



## Tim Polson MICS – FONASBA Young Ship Agent or Ship Broker of the Year Award Winner 2016

Address to the FONASBA Gala Dinner and ICS Prize Giving Ceremony,  
21<sup>st</sup> October 2016



Good evening everyone, and congratulations to the other award winners. I am honoured to be receiving this award before such a distinguished audience, including Lord Mountevans. Thank you very much to FONASBA for the opportunity to enter this contest. The essay was a great challenge, and a chance to give insight into my unique trade, hoping that others may benefit from this. I would also like to thank my employers Australian Independent Shipbrokers for sponsoring my trip here, everyone who's helped organise this event, and my lovely wife Annette. If there was a FONASBA 'Young Supportive Wife' of the year, she'd be on stage next to receive her prize.

To all young shipping professionals, whilst this may be the worst shipping market the world has ever seen, we should be thankful for the chance to experience this environment. When should one buy shares? Bottom of the market of course. If someone is preparing for the Volvo Ocean race, should they train on the River Thames, or at the Pentland Firth in March? I'm sure the more experienced folk would agree that development comes from adversity, so don't waste this development opportunity.

All young agents and brokers should get involved with Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers and FONASBA, do the education, attend the events, get to know other members, shout them a drink if they visit your city. Ask questions, help others, and most importantly – make your word your bond. Our principals, customers and anyone we deal with need to be comfortable with putting blind faith in us, as a crew puts blind faith in their captain to navigate a ship.

Finally, to the current generation of shipping leaders. Thank you for mentoring us, and being patient while we learn. Even though there are a few too many ships and not quite enough cargoes at the moment ... we are still inheriting a truly great industry. To quote the Vice President of FONASBA, Mr Botond Szalma, "shipping gets sick, but it never dies". I was lucky enough to be a discussion panellist during the Asia Logistics & Maritime Conference in Hong Kong a couple of years back. One of my co-panellists, Claudio Chiste, head of SPNL here in London, said something like "if two bankers, lawyers, pilots or engineers meet randomly at a bar in, say Hong Kong, they'll have a conversation. If two shipping people meet they spend hours sharing yarns, common connections, gossip, probably have a few too many drinks, exchange contact details and be there to help each other later ... maybe several years later".

I'm sure everyone in this room can recall such an encounter. So as this generation of shipping leaders start signing off and passing command to the shipping leaders of tomorrow, it is this spirit of mateship and comradery that we should strive most to carry on.

Thank you once again everyone, and congratulations once again to the prize-winners, enjoy the rest of the evening.