Peter Keller, Executive Vice President of TOTE, is responsible for overseeing both TOTE Shipholdings and TOTE Maritime, which includes TOTE Maritime Puerto Rico and TOTE Maritime Alaska.

Peter joined TOTE in February of 2012 and has extensive experience in port and terminal development, liner industry activities, labour relations, intermodal operations and supply chain economics and strategies. He has also been involved in merger and acquisition strategies and tactics, public private partnership development and has advised many senior industry executives.

You have vast knowledge and experience serving the international maritime industry. How has this helped you in your role?

I also worked in domestic and Jones Act trades in my earlier years in shipping. I was one of the founders of the Navieras de Puerto Rico in the 1970’s so was no stranger to that side of the business.

In the end shipping and serving customers is no different in any trade.

What would you say are TOTE’s key values and objectives?

Integrity and customer service are keys to our business and should be key to any business. We have clients who depend on us and we serve with pleasure.

We have proven shipping professionals in all aspects of our business

What makes the team at TOTE special?

We have proven shipping professionals in all aspects of our business. Whether it is sales, pricing, operations, shipboard personnel, we all understand customer needs and always try to serve those needs with integrity while providing real value. Trade and transportation are cornerstones to our economies, whether domestic or international and we all have an important part to play.

How do you adapt to changing regulation and how important is safety and maintaining environmental standards?

Safety is job number one.

We all have families and loved ones and it is our responsibility to make sure everyone goes home at night safely. We also have social responsibilities which we take very seriously which is why we were the first to commit significantly to the development of LNG as an important, environmentally friendly fuel.

You have been at the forefront of leading the conversion of TOTE’s fleet to LNG. How challenging has this been?

Any time you are in the lead, there are many unique and often unexpected challenges. We were able to meet these challenges because of the unwavering commitment of our management and owners. Without their commitment, none of these breakthroughs could have happened.

We were also fortunate in choosing partners such as NASSCO and MAN, among many others, who shared our vision for the future of maritime shipping.

What do your customers expect from the TOTE brand when contracting services?

First class, innovative service and an organization that is proactive at all times.

Please tell us about those services that have a higher demand and why:

We have a strong presence in the refrigerated markets and have introduced a lot of new modern assets. We also innovated the ISO compliant 53’ x 102” containers for our supply chain clients. We also built specialised container assets to safely and efficiently handle products from cars and trucks to live cattle. Our new ships also have a unique and innovative way of handling liquid bulk products such as fructose for the Puerto Rico soda trade.

Do you foresee exploring new markets over the next five years?

Like every other strong company we are always looking at opportunities that benefit our clients as well as our owners.

Your memorable shipping experience:

Over the past 50 years it is hard to single out one. It is an exciting industry that has and continues to change constantly. Being part of that change has been memorable every day.

Your favourite ship:

Actually two.

The SL-7 that Mr McLean introduced at Sea-Land. The first and still most innovative company for our industry. These were the fastest cargo ships ever built. At 33 knots, these ships were also beautiful to see and stevedore. They’re still active as part of the U.S. Government fleet.

The other is of course the Marlin’s, the “Isla Bella” and “Perla de Caribe”. These are the worlds first dual fuel LNG containerships in the world and herald yet another new era in international shipping. Just as the SL-7’s brought speed and unprecedented service levels to the international market, so the Marlin’s bring a new era of social responsibility and environmental consciousness.