

Shippers' Council tackles supply chain issues

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Discussion and strategic planning on key supply chain issues relevant to its membership was reportedly advanced during the recent annual Strategy Day of the New Zealand Shippers' Council (NZSC).

NZSC chairperson Simon Beale said the agenda included key consultation with both the Upper North Island Supply Chain Strategy (UNISC) working party and the Ministry of Transport.

"The council is concerned that the views of its members receive due consideration and will make formal comment on the UNISC study when it has had an opportunity to review the working party's draft report of findings," he said of the former.

"As has been well publicised, from January 1, 2020, signatories to MARPOL Annex VI will be required to limit the sulphur content of bunker fuel to a maximum of 0.5%," he continued on the latter.

"The Ministry of Transport consultation was an opportunity to consider the impacts for the domestic supply chain if the Government chooses to sign up and if it chooses not to."

Other matters addressed during the Strategy Day included:

- Potential implications for freight movements of Brexit Day in March 2019 and the need for contingency planning to mitigate the likely knock-on congestion effects across European ports — this being noted to be of particular concern for perishables exporters.

- Shortages within the key transportation workforce, including drivers and stevedores — with members, having noted this issue is now significantly impacting supply chain efficiency around the country, duly requesting the NZSC take urgent action to raise awareness, including seeking reinstatement on the skills shortage list.

Following a presentation from the 2025 Bio Security Strategy steering group, members also endorsed the NZSC signing up to the Biosecurity 2025 pledge.

"As part of this, the Council will actively engage with all members and affiliates about the business risks of biosecurity and encourage their participation in the programme," added Mr Beale.

The Strategy Day followed the NZSC's AGM in August, which featured meetings with MPs Shane Jones and James Shaw as well as a trans-Tasman briefing from the Australian Peak Shippers' organisation and presentation from the International Container Lines' Committee.

Mr Beale said a key topic of the AGM was implications for New Zealand shippers of the global "green freight agenda" — including industry readiness for Annex VI and International Maritime Organization strategies to achieve a 50% greenhouse gas reduction in shipping emissions by 2050.

Following the recent addition of Ravensdown, The Warehouse and Sanford, it was noted that the NZSC is steadily growing its representation, to now include 22 full member organisations and 24 affiliate members.