

The following is an extract from the Report of the Directors for the financial year ending 31 March 2008.

Background

The Society promotes and supports the interests of all UK companies that do business in the maritime industries. The strategic plan articulates the Society's aims and objectives in meeting the members' requirements.

The Board recognises that in perceiving the value of their membership, member companies must sense that they belong to a vibrant and expanding trade association. The Society has capitalised on the synergies of a strong union of individual associations that make up the organisation yet preserved the strength that comes from the diversity of these separate associations; they represent a wide spectrum of the maritime industries and provide the focus for the specific interests of the overall membership of the Society.

These interests are reflected through our five constituent associations, namely, the Association of British Offshore Industries (ABOI), the Association of Marine Scientific Industries (AMSI), the British Marine Equipment Association (BMEA), the British Naval Equipment Association (BNEA) and the Ports and Terminals Group (PTG).

The Society's financial year has been exceptionally active with strong attendance at the organised events which is amplified below.

Achievements:

All our activities are designed to assist member companies achieve growth in a competitive international market place. This is achieved through directly promoting companies, providing a range of export services, being a source of information and advice, assisting with access to government and funding from government schemes and creating the opportunity for important networking.

Our full programme of exhibitions and seminars further our members' interests and we successfully sponsored UK national pavilions or maintained a presence at most of the major maritime trade events in the world calendar. On the exhibition front we have been present at 14 trade shows, namely IMDEX Asia (Singapore), Norshipping (Norway), Transec World Expo (The Netherlands), DSEi (London), Kormarine (South Korea), India Shipping Summit (India), OGTI 2007 (Indonesia), Marintec (China), MEOST 2008 (UAE), Pacific 2008 (Australia), Oceanology International (London), DIMDEX 2008 (Qatar), Geo 2008 (Bahrain) and Asia Pacific Maritime (Singapore).

Outward trade missions were also undertaken to Vietnam and Indonesia, contracted to do so by UK Trade and Investment; and to Turkey, South Korea and China. Inward missions from Jordan and India were also hosted.

Our programme of seminars and conferences are designed to inform our members and the industry at large on latest developments and market opportunities. Although too numerous to mention them all, of particular note were networking events on 'Business Opportunities in the

Offshore Renewable Sector' and 'Technology Implementation and Sources of Funding' both of which attracted members from across the whole of the Society's membership. A packed audience from the UK and French defence industry attended the first suppliers' conference for the UK CVF and French PA2 programmes and two further very successful conferences on the Surface Ship Support project and the DGSS & DGSM programmes in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence were included in the programme.

In November the Society's annual conference took place in Plymouth with the lead sponsorship of South West Regional Development Agency on the subject of *Making the new maritime industries landscape deliver*. Part of the programme allowed delegates to undertake industrial visits to Babcock Devonport and Princess Yachts International. The annual Defence Attachés luncheon was held once again on HMS Wellington and the ever popular members' annual dinner was held at the House of Commons and Christmas lunch in the Wardroom of HMS Belfast. During the year the Board decided to instigate two new awards from the Donald Maxwell Award Fund. One award was for the best final year degree project from a UK resident student undertaking their study on a degree accredited by the Institute of Marine Engineering Science and Technology (IMarEST) which will be awarded at the Society's AGM in October 2008. The other, known as the AMSI Business Person of the Year, was awarded for the first time by Lord Browne of Madingley at Oceanology International in March 2008.

We have maintained close contact with Government during the period assisting with the creation of the new Maritime Industries Leadership Council successor to the Shipbuilding and Marine Industries Forum, where the Society is leading the innovation group, and the Marine Sector Advisory Group of UK Trade and Investment. During the year one of the Society's constituent associations, AMSI was invited to give verbal evidence to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee which was undertaking an inquiry entitled *Investigating the Oceans*. In other areas, the Society, through its association BNEA, as one of the four trade associations which represent the defence industry on the Defence Industries Council, is represented in the Naval Defence Industries Council, chaired by the Minister for Defence Equipment and Support.

In addition to our political contacts the Board and executive staff have regular contact with officials from the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), Ministry of Defence, UK Trade & Investment, Department for Transport, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. We also maintain contact with a number of the regional development agencies and the Society's Chief Executive is a board member of Marine South East.

The Society is a member of two European associations, the European Marine Equipment Council (EMEC) and the Naval Defence Industries Group of ASD (NDIG). The Society has continued to be active in assisting with the R&D group of EMEC called EMECRID to feed into the sector technology platform, Waterborne. The Board is particularly grateful to Rolls-Royce who have led this initiative on behalf of EMEC and also to BMT for providing the chairmanship of one of the technical working groups. To ensure members were kept up to date with developments in the Framework 7 programme of the European Commission a workshop was held in February.

The Councils of each of our constituent associations have met on a regular basis and formulated the strategy for the business areas covering their interest. This direct input by industry is important in ensuring the Society can portray accurately the views of the membership and we acknowledge the commitment of those members willing to give their time by serving on our Councils and committees.

The stature of our web portal www.maritimeindustries.org continues to grow and receives a substantial number of visits per month, the majority of which are to our 'Product Search' pages, a

data base of nearly 1,000 UK companies and 2,000 product categories. This success continues to bring regular requests for the Society and its constituent associations to support a number of external conferences and where we feel this enhances our status within the maritime community we have done so.

Finally, the Society continues to maintain an office in Shanghai China staffed by our resident China manager, Mr Chen Li Ming who continues to assist maritime companies in the Chinese market and provide market intelligence on the business opportunities in this fast expanding country.

The Future:

The lease on the Society's offices ends in September 2008 and the Board has decided that the Society should seek more prestigious accommodation in keeping with its status. On 27 May the board agreed to take a new lease on office accommodation at 28 Threadneedle Street, London EC2 for a new headquarters for the Society. This move will place the Society at the heart of the City of London and close to the large cluster of maritime organisations which reside in the vicinity. The relocation will, in due course, provide commensurate savings in the Society's fixed overheads.

The Government's maritime industrial strategy has continued to be the subject of much discussion with industry and we have ensured our members' voice has been heard in those discussions. However, the current financial restraints placed upon the government will put pressure on the future defence equipment programme and, as a result, place strains on maintaining future industrial capability, notwithstanding the hoped for placement of the aircraft carrier orders with the Society's large group members. The Society therefore sees its long standing strategy of assisting companies develop their business in the international marketplace will be in even greater demand in the coming year.

The steady growth in the Society's membership and demand for places at many of the Society's events and attendance at exhibitions gives the Board the confidence that the Society is delivering the types of services its members want from a strong trade association. The Society continues to be recognised by government ministers in those areas in which members have interest and will continue to work to strengthen our political influence as well as delivering the mission statement of "promoting and supporting the interests of all UK companies that do business in the maritime industries".

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