

The Society of Master Mariners South Africa

CAPE TOWN BRANCH

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MINUTES OF THE 77TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CAPE TOWN BRANCH OF THE SOCIETY OF MASTER MARINERS SOUTH AFRICA WHICH WAS HELD IN THE MARITIME ROOM AT THE SURVIVAL TRAINING CENTRE OF THE CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, GRANGER BAY CAMPUS AT 17:00 ON TUESDAY 03 APRIL 2018.

1. OPENING

The Master opened the meeting at 1700 with all upstanding for the reading of the Creed. A moment's silence was observed for the passing of Durban member Captain Bob Fletcher.

2. PRESENT

R Whitehead, C Flockhart, B Ingpen, L Crole, I Fishley, C Kingon, A & K Pletschke.

3. APOLOGIES

N Lawson, N Sloane, L Lawson, K Tate, L Merriman, A Nicholas, I Little, D Henwood, Burchell, S Pearson, A Myers.

4. NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice of the meeting had been duly circulated.

5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 76TH AGM

The Minutes of the 76th AGM were tabled and adopted with the exception of one correction, Item 2, add A Nicholas. Proposed by B Ingpen and seconded by R Whitehead.

5.1 Matters arising from previous Minutes

Nil

6. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE CAPE TOWN BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

In the year since our last Branch AGM our committee has met in open session nine times.

The committee would like to thank all members who have attended meetings. Even though we typically have only a very small percentage of our membership attending, these meetings are always informative and offer a great opportunity to catch up with news of members and maritime issues. Our quorum stands at three, but this is usually comfortably exceeded. The current Committee consists of the following;-

Master R. Whitehead

Deputy Master I Fishley, alternate L. Merriman

Secretary C. Flockhart
L Crole, K Burchell, C. Kingon, B. Bunton, L. Merriman
CPUT Rep A.Myers, S. Pearson alternate

Given the similar make-up of the Branch committee and the Executive committee, much of the Society's business is covered at the Branch meetings so as to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

One of the continuing issues that have occupied debate within the monthly meetings has been the future direction of maritime education and training in South Africa. A recent development has been the introduction of a basic SI/S2 SAMSA recognised OOW course at private institution SSTG, and the first bursary recipients have graduated. However obtaining berths is still a major challenge.

The Branch has also kept close to developments at CPUT, DUT, SAMSA, Lawhill, the NSRI, the Cape Town Mission and other maritime organisations.

Through EXCO we have been keeping a close watch on the progress SAMSA is making with issuance of new "Manila" COC's. A previous issue we flagged as a Branch has been possible changes to taxation of seafarers.

Socially we have continued to enjoy joint lunches with the GBOBA in the RCYC and we would like to thank the speakers who have provided the occasional talks at these functions. There has been a gap in the frequency of these events, but after recent discussions we intend to resume, starting in June.

Our annual wreath laying and memorial service for the Merchant Seamen who died during the wars has been reduced in scale as there was a notable decline in attendance numbers. This will be reviewed again later in the year.

In conclusion then, we would once again thank those members who have continued to actively support the Branch and our particular thanks to Sue Whitehead for organising drinks and snacks at meetings and assisting behind the scenes.

7. ADDRESS BY THE SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Thank you for the opportunity to address you once again.

During the course of this year we finalised the design and production of the Society's medal. Members will recall the original motivation for this was our belief that Government did not recognise the achievements of South African mariners involved in the salvage of the Costa Concordia – something the international community lauded and recognised.

Our medal has now been struck and can be awarded as and when opportunity arises. The 2017 National AGM agreed to call the medal "The Society of Master Mariners SA Medal" and defined the criteria for awarding as follows:

Certificated Master Mariner or Deck Officer who, by an exceptional action, has brought the highest honour to our profession by him or her exercising the pinnacle of marine skills acquired as a result of their qualifications and experience.

Awards will be considered by EXCO upon receipt of a written motivation by any member of SOMMSA. The EXCO decision would be by a simple majority.

The future of maritime training in South Africa has become a concern.

Both the CPUT and DUT have stated their intentions to follow a degree route in the future. Recent developments however have cast a cloud over these plans – particularly as they relate to merchant seafarers who want to follow a career at sea.

It may well transpire that Government subsidised marine education may eventually disappear completely leaving private institutions as the sole providers of this education and training.

I am also concerned that political interference and instability in the working of SAMSA at the highest levels will further hamper the early progress we saw when this institution took an active lead in maritime training and education matters.

