Comment from the Chairperson

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the industry for their excellent contribution to the Seacare Authority OHS Conference 2004. The level and quality of participation was particularly pleasing and helped make the event an outstanding success. I would also like to thank those employers and rehabilitation providers who nominated for Awards, as well as those who supported the Awards and Conference with sponsorship. We could not stage the events without this support.

I also wish to congratulate the Award winners and highly commended nominations. All of you are ambassadors for improved safety in the maritime industry. The Seacare Authority plans further such conferences and looks forward to the continued participation of the industry.

I am confident that the success of these events can now carry forward as we implement the Maritime Industry OHS Strategy and the Seacare Leaders Program.

Geoff Gronow ED
Chairperson

Seacare Authority Sea Safe-Work Awards 2004

The winners of the Sea Safe-Work Awards 2004 were announced at a presentation dinner at Dockside, Darling Harbour in Sydney on 17 November 2004.

The Seacare Authority introduced its Sea Safe-Work Awards in 2003 to recognise and reward the best positive initiatives being taken by employers, shipping operators, seafarers, health and safety committees, health and safety representative trainers, rehabilitation providers and others – all aimed at providing safe workplaces for seafarers and eliminating injury.

Nominations for the 2004 Awards were invited from across the maritime industry between April and August. Following consideration of the nominations by a judging panel of officials representing employers, employees and government, awards in three categories were given:

- **OHS Leadership Award** – in recognition of an employer or operator who demonstrates outstanding leadership through commitment and achievement in minimising workplace injuries and disease;

- **Best Solution to a Major OHS Risk** – for innovation and effectiveness in developing a solution to a major OHS risk or hazard;

- **Best Rehabilitation and Return to Work Program** – recognising the parties involved in an outstanding rehabilitation and return to work program.

Mr Bob Bird, ASP Ship Management accepting the OHS Leadership Award 2004
Importantly, the Seacare Authority has set aside additional time at its next scheduled meeting on 24 February 2005 to review OHS performance in the Seacare scheme and to identify any additional actions that might be necessary to improve OHS performance. The many proposals and ideas which emerged at the OHS Conference will form part of that discussion.

A preliminary analysis of participants’ evaluation of the OHS Conference has shown that generally: there was strong support for the format of the conference, particularly the participatory aspects of the program; there was good content presented aspects of the program; there was good content presented aspects of the program; there was good content presented as aspects of the program; there was good content presented as aspects of the program; and the Conference raised many issues that required further opportunity and time to discuss adequately.

The Seacare Authority gratefully acknowledges the sponsoring of the Sea Safe-Work Awards 2004.

The key issues and proposals considered at the OHS Conference have not yet been fully documented. The intention is that a report on the Conference outcomes be circulated to attendees at the Conference and to Seacare scheme stakeholders. We expect the package to be circulated in February.

Seacare Authority OHS Conference 2004

The Awards Dinner was attended by some 100 guests, among them representatives of maritime industry companies, unions, insurers, rehabilitation providers, legal firms, OHS agencies and other government bodies.

The Awards Dinner was preceded by the Seacare Authority’s OHS Conference, also held on 17 November 2004 at Dockside, Darling Harbour in Sydney. The theme of the Conference was “A Healthy Workforce Means a Safer Workplace” and around 65 delegates participated in hearing a series of distinguished speakers, and in round-table and panel discussions considering future trends and strategies for improving OHS performance in the maritime industry.

The keynote address was delivered by Mr Peter Wilkinson, Project Manager, National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA) Implementation Team. The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Ms Jean Kittson.

The Chairperson and Members of the Seacare Authority congratulate the winners of the Seacare Authority Sea Safe-Work Awards 2004

OHS Leadership Award: Winner – ASP Ship Management Pty Ltd

Highly Commended – Mermaid Marine Australia Ltd

The Seacare Authority gratefully acknowledges
New Seacare Authority website

The Seacare Authority launched its redesigned website (www.seacare.gov.au) on 1 January 2005. The new website contains updated information about the Seacare Authority and the functions it performs under the legislation, and is easier to navigate and find information.

Importantly, it contains a new online Employee and Ship Details (ESD) reporting system and a new Insurance Arrangements reporting system – known as Seacare Online. Seacare staff were assisted by Darian Yeo of Farstad Shipping, Grant Hardie of Teekay Shipping and Camille Ryan of AMICA in the testing of Seacare Online before it went live. Seacare Online is a secure system that can only be accessed by authorised users.

While Seacare has communicated with all ESD contacts to ensure they become authorised users, there may be staff in companies with responsibility for lodging employer insurance details (required within 14 days of taking out new insurance arrangements or renewal of a policy) who have not yet sought authorisation. If you need to lodge your employer’s insurance details with Seacare, email seacare@comcare.gov.au to obtain user access.

The Seacare Authority is indebted to the outstanding work undertaken by the Seacare Online system developers, Glen Morris and Rohan Smith of Comcare, and to the Comcare Webmaster, Rob Armstrong, for redesigning the site.

