

# DRIVING INDUSTRY CHANGE: Collaboration within and across borders



*Years of Operation*

## 2026 AIMS Biennial Conference Speakers List

Fremantle Sailing Club,  
Thursday 7 & Friday 8 May 2026

# Speakers



**Matt  
Kuc**

Director  
Austbrokers  
Countrywide

As an experienced Financial Lines, Technology and Distribution Manager with over 15 years industry experience, and a shareholder of the business, Matt forms a key pillar in devising and driving company strategy at Austbrokers Countrywide Insurance Brokers. Today's session focuses on professional indemnity claims.

Bringing together a deep understanding of translating complex professional risks into insurance solutions, as well as a personal interest in translating emerging AI and Automation technology into business practice, Matt is able to wear a number of hats adding value across a wide number of areas with clients and the broader insurance industry.



**Susan  
Hull**

AGSA Scheme, AIMS and  
Grain Accreditation Advisor  
Australasian Institute of  
Marine Surveyors

Susan started her Maritime career with AMSA in July 2010 in the role of National Training Manager and her role was centred around the development of the first accredited marine surveyor qualifications. In 2011 she was seconded to the Regulatory Affairs and Reform division of AMSA to lead three main projects: (1) further development of marine surveyor qualifications, (2) development of guidelines for marine surveyor accreditation and (3) assist in the reform of seafarer qualifications to meet the requirements of the National Law.

Her work with AMSA resulted in her forming close working relationships with marine surveyors and in late 2012 she was recruited as the Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Institute of Marine Surveyors, a role that she held for 13 years. Today she works in a contractual role with the AIMS primarily focusing on the AGSA Scheme and the accreditation of grain surveyors.

Susan has led the way in the reform of professional standards for marine surveyors and has achieved much for the AIMS including: (1) 2014 Winner of Lloyds List Award for Services to the Maritime Industry, (2) 2018 Winner of Associations Forum - "Turn Around Association", and (3) 2019 Highly Commended – Women in Shipping and Logistics.



**Ray  
Elson**

Director, Grain and Seed  
Exports Program, Plant Export  
Operations Branch  
Department of Agriculture,  
Fisheries and Forestry

Ray is the Director of the Grain and Seed Exports Program in the Plant Exports Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. He is responsible for leading the regulatory and operational framework supporting Australia's exports of grain, seeds, nuts, cotton, forestry products, and processed plant products.

His role includes oversight of the export regulatory system, supervision of Authorized Officers, and ensuring compliance with international plant protection standards and importing country requirements. Ray has also collaborated with the AIMS grain team on the recent review of the AGSA scheme.

# Speakers



**Eric  
McIlwain**

Principal Surveyor  
Hastings Marine and  
Engineering  
Chair  
Australasian Institute of  
Marine Surveyors

Eric is the Managing Director of Hastings Marine and Engineering, a marine surveying and engineering business he established in 2013.

Eric has had a career in the maritime industry spanning more than 35 years with roles as a Chief Engineer, Ship Repair Manager, Technical Superintendent and more recently that of Marine Surveyor.

He is an AMSA accredited surveyor, accredited for initial and periodic surveys for domestic commercial vessels.

Eric also undertakes a range of marine surveying services for his clients from small recreational surveys to large ship and cargo surveys.



**Pia Van  
Wyngaard**

WA State Representative  
Women's International  
Shipping & Trading  
Association  
(WISTA) Australia

Pia joined the CBH Group 12 years ago and has since held several roles which range from FX and Derivatives to Commodity Trading. Six years ago, she moved into Shipping and was appointed Head of Shipping last year.

Her current role entails a focus on sustainability and reducing shipping emissions which is being implemented by a diverse spectrum of initiatives, trials and plans.

Since August last year, Pia has been part of the WISTA Australia Board as Director - Western Australia State Representative. Pia holds a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Business and Economics (MSc) and is also a member of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (MICS).



