



CARING FOR SEAFARERS IN THE PORT OF BRISBANE
SINCE 1892

2020 Annual Report

of

THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS BRISBANE INC.

Presented to the Annual General Meeting

On the 13th March 2021.

Celebrating 128 years of the Mission to Seafarers Brisbane



THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS BRISBANE INC.

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WORLD PATRON

Her Majesty The Queen

WORLD PRESIDENT

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

SECRETARY GENERAL

Rev Canon Andrew Wright

PATRON

His Excellency The Governor of Queensland.

THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS BRISBANE INC.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President	Capt. Ross Nicholls
Secretary	Ms Lisa Davis
Treasurer	Mr. Rick Domann
Member	Mr. Rob Clark
Member	Mrs Wendy Firmin
Member	Capt. Kasper Kuiper
Member	Mr. David Beckinsale
Member	Mr Tony Fry
Member	Mr James Condon
Member	Ms Maureen Tottenham (Retired)

HONORARY CHAPLAINS

The Revd. Ian McGilvray
The Revd. Stephen Briggs
(Priest in Charge Anglican Parish of Grovely, RAN Chaplain)
Chaplain Emeritus: The Revd. William Pearson RFD MNSC RANR Ret.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs Marcia Scholes O.A.M
Mr Bruce Balnaves
Capt. David Ellis O.A.M. and Mrs. Marilyn Ellis
Mr. David Thomas

The Mission to Seafarers Brisbane Inc. is an Incorporated Association and Registered Charity in Queensland and registered with the Commonwealth Charities and Not for Profit Commission.

The Mission to Seafarers is financially supported by proceeds from the Seafarers Centre shops, income from investments, donations from parishes, companies and individuals along with community grants and projects supported by industry.

**2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS BRISBANE INC.**

**HELD
AT THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS, 2 SEAFARERS STREET
PORT OF BRISBANE
ON
Saturday 13th MARCH 2021 at 1pm**

AGENDA

1. Introduction and welcome by the Chairman
2. Opening prayer
3. Apologies:
4. Presentation of the President's Report by Capt. Ross Nicholls;
5. Presentation of the Financial Statements and Audit Report for 2020 by Mr Rick Domann
6. The appointment of an Auditor for the next year;
7. The election of office bearers and committee members for the next year;
8. NOTICE OF MOTION –
 - a. "That the incoming committee be given power to pass the minutes of The Annual General Meeting of the 14th March 2020"
9. Any other business of which prior notice has been given.
 - a. Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation
 - b. Recognition of Mrs. Marcia Scholes OAM
10. Closing prayer

The Mission, Vision and Values of The Mission to Seafarers Brisbane Inc.

Our Mission

To provide social and spiritual support for the emotional wellbeing of all seafarers

Our Vision

To be a relevant and proactive provider of services to meet today's seafarers needs.

Our Values

We operate with integrity and commit to being:

- ✓ Respectful
- ✓ Resilient
- ✓ Compassionate
- ✓ Inclusive
- ✓ Faithful

***Our Seafarers Centre is a place of safety, comfort
and a “Home away from Home” for all seafarers
irrespective of Race, Gender, Culture or Faith***

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the President's Report on The Mission to Seafarers Brisbane Inc. for 2020.

It almost goes without saying that the past year has been one that has presented challenges for our Mission and all seafarers centers worldwide. While the cause of the challenges may be unique for our lifetimes, it is not the first time in our 128-year history, one that has spanned several wars and other memorable societal hurdles, including a flu pandemic, that we have been required to adapt our service. What was most challenging in this past year were the restrictions placed on our personal interaction with our seafarers, volunteers and supporters. It has been difficult to reconcile not being able to interact with those we serve which is the primary purpose of our existence. That said, our doors have generally remained open and thankfully for technology, we have remained in contact as best we can. Our Supervisors, Volunteers, Chaplains and Stakeholders remain as committed and dedicated as ever to show the compassion and care for our Seafarers.

In previous years I have highlighted that we need to continuously understand the changing needs of our seafarers and how our service can adapt to meet those needs. A seafarer's general needs have remained simplistic in nature however the enhanced isolation that has befallen the worlds 1.5 million seafarers has taken an enormous physical and emotional toll on them, their ship mates, their families and those seafarers who would normally be waiting to re-join a ship so they can resume being paid. This pressure of not being able to leave their ship for any reason other than maintenance or, if they are lucky, to return home to their family, has been the cause of significant duress and has manifested itself in several ways all culminating in an impact on the seafarer's mental health . During the last quarter of 2020, it was not unusual to hear that seafarers had been onboard their ship for well in excess of 12 months some taking drastic measures in an effort to be repatriated. Our role to provide welfare support has been severely restricted yet the need for this care has dramatically increased.

