy said temperatures across Australia were, on average, almost 1°C warmer than they were a century ago, with most of the warming having occurred since 1950.

Ocean's Biggest Current Carries More Water Than Thought

Yahoo News South Africa [reported](#) “The world's biggest wind-driven ocean current carries 20 percent more water than previously thought, scientists announced this week. A team of oceanographers reported the results of four years of continuously monitoring the Antarctic Circumpolar Current on Monday (Feb. 24) at the 2014 Ocean Sciences Meeting of the American Geophysical Union in Honolulu.”

Monitoring of Southern Ocean whaling continues

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, [said](#) “On 2 March 2014 the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) undertook another monitoring flight over the Southern Ocean. The flight left Hobart on Sunday morning and landed in Melbourne that evening. The flight observed vessels from both the Japanese whaling fleet and the Sea Shepherd protest fleet. No whaling activities, nor any evidence of recent activity, were observed during this monitoring mission.”

Productivity Commission releases Mineral and Energy Resource Exploration Report

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WA Shark Mitigation to undergo full assessment

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, [announced](#) “The Federal Government will require the West Australian Government to undertake a full environmental assessment of Western Australia's Shark Mitigation Strategy. In response to a request from the West Australian Government to extend the current operation, I have reiterated that the scheme requires a full assessment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The current operations can continue until April 30.”

WA Greens MLC Lynn MacLaren “[expressed](#) concern and disappointment at today’s [5 Mar] [WA] Supreme Court decision to keep the drum lines in the water, with a requested injunction for the hooks to be taken out for proper judicial review denied.”

Ocean Tanker Group Fined \$1.2 Million After Liquid Freight Carrier Discharges Pollutants off USA

The Handy Shipping Guide [reported](#) “Singapore based bulk liquid freight carrier [Odfjell Asia II Pte](#), a subsidiary of the Norwegian based Odfjell Group, plus one of the company’s senior crew members, have pleaded guilty in federal court in Hartford, Connecticut, for violating the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships ([APPS](#)) on charges related to the illegal discharge of waste oil and oil-contaminated waste water.”

Funding to further support our sustainable fisheries

The Minister for Agriculture, Mr Joyce, and his Parliamentary Secretary, Senator Colbeck, [announced](#) “The Australian Government today reaffirmed its commitment to further develop our sustainable fishing sector, delivering on a 2013 election promise to recognise OceanWatch as natural resource management (NRM) organisation. OceanWatch Australia Ltd has been granted \$439,836 as part of the National Landcare Programme to continue promoting best-practice harvesting practices and help increase long term returns to Australian fishers, including work to enhance fish habitats and improve water quality in estuaries and coastal marine environments.” [It is hard to believe that \$439,836 is a significant amount to address the problems - Editor]

Applications open - Australasian Hydrographic Society Education Award 2014

The Australasian Hydrographic Society (AHS) 2014 award is now open to students studying, or proposing to study, within a broad range of maritime disciplines including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Hydrography - Nautical Charting - Surveying at Sea
- Coastal Studies - Coastal Zone Management
- Offshore Resource Surveys and Management
- Port Development and Maritime Engineering

- Law of the Sea
- Marine Cartography
- Environmental Studies
- Marine Geology and Geophysics

The award is for the amount of **AUD\$3500.00**, and is provided at the beginning of each year, during January to March. For details, click [here](#).

El Nino ocean warming “watch” issued

The Vancouver Sun [reported](#) “U.S. federal forecasters predict a warming of the central Pacific Ocean this year that will change weather worldwide. The warming, called an El Nino, can mean an even hotter year coming up and billions of dollars in losses for food crops. Australia and South Africa should be dry while parts of South America become dry and parts become wet in an El Nino. Peru suffers the most, getting floods and poorer fishing.” and “The National Oceanic Atmospheric and Administration issued an official El Nino watch Thursday [6 Mar].” [Note: it is just a “watch” at this stage – Editor]

Ocean Depths Feel Impact of Global Warming

Environmental Protection Online [reported](#) “Using data and measurements from studies conducted over a 60-year span, the [McGill] researchers [found](#) that the reduction of salt in the ocean’s surface prevents water from effectively mixing to cool the overall temperature of the ocean. The researchers also studied several [climate models](#) which predict a rise in precipitation in the Southern Ocean as atmospheric carbon dioxide level increase.”