**Andrew  
Fielding**

Chief Executive Officer  
Boating Industry Association

Andrew is a seasoned marine industry professional with more than 35 years of experience. His extensive expertise spans yacht brokerage, marine retail and wholesale, and stems from being part of a respected marine industry family involved in boat building, shipwright services, and marine sales.

Throughout his career, Andrew has dedicated significant time to volunteering and collaborating with both industry and government through various committees and associations. Currently serving as CEO of the Boating Industry Association (BIA), he has also held key leadership roles, including President of BIA Ltd, Chairman of the Queensland Recreational Boating Council (QRBC), and currently as a board member of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority (GCWA).

Leveraging his strong network across the marine sector, government departments, and marine agencies, Andrew champions a collaborative approach to ensure the continued growth and success of Australia's marine industry.

# Speakers



**Sheryl Swarbrick**

Chief Executive Officer  
Boating Industry Association  
of Western Australia

Sheryl's professional journey began with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in New Zealand, where she developed a strong foundation in business engagement, advocacy, and stakeholder relations. This early experience sparked a long-standing passion for supporting industry development and laid the groundwork for a transition into the marine sector.

Returning to Perth, she continued her career in the marine industry serving as a director of our family business, Swarbrick & Swarbrick Yachts – a respected WA boatbuilding company with over 50 years of history and more than 800 yachts launched. This role provided valuable insight into yacht design, production, and the heritage of Australian craftsmanship. Becoming a member of the Board of the Boating Industry Association of Western Australia (BIAWA) in 2014, President in 2018 and now CEO of BIAWA. Sheryl advocates for the next generation of boating and the growth of a strong, skilled, and sustainable marine Industry.



**Fabian Pasquini, FAICD**

Manager,  
Key Clients and  
Corporate Partners  
Austbrokers  
Countrywide

With a 40+ year insurance career, mainly in executive and leadership roles, Fabian has been exposed to substantial business risks and understands the importance of protecting what is crucial. As a result, he has a passion for getting to know clients and their business, clarifying their risk appetite and creating tailored insurance solutions accordingly.

Fabian has also served on a number of insurance industry committees and Boards including as Chair of the National Insurance Brokers Association (Vic) and currently sits on the Broker Advisory Board for the Australian & New Zealand Institute of Insurance and Finance.

In his role at Austbrokers Countrywide, he also works closely with Associations and key clients to ensure value is created for stakeholders. His previous experience as a Non Executive Director of several small to medium-to-medium enterprises (SME) and family businesses means he understands and relates to the challenges many of our members face.



**Dianna Smith**

Branch Manager  
Domestic Maritime Safety and  
Data, Policy and Regulation  
Australian Maritime Safety  
Authority

Dianna Smith joined the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) in November 2021 and is currently the Branch Manager Domestic Maritime Safety Policy.

She is leading AMSA's delivery of fit for purpose, risk-based, and data-driven regulations and standards for domestic commercial vessels operating in Australian waters.

Di is an experienced leader in strategic policy development, legislative reform, stakeholder engagement and project management. She has led policy and regulatory reform across multiple Commonwealth agencies.

# Speakers

Prior to joining AMSA, Di worked on national security policy, particularly in the context of people smuggling and transport security.

Di has held senior leadership positions in the Department of Home Affairs, Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Australian Customs and Border Protection Service and the Australian National Audit Office.



**Samantha  
Rowe MLC**

Parliamentary  
Secretary  
to the Deputy Premier,  
Treasurer, Minister for  
Transport, Sport and  
Recreation

## Parliamentary Service

Elected to the Thirty-ninth Parliament on 9 March 2013, for the term commencing 22 May. Re-elected 2017, 2021 and 2025 for the terms commencing 22 May.

## Ministerial Appointments

- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Training: 17 March 2017 - 19 March 2021.
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services: from 19 March 2021 - 21 December 2021.
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Culture and the Arts; Sports and Recreation; International Education; Heritage: 21 December 2021 - 19 March 2025.
- Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Transport; Sport and Recreation: 19 March 2025 - present.