Out of necessity our services have adapted in several ways to provide a lifeline between the seafarer and our centre. Technology has been the key and has allowed us to maintain that vital contact. Our regular weekly Chaplains video post on Facebook, direct contact with seafarers on Facebook Messenger and an "online" seafarers shop for essential items and some non-essential items has provided those valuable connections. While physical ship visiting has almost halted, frequent unscheduled visits to the bottom of the gangway from one of our ship visitors for the delivery of shop order items or "care packs" still allow us to retain a "socially distanced" physical connection which is vital to the emotional wellbeing of our seafarers and our volunteers.

These challenges have enabled us to bring forward new ideas and concepts while adapting our more traditional services. These restrictions have significantly impacted our financial standing but the prudence of our Committee and the continued support from our key Stakeholders, supporters and followers continues to encourage us and allow us to provide our service in a low cost way. Without their support, whether it be financial or "in kind" our role in a seafarer's life would be further diminished and less effective.

This broad section of supporters from the Anglican community through to local community groups who behind the scenes tirelessly knit, make gifts, gather essentials and deliver these to our

seafarers centre all year round have provided our seafarers with items that make their lives more bearable and provide hope. Contributions have continued to benefit our seafarers through “care packages” that provide forms of entertainment and a distraction to both their daily onboard lives or periods ashore in quarantine accommodation and have allowed us to distribute more Christmas Gift bags this year than any prior year.

In conjunction with these more organic connections our relationships with local Maritime Industry leaders from Port of Brisbane, Maritime Safety Queensland, Brisbane Marine Pilots, Svitzer, AMSA, Viva Energy and Shipping Australia have continued to provide essential support for which we are continually grateful. Maritime Safety Queensland have proactively provided support to seafarer welfare agencies across QLD and have demonstrated their care for the seafarer through the implementation and coordination of a successful seafarer repatriation campaign. This campaign, not without its significant challenges, is a benchmark for national and international ports as to what can be done with the appropriate resolve and care in what has been heralded as a global humanitarian crisis.

The year ahead for us will continue to be a challenge but one we now have a clearer understanding of. The past year has allowed us to focus on developing our systems with improvements in our Governance, Management Systems and strategic planning all of which will underpin a sound structure for our seafarers centre into the future.

Operationally we will continue to utilise technology to improve the efficiency of our Online Store with enhanced access through the development of a fit-for-purpose e-commerce site. This will provide greater flexibility and access for our seafarers. In conjunction with the store development the installation of a standalone “Cloud” storage system has allowed us to start consolidating and archiving our vast history of information along with utilising data sharing technology to free up our information flow. Technology has also strengthened our ties with our network of national seafarer centres which traditionally had been stifled by geography and time zones. It has also created better opportunities for us to connect to a global “online shopping” hub facilitated through Mission to Seafarers HQ in the UK.

2021 will be a year of further refinement and development of our services and hopefully establish a level of business security to allow us to operate into the future. Committee will continue to prudently manage the services and associated finances of our seafarers centre and continue to develop the systems and appropriate succession plans for Committee to underpin our continued operation within the Port of Brisbane.

KEY STATISTICS FOR 2020

The following statistics highlight the activity of the Seafarers centre for the past year.

No. of Ships calling Port of Brisbane	2,150 (2,850 in 2019)
No. of Seafarers visiting the centre	3,240 (15,500 in 2019)
No. of bus trips for Seafarers	3,040 (7,800 in 2019)
No. of Kilometres driven	13,500 (82,000 in 2019)
No. of Supervisors	1 (2 in 2019)
No. of Volunteers	45 (54 in 2019)
Minimum No. of Volunteer Hours	5,940 (8,700 in 2019)
No. of Ship Visits	21 (426 in 2019)
Value of Donations - Goods and "In Kind"	In excess of \$100,000 (\$50,000 in 2019)

KEY EVENTS AND PROJECTS FOR 2020

Each year, the seafarers centre hosts various events and activities that enable us to thank our staff, stakeholders and supporters and hopefully engage with other community organizations and potential volunteers who can assist us in our endeavors. We also engage with our community and industry stakeholders to undertake a range of projects that will ultimately benefit the services we can provide to seafarers.

The key events and projects of 2020 were explicably minimal given the restrictions impacting our industry, but nonetheless it gave our wonderful staff, followers and supporters the opportunity to continue to engage with us as best we could.

Strategic Planning Day

During October our Committee and Supervisors engaged with the services of Board Matters to commence a more formal approach to strategic planning. This is a first step for our centre to seriously consider the future continuity of our services to develop the appropriate systems to underpin the future. We initially considered our purpose and how we are likely to approach this into the future, distilling our Mission, Vision and Values as the initial step. Further collective workshops are to be held during the year ahead to develop a more detailed structure of the how we are to adequately fulfil our objectives through to 2025 and beyond.