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Anglo American pull out of the Abbot Point coal terminal

The Australian Greens [said](#) “Anglo American’s decision, to join BHP, Rio Tinto and Lend Lease in pulling out of the Abbot Point coal terminal, is further evidence the project is economically unviable as well as environmentally disastrous.”

New National Plan ensures effective response to maritime emergencies

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) [announced](#) “Australian industry, state and federal governments have endorsed a new National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies. The plan sets out the cooperative arrangements between governments and industry to respond to maritime pollution and shipping casualty incidents.”

Maritime Powers Regulation 2014

The Governor-General made this [regulation](#), which “prescribes Commonwealth laws in respect of which enforcement and monitoring powers could be exercised by maritime officers, a range of international agreements and decisions, which enable the exercise of maritime powers by a maritime officer if the authorising officer suspects, on reasonable grounds, that the agreement or decision applies to a particular vessel, installation or aircraft, Commonwealth laws that could be enforced by maritime officers in Australia’s contiguous zone to investigate or prevent a contravention of a customs or immigration law occurring in Australia, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of a vessel, installation or aircraft, after boarding the vessel, installation or aircraft; and, additional types of maritime officers in uniform who would be exempt from the usual requirement to produce identification, when requested by the person in charge of the land, after entering onto the land.” [The laws are prescribed at Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the regulation and, in addition to migration, customs and maritime transport Acts and agreements, include fishing and environmental laws – Editor]

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Extension of Time for Independent Review into Gladstone bund wall

The Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, [announced](#) “Following a request from the independent panel, I have agreed to extend the timeframe to conduct the review of the bund wall at the Port of Gladstone. The independent panel’s co-chairs, Anthea Tinney and Dr Andrew Johnson, have advised that the volume of material to be reviewed and the range of background work required is such that another month is required to finalise the task.” and “I expect the independent panel to provide me with a final report at the end of April.”

Streamlining Offshore Petroleum Environmental Approvals

The Departments of [Industry](#) and [Environment](#) released a [Regulation Impact Statement](#) on the measures taken to streamline the duplication of the regulation of petroleum and greenhouse gas activities in Commonwealth waters that were likely to impact on matters of

national environmental significance - as defined in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) – that are were subject to regulation under both the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006 (OPGGGS Act) and the EPBC Act. [See also NOPSEMA's [position](#).]

Deep ocean current may slow due to climate change

Eureka Science News [reported](#) “Far beneath the surface of the ocean, deep currents act as conveyer belts, channeling heat, carbon, oxygen and nutrients around the globe. A new study by the University of Pennsylvania's Irina Marinov and Raffaele Bernardello and colleagues from McGill University has found that recent climate change may be acting to slow down one of these conveyer belts, with potentially serious consequences for the future of the planet's climate.”

New Zealand and Australia to work together on “Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction”

The New Zealand Conservation Minister Dr Nick Smith and Australian Environment Minister Greg Hunt [announced](#) that New Zealand and Australia will work together on proposals to develop a new international agreement for improving conservation and management of the marine environment beyond countries' national jurisdiction. United Nations discussions on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction are due to be held in New York next month.

Senate Inquiry - Australia's future activities and responsibilities in the Southern Ocean and Antarctic waters

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Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Heard Island and McDonald Islands) Proclamation 2014

The Governor-General made this [proclamation](#), which “amends the boundary of the Heard Island and McDonald Islands Marine Reserve, and repeals an adjoining Conservation Zone.”

Nominations called for Prime Minister's Prizes for Science

The Department of Industry [called](#) for nominations for the Prime Minister's Prizes for Science. Nominations for the initial stage close 5.00 pm, 29 May 2014, Canberra local time.

Concerns with IMO Ballast Water Convention Can Be Addressed by IMO MEPC Resolution, Suggests ICS

The International Chamber of Shipping [said](#) “In advance of next week's [31 Mar – 4 Apr] meeting of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has [suggested](#) a number of steps by which IMO Member States might address implementation problems associated with the Ballast Water Management Convention, which has yet to enter into force.”

