



13 April 2018

Bass Island Line Update – edition 53

Masters of the Bass

When the *John Duigan* make it's inaugural voyage for the new BIL service there will be a familiar face standing onboard the bridge.

Bass Island Line (BIL) has confirmed that Polaris Marine Masters of the *Investigator II*, Justin Webster and Andrew Brewster will be rotating as Master of the new vessel once the service commences.

For this week's edition, BIL interviewed both Webster and Brewster ahead of the takeover. Here's what they had to say.



How long have you been working with Polaris Marine?

Andrew: 14 months. I was originally hired for the delivery of the *Investigator II* to Devonport as the engineer.

Justin: I have been employed with Polaris Marine for eight years.

What appealed to you most about the industry?

Andrew: My first job was a deckhand on a cray boat by chance through a friend-of-a-friend back in 1987. Here I am now, 30 years later, still working on boats.

Justin: I grew up in Lakes Entrance and enjoyed watching the trawlers come in from Bass Strait with their catches and I would help unload after school and on the weekend. I have always had a passion to be a seafarer and continue my nautical studies and challenges.

What do you enjoy most about the job?

Andrew: Calm weather. Everything is too easy. We get a lot of freight moved, which in turn keeps everyone happy.

Justin: Delivery of cargo safely and on time, working with all crews involved and the

scenery. We see some amazing sunrises in Bass Strait.

What is the most challenging part of the job?

Andrew: Rough weather and the swell surge in Grassy Harbour makes life difficult and I have to make the call on whether it is safe to work in the conditions. Unfortunately there can be some delays due to weather but the safety of our crew and the vessel is my number one priority.

Justin: The elements of Bass Strait. Mainly weather.



Pictured: Andrew Brewster on the bridge of the *Investigator II*.

What does a day in the life of a Master look like?

Andrew: Busy, always planning and monitoring weather forecasts. Lots of decision making. We have a very good team onboard: master, chief mate, second mate, engineer and two crew. Together we run the *Investigator II*. So, as in most work places, in basic terms I'm the supervisor.

Justin: Up at sunrise, receive updates from ships officers on ETA, weather conditions, shipping schedule, cargo on decks (eg. cattle welfare). Be prepared with the information for the client. Looking ahead with weather conditions for week shipping schedule.



Do you have a favourite port to call in to?

Andrew: At the moment Devonport is our home port so it's always your home port.

Justin: Stanley at sunset... at the Nut. Also Grassy.



Pictured: Justin Webster on the bridge of the *Investigator II*.

What are your thoughts on the new vessel, *John Duigan*? How will it compare with the *Investigator II*?

Andrew: The *John Duigan* is a much bigger vessel with double the freight capacity so I'm excited to have the opportunity to be one of the masters. The *Investigator II* is a work horse and has done a mighty job for its size. We have pretty much maxed out its capabilities for carrying freight. Hopefully we can do the same with the *John Duigan*.

Justin: I brought the *John Duigan* down from Malaysia and she handles a lot better than the *Investigator II*. Even though we had a calm transit, she has a lot more stability and more power. I think we will work well together once we work each other out. Lol.

When not onboard the vessel, what do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Andrew: I'm a mad keen fisho. Every chance I get its either fishing or diving out of Bicheno or Coles bay.

Justin: Family times, riding my motorbikes, camping. Sport team? Well we won't go there at the moment. I follow the weather.

Safety first

Safety remains our number one concern at BIL.

Due to unfavourable sea conditions forecast for Northern Tasmania, Bass Strait and South King Island on Saturday 14 April and Sunday 15 April the *Investigator II* Master advised conditions are unsuitable for sea crossings.

BIL will hold the *Investigator II* in Devonport over the weekend until conditions ease.

This has been communicated to key stakeholders and customers in line with normal practice.

Freight to date: One year of service

BIL commenced operation on 7 April, 2017, so we have now been in service for one whole year.

In this time, BIL has completed 284 sailings in total; including 145 General sailings and 139 Livestock sailings.

The annual freight tonnage that BIL has moved into and off King Island comes to a grand total of 68,397 tonnes. To put this in perspective, this equates to 45.5 tonnes for each person living on King Island!

We now look forward to the rest of 2018 with more milestones to follow.

The schedule

The next three sailings are as follows:

- Monday 16 April: General Sailing - Depart Devonport 1.30pm
- Tuesday 17 April: General sailing – Depart Grassy 1:30pm
- Wednesday 18 April: Livestock – Depart Stanley 11:00pm

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