Sea Sunday & Regular Services

Sea Sunday, the second Sunday in July, is an international day for the Mission to Seafarers to recognise their Seafarers. This day, in conjunction with the International Day of the Seafarer (last Sunday in June) allows us to widely recognise the Seafarer and promote the efforts of the Mission to Seafarers as a faith-based service.

Given the restrictions surrounding social gatherings, technology was used to “live stream” a Sea Sunday service via Facebook. While the ability to network with those that would normally attend the service was curtailed, the live stream concept allowed us to extend our service beyond our traditional borders, without a Declaration Pass!

We are continuously reminded of how we are blessed to have two wonderful and active Chaplains. Their support for our Seafarers and the work they do shines through continuously. Rev. Ian Mc Gilvray and Rev. Stephen Briggs are actively engaged at the Mission and provide a strong link to the welfare and pastoral care required by seafarers and to their Parish communities.

At the beginning of the year, Rev. Ian McGilvray held regular Sunday Service at the Seafarers Centre and quite excitedly, presided over a wedding between a young Third Officer and his bride which was coordinated on the ships arrival in Brisbane.



Ship Visiting

Our long-term ship visitors of Peter Jones, Rev. Ian Mc Gilvray and Rene Lejeune continue to do a magnificent job and I thank them for their ongoing commitment to the Mission and the seafarers they visit.

2020 has impacted our ability to visit ships at a time when the seafarers need us the most. This is a confronting reality for our caring Ship Visiting team and volunteers. However, while physical shipboard visits are not permitted, other than in an emergency, I am pleased to advise that we have made headway this year on several key fronts. Following last year’s AGM a regular volunteer – Russell Brennan - stepped forward to assist in the coordination of Ship Visiting, allowing us to expand our existing program. Russell is an enthusiastic member of the team being an ex British Merchant Navy seafarer from several years ago. We hope his enthusiasm, passion and skills in this area will enhance our ship visiting into the future when the restrictions on interactions with our seafarers are lifted so we can meet our commitment to increase the number of ships visited in the port.

The apparent value in Ship Visiting can never be understated and this was highly evident when our Chaplain Revd. Stephen Briggs and Ship Visitor Peter Jones were called in to assist seafarers who

had been traumatized by the heavy weather incident on APL England earlier in 2020. In conjunction with traditional Ship Visiting, we have undertaken numerous hospital visits to assist seafarers who have been admitted with medical concerns along with delivery of “care packages” to seafarers isolated in “quarantine hotels” while they travel to/from their ships or awaiting to travel home.



Christmas Bags

We were blessed to have a Committee Member with a broad network in the charity space that was able to connect with many likeminded charities in preparation for Christmas. In what was a unique year, we managed to source and pack nearly 900 Christmas bags for seafarers, eclipsing our previous best of 440 bags. This was a significant achievement for our volunteers, one that was overwhelmingly endorsed by our seafarers who understandably cherish this special time of year to be with family. There are significant benefits for our wonderful team of volunteers who pack and delivering the bags to see the looks on the seafarers faces as they receive their bags.



Capt. Dave Ellis OAM

Our immediate past President and significant contributor to the Mission to Seafarers Brisbane was awarded an OAM during 2020. Given the restrictions on social gathering earlier in the year, a befitting function at the Seafarers Centre was held in October to congratulate David and Marilyn who both richly deserve the recognition for the services to our Mission and the Community.



Each year there are a number of specific projects tabled for consideration, each of them focused on enhancing the level of service we can provide to the seafarer. Our ability to self-fund these projects is often limited and our Grants team continuously review the Community opportunities to seek funding.

During 2020 there were three key projects undertaken and we are extremely grateful for the organisations providing the Grant and undertaking the work.

Australian Mariners Welfare Society – Our existing Bar fridges were limiting our ability to store and display stock and given their age, were also inefficient and ultimately expensive to operate. New fridge front and shelving has allowed us to expand our storage and show case our refrigerated shop and bar items.

Viva Energy – At the commencement of the COVID19 lockdowns and closing of the doors of our Seafarers Centre, a decision was made to create an “Online shop” through our website, allowing the goods traditionally sold in store to be available to seafarers online. The system, while slightly crude, enabled us to commence serving our seafarers and delivering to their vessels, keeping our connections with them alive. Within a short period of time, it was recognised that the system needed to be upgraded to cope with limited internet access ships have. A Viva Energy grant has

enabled us to upgrade our Online Shop using a contemporary e-commerce platform which will ultimately allow us to engage with a greater number of seafarers.

Port of Brisbane – The condition of the Seafarers Centre roof had deteriorated to the extent that there were concerns of potential internal water damage following storms and periods of heavy rain. While the centre was operating at reduced capacity in November it was the ideal time to undertake this significant project. Now with a new roof and guttering we are well placed to withstand future storm and rain events.