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Public consultation on Australia's Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity

The Department of the Environment is undertaking public [consultation](#) on Australia's fifth national report to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Information provided by Parties in the national reports will also be used for a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to assess progress made in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Australia's fifth national report covers a period from January 2009 to December 2013 and is in line with the agreed reporting guidelines of the Convention. Input to the [draft report](#) has come from a range of sources from across government as well as from publically available reports, publications and websites. The period of consultation **closes at 5pm AEST Friday 18 April 2014**.

IPCC Fifth Assessment Report on Climate Change released

The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report - *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* - was [released](#). It attempts to provide “a clear view of the current state of scientific knowledge relevant to climate change” and addresses such matters as the effects on the Great Barrier Reef, extreme weather events and rising sea levels.

International Court of Justice finds for Australia against Japanese whaling research program

The International Court of Justice [found](#) for Australia, and decided that Japan's whaling research program, JARPA II, is not a program for purposes of scientific research within the meaning of Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, and Japan is required to revoke any extant authorization, permit or licence to kill, take or treat whales in relation to JARPA II and refrain from granting any further permits in pursuance of that programme.

AMSA 2014 CONFERENCE

INVESTIGATING OUR MARINE NATION

- Marine Habitat Mapping • The Land - Sea Boundary
- Marine Management and Policy • Marine Global Change
- Marine Outreach and Communication • Remote sensing and bio-optics



Dates to Note (Closing time is 11:59pm AEST)

On Registration
 1 September 2013
 30 November 2013
 21 January 2014
 21 January 2014
 14 March 2014
 14 April 2014
 21 April 2014
 30 April 2014
 9 June 2014

6 July 2014

7 - 10 July 2014

Abstract Submission, Registration & Conference Dates

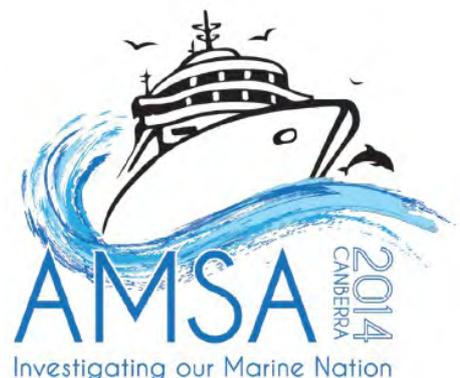
Book your accommodation. Don't miss out!
 Call for Symposia OPENS
 Call for Symposia CLOSED
 Abstract Submission OPENS
 Registration for the Conference OPENS.
 Abstract Submission CLOSES
 Authors notified of acceptance of abstracts
 CLOSE of Earlybird Registration prices
 Presenter registration CLOSES
 CLOSE of Standard Registration prices.
 No refunds for cancellations after this date, but a substitute person can be nominated.
 Exhibition Stand setup from 2pm
 Registration and Poster Hanging at National Convention Centre from 2pm - 4pm
 Welcome Function - War Memorial 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
 AMSA2013 Conference Sessions and Social Events

Iconic Function Venues

Australian War Memorial
 (Welcome Function)

Old Parliament House
 (Conference Dinner)

Conference Venue
 National Convention Centre - Canberra



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you have comment to make on an article in a previous *Digest*, or if you wish to comment on a maritime issue that you think *should* be addressed, please e-mail news@aama.asn.au with "Letter to the Editor" in the subject field. Please keep your "letter" to 100-150 words and include hyperlinks to any supporting documentation.

SOMETHING TO SAY?**The Australian Maritime Digest**

(ISSN 2201-7003)

Why not advertise in the *Australian Maritime Digest*, particularly if your advertisement is relevant to a current story? Your advertisement would reach right into the heart of the maritime community – those who would be most interested in your organisation, its events and its products. Advertising is accepted at the discretion of the Editor and rates are based on \$330 for a quarter page.

