



## AUSMEPA MEDIA RELEASE

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PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (AUSMEPA)

For further information please contact Michael Julian  
Executive Director

02 62542559

0417 657 951

mjulian@bigpond.net.au

### **AUSMEPA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF PROVIDING FREE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO SCHOOLS AND SEAFARERS – 13 July 2010**

At a dinner at Rydges, South Bank in Brisbane on Tuesday 13 July, 70 members and sponsors celebrated AUSMEPA's 10th anniversary.

The guest speaker for the evening was Dr Rachel Baird, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Law at the University of Southern Queensland who spoke about a range of legal issues related to the protection of the marine environment and the prevention of pollution of the seas and oceans.

Dr. Baird highlighted the legal aspects of pollution incidents in Australia such as the Pacific Adventurer oil spill off Moreton Island in March 2009, this case is currently before the Supreme Court in Queensland. She also drew attention to the environmental catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico and the financial difficulties being experienced by the thousands of people in the region; calling for the urgent need to introduce an international compensation fund for pollution damage caused by oil and gas exploration and production, similar to the one in existence for oil pollution damage caused by oil tankers, the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund, known as the IOPC Fund.

Dr. Baird also suggested that governments needed to quickly address the lack of adequate international regulations covering the offshore petroleum exploration, development and production operations.

Neil Baird, AUSMEPA's Chairman, when introducing the guest speaker talked about AUSMEPA's mission to bring awareness to the Australian community about the consequences of allowing land sourced rubbish and other pollution reaching our seas, he said "almost 85 % of pollution in the sea is land sourced and does not come from shipping"

Neil Baird went on to thank those responsible for taking the initiative of setting up AUSMEPA back in 1999/2000, those he mentioned were the Hon. Peter Morris former

Federal Minister for Transport, Captain John Watkinson, Captain Steve Pelecanos, Captain Michael Alexander, AUSMEPA chairman from 2000 to 2007 and Greg McGarvie the first Executive Director. All of these were at the celebration dinner.

Neil Baird also paid tribute to Captain Dimitris Mitsatsos, Director General of the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association (HELMPEPA) whose guidance in the early stages of setting up AUSMEPA was crucial to its success.

Michael Julian, who has been the AUSMEPA Executive Director since 2002, spoke about AUSMEPA's achievements in developing FREE web based marine environment educational resources for school students available at [www.ausmepa.org.au](http://www.ausmepa.org.au) and also the joint publication with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) of a DVD, 'Welcome to Australia protecting our marine environment' which is placed on every ship when it first arrives in Australia. The DVD provides guidance to seafarers on what they must do or not do to ensure Australia's pristine marine environment is not harmed by shipping operations.

Michael Julian said he was very appreciative of the strong support shown by the 21 companies who provide sponsorship funding to AUSMEPA as well as the valuable grants received from the Federal Government's "Caring for Our Country" natural resource management (NRM) program and from Maritime Safety Queensland for the development of a boating safety and environment reader for use in all schools in Torres Strait. He said these two readers will be launched on 8<sup>th</sup> August on Thursday Island.

While talking about AUSMEPA's Ship Membership scheme, Michael said 'we like to recognise and reward quality shipping trading to Australian ports, a priority for AUSMEPA is to highlight those that do the right thing'.

Michael Julian also said "to be approved as a ship member, each ship must have a good safety and environmental record and meet AUSMEPA's strict criteria which is to not have had a port State control (PSC) detention in the previous two years.

He said the night of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary was a very memorable one as 13 vessels from three companies were being accepted into AUSMEPA's ship membership scheme.

Michael Julian, when presenting AUSMEPA flags and ship certificates to Mr. David Oliver, Maersk Australia, said he was very pleased to welcome the first container fleet to the AUSMEPA ship member ship scheme. The ships, operated by Maersk were; ***Grasmere Maersk, Maersk Gairloch, Maersk Garonne, Safmarine Makutu and Safmarine Mulanje.***

Next to be presented with AUSMEPA flags and ship certificates was Mr. Ben Burns, General Manager Svitzer Australia Pty. Ltd. for 6 tugs which are part of Australia's emergency towing arrangements and as such fulfill a first line of defence in preventing pollution by ships that may have suffered either an engine breakdown or a grounding.

The tugs owned and operated by Svitzer Australia Pty. Ltd. were ***Austral Salvor, Wonga, Wambiri, Keena, Tarpan and Wickham.***

Michael Julian said “It is very pleasing to see Maersk and Svitzer, both member companies of the major A. P Moller –Maersk Group, being recognised for their quality and commitment to the marine environment.

Andrew Douglas, Marine Superintendent of ASP Ship Management was the next to receive AUSMEPA flags and certificates for the ***M.V. Portland and the M.V. Lindsey Clark***

Michael Julian concluded his talk by paying tribute to AMSA’s two Chairmen Captain Michael Alexander and Neil Baird for their inspiring leadership and support.

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