**Jodie  
Ransom**

Chief Executive Officer  
Fremantle Ports

Ms Ransom joined Fremantle Ports in May 2023 from Svitzer Australia, where she was General Manager, West (covering operations in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Papua New Guinea).

Jodie's career over the previous three decades commenced as a seafarer with BHP Transport before progressing into management, operational, commercial and supply chain roles, including with MUR Shipping Australia, CBH Group and Alcoa.

As a leader in her field, Ms Ransom has a strong reputation, including as a previous member of the Freight and Logistics Council of Western Australia and former Board member for the Kimberley Port Authority.

Jodie holds formal qualifications in leadership and the marine industry. Jodie was Acting CEO from 8 April 2024 to June 30, 2024, and appointed substantively to the position, effective 1 July 2024.

# Speakers



**Mark  
Potter**

Manager  
Occupations & Third-Party  
Oversight  
Maritime New Zealand

Working for Maritime New Zealand in Wellington, Mark leads the Occupations & Third-Party Oversight team. “Bringing together many of the support services with our emerging performance oversight work creates a synergy that can really help third-party regulators to do a great job” say Mark. “Surveyors are skilled and dedicated people, building better systems to support them is very satisfying work, with no shortage of opportunities that will help minimise harm in the maritime sector.”

Mark spent his early career working in the Falkland Islands as an observer on a variety of large commercial fishing vessels, then in Wales as an ecologist. Moving to New Zealand in 2010, Mark managed a new legislation project for the Ministry of Fisheries focussed on the allocation of coastal marine space to facilitate growth in the aquaculture industry. Later, designing new services to support exporters at the Ministry for Primary Industries, and managing technical teams setting food safety standards and improving regulatory systems. Mark will share progress on Maritime New Zealand’s recent work and its future plans for improving how it is working with marine surveyors.



**Maximiliano  
Lavin**

Operations Manager  
Leeuwin Ocean Adventure  
Foundation

Max is the Operations Manager at Leeuwin Ocean Adventure Foundation. He began his maritime career working as a deckhand and commercial diver, gaining practical experience in vessel operations, maintenance, and managing risk in operational environments. This background continues to shape a grounded, practical approach to vessel management and decision-making.

In his current role, Max is responsible for the operational, technical, and regulatory management of STS Leeuwin II, including safety management systems, maintenance planning, and major project delivery. Since 2023, his scope of work has included navigating voluntary administration, a major allision in 2024, and the insurance and survey processes that followed, ultimately enabling the vessel to enter dry dock for the most significant refit in her 40-year history. His role involves coordinating the interface between surveyors, insurers, shipyards, and regulators within the constraints of a complex traditional sailing vessel operating in a modern compliance environment.



**Amanda  
Bradfield**

With almost three decades in international freight and logistics, Amanda brings deep industry knowledge, strong leadership, and a track record of building trusted relationships.

Her focus is on delivering practical solutions, supporting clients through complex global challenges, and keeping the supply chain front of mind

# Speakers

Amanda is passionate about connecting people, sharing insights, and helping others understand the real impact of trade and logistics.

On LinkedIn, she shares industry updates, frontline stories, and the occasional vessel photo, because every shipment has a story.



**Kalyan  
Das**

ISM-ISPS & Service Supplier  
Auditor, Marine Surveyor,  
MLC Inspector at RINA

Currently working as an IACS class society surveyor and auditor (RINA), he brings hands-on experience from years spent as a senior engineer aboard ocean-going Ships.

He is deeply committed to giving back to the maritime industry by demystifying the complexities of regulation. To that end, he authored the 'Ship Classification & Statutory Concepts Handbook,' a practical guide designed to bridge the gap between high-level classification society and Statutory regulations and day-to-day vessel operations.

He also regularly shares his insights through his LinkedIn community and as a member contributor to Shipshape, the official magazine of the Australian Institute of Marine Surveyors.