OUR PEOPLE & SUCCESSION

Our people - Supervisors, Volunteers and Management Committee - continue to underpin the services we provide, for which we are truly thankful for their unselfishness. Sadly, and not unexpectedly, the limitations on our operations and the potential for transmission of Covid19 has seen many of our volunteers reduce their availability or stop volunteering. A decision that is totally understandable given these circumstances and the potential impact on their personal health given their demographic.

The demand for our services has been curtailed in the past year however we are fully aware that the seafarers need for pastoral care and welfare support is increasing given the circumstances of their enhanced isolation. Our remaining team of volunteers are responding on demand and are looking forward to the day we can return to interacting face to face with our seafarers.

Historically the Mission has devoted a lot of time and resources seeking to refresh our volunteer pool to ensure we can effectively operate the Seafarers Centre. Our Supervisors and members of Committee are regularly engaging with Parishes, Community Groups, and the local maritime industry participants to maintain a regular presence and visibility in the community.

The impact of the past year on our ability to provide adequate succession for the future is notable but we are not the only charitable organisation to feel the effects of this. In the year ahead we will be taking the opportunity to broaden our engagement within the Community and seeking to build our capability again both at Volunteer and Committee level. This will not only strengthen our team to provide the service but to import new skills and experiences needed to facilitate our strategic plan and guide us to achieving our future centre objectives.

The Mission has maintained its community profile by continuing to:

- Engage with Volunteering Redlands and Volunteering Queensland
- Maintain an interesting and informative Website,
- Maintain an interactive social media presence through Facebook Page (now with over 800 followers)
- Distribute a quarterly e-Newsletter (“Brisbane Mission Matters”) emailed to volunteers, supporters and other interested persons and associations.
- Attend fora and presentation opportunities within the Port, parishes, service clubs and interested groups.
- Seek to develop meaningful MOU’s with key organisations.

Financial Matters

Our financial health is of paramount importance in being able to continue to operate in Brisbane. In the past year we have received employee support through the Government's Jobkeeper program and commissioned an "online shop", both of which have been critical in maintaining a source of income.

Our regular operating income streams from our shop, bar sales, phone cards and foreign exchange have been heavily impacted. We had already seen downward trends on these traditional income sources over the years as seafarers get less time ashore with these trends set to continue. Covid19 has driven us to diversify our traditional income streams, monitor costs closely and reduce or cease unnecessary expenditure while continuing to seek "one off" Community Grants.

Our investment fund and donations are critical to the future funding of the Seafarers Centres operations and more so now than ever in the past decade. While they cannot be relied upon as regular means of income our longer term strategies and opportunities are being pursued.

Our financial results for 2020 will show Mission to Seafarers Brisbane has delivered an operating profit for the year, albeit significantly lower than forecast. While this surplus is pleasing and reassuring that we can continue with our work, we must be mindful that without the appropriate distributions from our investment fund, this surplus will be significantly eroded with a potential for an operating loss. Continued prudence in managing our expenditure for the year ahead along with assessing opportunities to improve our sources of income will allow us to maintain and hopefully extend our operations and services to meet the demands of the modern seafarer.

A copy of our financial status at the conclusion of 2020 can be found at the end of the Annual Report.

Mission to Seafarers Brisbane Inc. Points of Contact:

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Email: tfa@mtsbrisbane.org.au

Website: Visit us at www.mtsbrisbane.org.au

Facebook: Like us at MISSION TO SEAFARERS BRISBANE

E-newsletter: Please send your email address to tfa@mtsbrisbane.org.au to be added to the mail-out list for this quarterly newsletter

President – Ross Nicholls – presmtsbrisbane@gmail.com

Treasurer – Rick Domann – treasmtsbrisbane@gmail.com

Secretary – Lisa Davis – secmtsbrisbane@gmail.com

Centre Supervisor – Heather Turner volsupmtsbrisbane@gmail.com

Bank details:

Account: Mission to Seafarers Brisbane Inc

BSB: 704 901

Account Number: 0000 3660

Conclusion

At the Mission to Seafarers Brisbane all our staff, volunteers, supporters and donors from across South East Queensland contribute from their hearts to support seafarers visiting the Port. Each year we are reminded that our Mission continues to be of relevance and the year passed has been a valuable reinforcement of the need for these welfare services worldwide.

We are blessed that our Port continues to innovate, collaborate and enable a growth in trade which only seeks to underpin our role in providing a range of support services to the seafarers manning these ships. While this year has also challenged the Port, given the impact on trade, we will continue to monitor trends in the global shipping industry and adapt to provide the best local welfare and pastoral care services possible.

In closing, we pray that our valuable and vital ministry to seafarers visiting the Port of Brisbane will continue with the kind and heartfelt levels of support that we are currently blessed with.

Capt. Ross Nicholls
President 2020