Summary of Seacare OHS performance 2003-04

• The period of nine years to 30 June 2004 without a work-related fatality is an outstanding achievement.
• However, on current trends, the scheme will not achieve the five year or 10 year injury improvement targets established in 2001-02.
• Relatively more seafarers are being injured or are suffering a work-related illness, though the severity of those injuries/illnesses may be declining.

Key Outcomes of Seacare Authority Meeting 54, 16 November 2004

Summary of Seacare compensation performance 2003-04

• The cost per accepted claim rose from $13,563 in 2002-03 to $16,294 in 2003-04.
• Days lost per seafarer rose from 2.40 in 2002-03 to 3.31 in 2003-04 (although the 2002-03 figure is lower than the two years prior to 2002-03 and there is a downward trend in days lost).
• The average premium rate increased by 24.7% in 2002-03, and despite a stable wages pool over 2001-02 and 2002-03, premium income increased by 38.89% as a result of the increased premium rate.

Summary of Seacare rehabilitation and return to work performance 2003-04

• The RTW rate in the Seacare scheme, based on the Australasian Return to Work Monitor results show that the RTW rate is 86% (comparing favourably to the national average of 87%).
• The duration from receipt of claim to end of compensation, which is regarded as a useful proxy for RTW, shows that in 51% of claims, there has been RTW within one month.
• Only 26% of claimants eligible for an assessment of their capability of undertaking a rehabilitation program are actually assessed, and of those 26% that are assessed, only 90% commence a rehabilitation program. That is, only 10-15% of those who should be undertaking a rehabilitation program actually do so.

New Compensation Claim Form

The Authority approved a new compensation claim form. The new form is currently being printed and will be distributed to employers (for placement in employer offices and on board ships), insurers, union offices, legal firms and to other stakeholders during January and February 2005.

Importantly, the new form is now in two parts – an employee claim form and an employer claim determination form. Both parts must be completed for each claim and both parts must still be forwarded to AMICA. Employers are strongly encouraged to advise their workers’ compensation insurer of all claims received.

Best Solution to a Major OHS Risk:

Winner – Farstad Shipping (Indian Pacific) Pty Ltd
Highly Commended – CSR Shipping Ltd
Highly Commended – Mermaid Marine Australia Ltd

Best Rehabilitation and Return to Work Program:

Winner – MP Safety Management Pty Ltd, CSR Shipping Ltd and Mr Brian Neilson

the sponsors of the Sea Safe-Work Awards 2004
Seacare Authority accredited health and safety representatives (HSR) training

Seacare News (Issue 7) reported that there is only one accredited HSR training course. This is technically incorrect. While the Seacare Authority has not re-accredited the Distance Learning Course sponsored by the Australian Centre for Work Safety (Swan TAFE, WA) or the CSR Shipping In House HSR training course, these courses have not had their accreditation revoked at this point.

The Seacare Authority is to consider revocation of the accreditation of both these courses at its 24 February 2005 meeting.

The Australian Maritime Safety Consultants HSR training course remains accredited. It is currently going through a re-accreditation process.

In the meantime the Seacare Authority has selected a WA based Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to work with the Authority to develop a new HSR training course – one capable of delivery in both face to face and distance learning (flexible delivery) mode. As discussions with the RTO only commenced in December it is too early to predict when this course will be available. The industry will be kept informed on developments.

Update on proposed Manual Handling Regulations and Code

The Seacare Authority has received advice from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) on the process for creating a new regulation and code of practice under the OHS(MI) Act, based on the national manual handling standard [NOHSC:1001(1990)]. Seacare advice, detailing the proposed regulation and code of practice has been forwarded to DEWR. DEWR is considering the Seacare request for a new regulation.

New Seacare Authority Compliance Procedures

The Seacare Authority agreed to revised Compliance Procedures used to guide the Seacare Management Group in ensuring the compliance of employers with s94 insurance arrangements as well as compliance of s20A exemption holders with the obligations (conditions) of the exemption. The procedures now require Seacare to remind employers that their insurance arrangements, as reported to Seacare, are about to expire and that to comply with the Seafarers Act they must notify the Seacare Authority of their new or renewed insurance arrangements. Further steps require SMG to email or telephone the usual contact person on the fifth day after the expiration of the compliance date. Then, after a further five working days, issue a letter to the employer’s CEO/General Manager. Then, if still no response is received, refer the issue to the relevant employer member of the Authority seeking assistance in ensuring compliance. If these steps fail to result in compliance, the SMG will refer the matter to Comcare Legal Services Group for possible referral to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Seacare Notice 06/2004

On 8 December 2004, the Seacare Authority issued Notice 06/2004 updating the maximum level of benefits for weekly incapacity payments after the first 45 weeks. The Notice can be viewed and downloaded from www.seacare.gov.au/news/default.asp

Seacare Contacts

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<td>Mr Noel Swails</td>
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<td>Mr Peter Bremner</td>
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<td>Employer member</td>
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<td>Mr Mick Doleman</td>
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<td>Mr Clive Davidson</td>
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