His long-term vision is to become a business coach and consultant - someone who empowers entrepreneurs to build resilient, thoughtful, and thriving businesses in a world that is constantly changing.



**Wade  
Nagel**

Director and Principal  
Marine Surveyor  
Adapt Marine

Director  
Australasian Institute of  
Marine Surveyors

Wade is the director of Adapt Marine, a marine surveying and consulting company established in 2022. Wade prides himself on integrity, ensuring a reliable, trusted and sustainable service to his clients.

With over 15 years industry experience working in various positions in the maritime industry both on vessels and ashore, Wade is experienced in vessel management, ship repair, new build supervision, compliance, asset management and HSEQ; is an AMSA accredited marine surveyor, AIMS Director (CCMS) and remains active in marine engineering.

Passionate about improving quality assurance practises in the marine industry, Wade is a certified ISO lead auditor 9001, 14001, 45001, ISM/ISPS, certified asset management assessor ISO 55001, holding qualifications as graduate diploma in asset management, diploma in marine engineering and diploma in marine surveying.

# Speakers



**Dr Eric  
Perez**

Chief Executive Officer  
Australasian Institute of  
Marine Surveyors

Eric is the Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Institute of Marine Surveyors. He graduated with a Bachelor of Behavioural Science and Bachelor of Commerce from Griffith University. Eric decided to extend his education by obtaining a Master of Business by Research at the University of the Sunshine Coast exploring strategy and strategic planning within Australian commercial fisher micro-businesses. He successfully completed a research thesis and was awarded a Doctoral qualification from the University of Southern Queensland exploring strategic thinking, and foresight capabilities among Australian agriculture leaders.



**Capt Norman  
Lopez**

FICS AFNI, Extra Master,  
Lawyer LLB, BAdVocT, MA  
(Intl Econ and Politics), Grad  
Dip Leg Prac  
Chairman  
Education and Training  
Committee  
Institute of Chartered  
Shipbrokers

Capt Lopez is closely involved with the maritime industry worldwide and has been for more than 60 years: as a sea-going officer up to Master (Captain), Maritime Academic (to Associate Professor level), Maritime Author, Chartered Practising Shipbroker, Practising Maritime Arbitrator, P&I Correspondent, Ship and Cargo Surveyor, Nautical Consultant, FOSFA Superintendent, Expert Witness and Solicitor.

In addition to holding professional seagoing qualifications, including the Extra Master's Certificate (Thomas Gray Medallist), and a revalidated Master Class 1 Certificate (STCW 1995), Norman also holds other professional qualifications. He was a Fellow and Member of 15 Professional Organisations before self-reducing these. He presently practises as a Nautical Consultant and Maritime Trainer. He has taught internationally for BIMCO from about 1984 to 2012.

His teaching - at webinars and in-person courses and workshops on maritime-related courses - covers topics including business and law of shipping, international trade, INCOTERMS and Documentary Credits, Chartering, Bills of Lading, Letters of Indemnity, and Carriage of Goods by Sea. He is the Chairman of the International Education and Training Committee of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers.



**Capt John  
Kavanagh**

Principal Lawyer  
Master Mariner, Notary  
Public (NSW)  
Pacific Maritime Lawyers

John is a professional mariner, legal practitioner and maritime auditor. John is the founder of Pacific Maritime Lawyers & Notaries (PML), a specialist maritime law firm. Prior to establishing PML, John was employed in the role of Executive Director (Maritime Services) at Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ), supervising 60 staff and responsible for the delivery of maritime services for the whole of Queensland, including oil spill response capability, the provision of Vessel Traffic Services (including Reef VTS) and the aids to navigation program.

John had a first career at sea as a professional mariner, working for BHP Transport on oil, chemical and LNG tankers, and for international dredging companies Van Oord and DEME.