One of the key roles of the Society is to ensure our Certificates of Competency remain internationally recognised and respected around the world. We must remain vigilant in this regard.

Over the last few years, we have discussed the role of the Executive Committee in light of its member's distribution around South Africa and the use of internet communications to keep committee members in touch. Essentially the Society works increasingly within the Branches – in the case of Cape Town and Richards Bay branches particularly. Exco members and the Cape Town Branch particularly are made up of the same members to a large extent. This reality needs to be recognised and we as a Society need to modernise our organisation both in practice and constitutionally. This is a matter for the National AGM and I would urge Branches and other members of Exco to seriously debate this issue and bring their ideas to the National AGM in August

Once again I would like to thank my committee for their support and assistance during the year as well as our Branch Masters, Port Representatives and those members who take an active role in the work of the Society. I would like to especially thank Sim

8. ELECTION OF BRANCH COMMITTEE

8.1 The Secretary advised no new nominations had been received. I Fishley asked to stand down as Deputy Master. The meeting resolved to vote L Merriman as permanent Deputy Master, and there being no resignations voted in the present Committee en bloc.

8.2 Election of Committee Members:-

Master – R Whitehead

Deputy Master – L Merriman

Secretary – C Flockhart

L Crole, K Burchell, C Kingon, B Bunton.

CPUT rep – A Myers, S Pearson alternate.

9. MEMBERSHIP

9.1 MEMBERSHIP REPORT TO THE CAPE TOWN BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Currently, the Cape Town Branch comprises 160 (175 for prior year) members made up as follows:

- MEMBERS 107 (an increase of 3 members over the prior year)
- MEMBERS (RETIRED) 18 (a decrease of 1 over the prior year)
- ASSOCIATE MEMBERS 23 (no change over the prior year)
- STUDENT MEMBERS 0 (a decrease of 17 over the prior year)
- AFFILIATE MEMBERS 6 (no change over prior year)
- HONORARY MEMBERS 6 (no change over the prior year)

Our Branch's membership makes up 60% of the Society's national membership.

Our Student Members received a membership for 3 years at a small cost to encourage them to join the Society as they move upward in their careers. Most of the 17 Student Members we currently have are now past their 3 year membership and it remains to be seen how many will continue membership as Associate Members this year. They have all been removed from our membership list and have all been given 30 days to advise the Society if they want to upgrade to Associate members.

We are still missing opportunities to attract members by not focussing recruitment efforts at the maritime colleges, SAMSA offices and the port authorities. Essentially, we need a member who has the time and inclination to tackle this project with some enthusiasm.

Cape Town Branch Master

Rob Whitehead

President

- 9.2 Honorary Membership – B Ingpen, M Schooling, J Hare, D Owen, S Whitehead, Rev A Petersen. It was agreed that the membership of those members would be continued. The possibility of appointing other key people in other organisations such as the SA Navy was discussed.

10. REPORTS ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 10.1 Membership of IFSMA – R Whitehead confirmed that he was still a member on behalf of SOMMSA in order to retain a link. He did disseminate their information on the website.
- 10.2 Bursary Fund – C Flockhart reported that the majority of the funds had been transferred to the GBOBA Fund. The Treasurer, R Whitehead, and he would need to attend the bank in order to close the account.
- 10.3 Lawhill – B Ingpen reported that the yacht Homero was now operational.

11. NATIONAL AGM 2018 MATTERS

- 11.1 Confirmation of date and venue – 17th August 2018 at Cape Town, probably at Lawhill.
- 11.2 Branch delegates to National AGM – to be advised
- 11.3 Mandate for Benevolent Fund allocation – to remain at 7%
- 11.4 Branch Mandate for annual subs – presently R475 for Full Member, and had been at this level for two years subject to any budget mandate up to R500.
- 11.5 Taxation of Seafarers (Exco matter) – this had been monitored, current seagoing member, C Kingon, advised that there had been little change in the tax regime, it was therefore decided to drop this matter.

11.6 Branch Items for National AGM – the new draft Shipping Bill was discussed, we had registered as an interested party. There was to be a feedback workshop on 20 April 2018. The Society plans to send representatives to the workshop. C Flockhart would contact Johan Swart to see if he was in the loop.

12. GENERAL

Society medal – R Whitehead requested members to forward any nominations for an award to the National AGM for consideration.

13. CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 1755. The next ordinary meeting would be held on 08 May 2018.

R WHITEHEAD

MASTER

C FLOCKHART

SECRETARY