Contact the Editor, Richard Griffiths: news@aama.asn.au

CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

7-11 April 2014 – XXII International Maritime Pilots' Association Congress – Panama

For details: click [here](#)

9-10 April 2014 - 6th Offshore Support Vessels Summit – Aberdeen, UK

The event will include case study examples of the European OSV ship owners, ship operators and oil and gas majors, which will enable you to get an objective overview of the current industry challenges, caused by the rapid increase in deep sea exploration and production activities, pressure in sourcing experience crew, the new standards of the OSV performance and legislation requirements and recent developments within the oil and gas sector. For details, click [here](#)

9-10 April 2014 - Developing Specialist Wind Vessels Summit 2014 – Aberdeen, UK

Co-located with the Offshore Support Vessels Summit (above), this conference will assess the current demand for specialised vessels to install and service wind farms, examine retrofit and new build design and discuss operational technique within this specialised area. For details, click [here](#)

22-24 April 2014 - Strategic Offshore Asset Life Extension – Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Life extension of offshore structures is increasingly being needed as many of the existing assets have exceeded or are approaching their design life. A robust Structural Integrity Management (SIM) is crucially important to help make a case to extend life of an asset. For details, e-mail Stella Wong - stella@yf-asia.com.

23-24 April 2014 - Structural Life Extension for Offshore Installation and Marine Vessels – Abu Dhabi, UAE

This seminar will cover the most important elements of offshore and marine vessel structural life extension programmes. For more details, click [here](#)

1-4 May 2014 – Australian Maritime Museums Conference – Queenscliff, VIC

The 2014 conference theme is Looking Outward. In this, we aim to discuss what we can learn when we think outside our traditions and look to other industries, other professions and other views of the world. For details, click [here](#)

6 May 2014 - Marina management software seminar – Sydney

Marina Industries Association has brought together the three main marina software providers for a morning seminar to present their software packages and answer questions from participants. For details, click [here](#).

21-22 May 2014 - QLD Marina Study Tour – Brisbane and the Gold Coast

The Marina Industries Association (MIA) is pleased to offer a three day marina study tour visiting a great variety of boatyards in Brisbane and the Gold Coast in Queensland with a visit to the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show. For details, click [here](#)

7-11 June 2014 – World Aquaculture Conference – Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide

Australia is hosting World Aquaculture for the first time since 1999. This annual event will incorporate the biennial Australasian Aquaculture conference and trade show. Call for papers by 1 November 2013. For details, click [here](#)

7-11 July 2014 - Australian Marine Sciences Association Conference – Canberra

The conference theme is *Investigating our Marine Nation* with sub-themes of: Marine Habitat Mapping, The Land - Sea Boundary, Marine Management and Policy, Marine Global Change, and Marine Outreach and Communication

29-30 July 2014 - Defence and Industry Conference - Adelaide

The conference will bring together Defence officials and representatives of Defence Industry from across the country and around the world. To maximise affordability of the conference, a trade show will not be held in conjunction with the D+I Conference in 2014. For press release, click [here](#)

17-18 September 2014 - 10th Ballast Water Management Summit – Singapore

The 2014 event will provide you with real case studies of how shipowners have gone through the process of selection and integration of ballast water systems. For details, click [here](#)

13-14 October 2014 – Intermanager AGM 2014 to run alongside ship management conference – Singapore

The AGM will be held on Monday October 13 followed by an evening reception for all participants. Then on Tuesday October 14 members will have the chance to attend the International Ship Owning and Ship Management Summit for a discounted rate. For initial details, click [here](#)

16-18 October 2014 - 3rd Annual World Congress of Ocean & Investment and Trade Fair-2014 – Dalian, China

To be held in the Dalian International Conference Center with the theme of “Blue Economy, Smart Development” For details, click [here](#)

29-30 October 2014 - 11th Ballast Water Management Summit – Hamburg

[ACI's 11th Ballast Water Management Summit](#) will focus on helping the shipping industry understand the state of play with the compulsory introduction of expensive and complex Ballast Water Management Systems on Vessels.

27-31 October 2014 – Euronaval – Paris Le Bourget, France

Euronaval claims to be the world’s leading trade show for naval defence and maritime security and safety. For details, click [here](#).

3-5 May 2015 – Marine15 recreational marine business and safety conference – Gold Coast

The conference program will again be structured with the three streams of boating business, boating safety and marinas. Press [statement](#)

2-4 February 2016 – 2016 Pacific International Maritime Exposition – Sydney Exhibition Centre, Glebe Island

The commercial maritime and naval defence showcase for the Asia Pacific. For details, click [here](#)

**There is no charge for entries under
“CONFERENCES & SEMINARS”
Email details to news@aama.asn.au**