# Speakers

	<p>John is a graduate of the Australian Maritime College in Nautical Science, Deakin University in Law and ANU in military law. John has worked as a mariner in all ranks from Cadet to Master, and as a lawyer and manager in both private practice and in Government. John is a serving member of the Royal Australian Navy Reserve, advanced qualified in both the Legal and Maritime Trade Operations Branches.</p>
 <p><b>Capt Louis Koutelas</b></p> <p>Director &amp; Senior Marine Surveyor Hunter Marine Surveyors</p>	<p>Capt Louis Koutelas has spent his working life in, on and around ships. He has also written several software solutions including CargoMax to add value to the draft surveying and trimming process. As a self-confessed visual learner, he understands the importance of training people in a way that makes sense to them.</p> <p>His team at HMS have been conducting draft surveys and trimming for over 25 years and are industry leaders in the field. Louis has incorporated visual learning techniques in training and in the CargoMax user experience to make it easier to use.</p>
 <p><b>Graeme Normington</b></p> <p>Principal Marine Surveyor Queensland Ship Surveyors Pty Ltd</p>	<p>Graeme is an experienced and highly qualified Principal Marine Surveyor with over 20 years of expertise in conducting surveys for both commercial and defense vessels. As the Managing Director of Queensland Ship Surveyors Pty Ltd, he oversees a wide range of marine survey services and hold accreditation as an AMSA Marine Surveyor.</p> <p>His primary focus is on the Guardian Class Patrol Boats (GCPB) for the Australian Defence Force, the Serco DMS fleet of vessels based in the port of Cairns, Queensland and a range of commercial AMSA DCV vessels.</p> <p>His knowledge spans particular stability approval, construction surveys, machinery inspections, safety equipment surveys, and compliance with Australian National Standards for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) and Lloyd's Register (LR) LSSC Rules.</p>
 <p><b>Dr Wade Azmy</b></p> <p>Executive Chairman Pharos Institute</p>	<p>Dr. Wade Azmy, <u>Professor (Adj) of Strategic Leadership</u> at the National University of Singapore and CEO of <u>ICG Asia</u>, is best known as a Pracademic. He is a highly accomplished C-suite executive recognised for building profitable organisations in competitive markets worldwide. With extensive experience in business and corporate strategy for sustainable growth, Dr. Azmy has excelled in Australia, Japan, China, the USA, and the Middle East, successfully building and leading teams across diverse cultures. In addition to his executive career, Dr. Wade Azmy is a respected management consultant, strategy formation mentor, and strategic leadership coach.</p>

# Speakers

With a deep understanding of market dynamics and organisational leadership, Dr. Azmy offers valuable insights for strategic decision-making, conceptualises plans, and successfully implements transformative projects. Dr. Wade Azmy's multicultural background enables him to connect with both Eastern and Western cultures, enhancing his effectiveness as an executive, academic, and consultant. His passion lies in fostering professional growth and empowering businesses to gain a competitive advantage.

Driven by a vision for long-term success, he offers strategic thinking, cultivates lasting relationships, and maintains a deep commitment to achieving meaningful results in today's dynamic business landscape.



**Margot de Villiers**

Head of Marine – Executive  
Marine Surveyor  
Sedgwick

When Margot began working as an office manager for a marine surveying firm in South Africa nearly 25 years ago, she had no intention of pursuing a career in insurance.

But after taking some basic courses to learn about the field, she found herself studying project management, training under two respected marine experts, and earning a diploma in marine surveying.

Margot conducts assessments to quantify insurance claims related to transit incidents.



**Kerryn Woonings**

Senior Marine Surveyor  
Specialty  
Crawford & Company  
(Australia) Pty Ltd

Kerryn is a Senior Marine Surveyor at Crawford & Company, the world's largest publicly listed independent provider of global claims management solutions. Kerryn specialises predominantly in Marine Cargo and Liability investigations and is a qualified lawyer.

Kerryn started with Crawford in Sydney in 2014 and relocated to her home in Western Australia (WA) at the end of 2020 to expand Crawford's Marine offering into WA. Prior to that Kerryn worked for a leading global transport insurer.

