Hon M. McCormack MP 20th April 2021

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure

Transport and Regional Development

Dear Deputy PM,

**Re: Support for Coastal Tanker proposal**

This letter is to request your support for the Coastal Tanker proposal put forward by the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers and the Australian Maritime Officers Union. I believe the Australian maritime industry needs this proposal to be implemented in the Federal Budget coming up in May.

I have been working in the Australian maritime industry for several years and can honestly say that the Australian flag shipping sector is now smaller than at any time in the last 50 years. Something needs to be done urgently to turn this around. This cannot be deferred for another year.

The AIMPE/AMOU proposal was submitted to the Department of Infrastructure and Transport in 2019 and also to a number of Parliamentary Committees in 2020. The proposal is a tight, focussed proposal for the Federal Government to support 6 Australian flag coastal tankers to distribute fuel products around the Australian coast. The proposal has the specific purpose of improving Australia’s fuel security as well as providing a platform for the training of the young maritime professionals of the future - which Australia surely needs.

Energy Minister Taylor has championed the improvement of Australia’s energy security by implementing a new fuel storage policy for key strategic locations around Australia – but Australia currently lacks a home-grown capability to distribute petroleum fuel products from those key strategic locations to the many other smaller ports around the country. Instead, we are relying on a constantly changing fleet of foreign ships, many under flag of convenience registries, and crewed by foreign crews.

We seek your urgent support for this proposal and the inclusion of funding in the 2021-22 Budget to be handed down in May to implement the plan in three stages over the next three financial years.

Yours faithfully,

AIMPE member no.