Kerryn has been heavily involved in the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA) since 2019 and served as the Australian Vice-President in 2020 and 2021.

Kerryn loves the opportunities her role at Crawford and involvement with WISTA present to advocate for women in the maritime industry, and to empower them to make their mark in a very male dominated field. Kerryn loves to read books and finds any opportunity she can to head to the south coastal port of Albany WA, to watch the ships go by and spend quality time with family.

# Speakers



**Capt Michel  
Lagesse**

Managing Director /  
Principal Marine Surveyor  
ACME MARINE SERVICES  
INTERNATIONAL PTY LTD

AIMS Life Member

Born in Mauritius, grew up in Durban, South Africa, with all customary schooling conducted in Durban. Being from a family of seafarers (over many generations), I commenced my sea-going career in late 1976, as a 16 year old, sailing / working as a “deck-boy” on a general cargo vessel, trading around some of the Indian Ocean Islands (Mauritius, Madagascar, Reunion Island), including South Africa. Working on such a vessel, sharing a cabin with five other somewhat “seasoned” crew members, using communal washroom facilities, etc, certainly set me up for what may lie ahead!

I became a member of the Australasian Institute of Marine Surveyors (AIMS) in May 2004, and over the years assisting where I could as the WA Branch Chairperson, as Sub-committee and executive representative. I view the work of the AIMS, through the enormous efforts made by those representing sub-committees and the executive, both past and present, as extremely important in maintaining some higher level of integrity, professional ethics and moral judgement amongst the members of AIMS.



**Greg  
Marsden**

Managing Director  
Marsden Marine Services Ltd

Vice Chair

Australasian Institute of  
Marine Surveyors

Greg is an MNZ and AMSA qualified and recognised marine surveyor and owner operator of Marsden Marine Ship Surveyors based in Wellington, New Zealand, specialising in recreational and sub 24m commercial vessels. In addition, Greg is also an Inspector with the International Marine Certification Institute (ICMI) specialising in CE compliance, and a qualified Marine Accident Investigator having undertaken specialist training in marine accident investigation through the UK's National Maritime Training Centre.

In this role he has supported investigations conducted by MNZ, the NZ Transport Accident Investigation Commission, NZ Police, as well as technical consultancy support to civil disputes. Greg is the first New Zealand representative to join the AIMS Board and is keen to continue to foster the linkages between our Australian and New Zealand membership and surveying community.



**Carlo Di  
Meglio**

Manager Operations,  
West Operations

Australian Maritime  
Safety Authority

Carlo Di Meglio is a qualified Master Mariner, certified in 1994, with extensive sea-going experience on bulk carriers, general cargo vessels, and passenger ships. He joined the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) in February 2001 as a Marine Surveyor in Dampier and has since progressed through the ranks, being appointed Manager Operations – West (covering Western Australia and the Northern Territory) in 2020.

With nearly 25 years of regulatory experience, combined with a distinguished maritime career, Carlo has consistently demonstrated the ability to lead highly trained professional teams while successfully engaging with the maritime industry and stakeholders worldwide.

# Speakers

His regulatory functions have included serving as:

- Examiner for Masters and Mates
- ISM Code Auditor
- Port State Control Trainer
- Inspector under the
  - Occupational Health Safety (Maritime Industry) Act Inspector
  - Navigation Act and National Law Act
  - Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act
- Duly Authorised Officer under the Maritime Transport and Offshore Security Act

Carlo's values are fully aligned with AMSA's mission. His purpose and drive for the past quarter century have been centred on ensuring safe and clean seas and saving lives, a commitment that continues to guide his leadership and professional contributions.

## AIMS Board



**Eric McIlwain**  
Chair



**Greg Marsden**  
Vice Chair



**Capt Scott Aiton**  
Company Secretary



**Capt William Burton**  
Director



**Wade Nagel**  
Director



**Zac Howells**  
Director



*Years of Operation*

