

EBU-SEMINAR 2012

OPENINGSSPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT

Dear President and Secretary General of the CCNR,
Dear representatives of the European Commission and the European Parliament,
Distinguished guests,

1. INTRODUCTION

On 14 December 2001 the European Barge Union has been founded by its predecessors, the Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Rheinschiffahrt IAR and the International Barge Union IBU. Merging these two associations resulted in one strong representation of the inland navigation interests at European and international level.

We are pleased to welcome today two former presidents of EBU who have been closely involved in the foundation and development of EBU in the past decade, Mr. Feierabend and Mr. De Korte. **And of course, I would like to welcome all of you and thank you deeply that you join us in celebrating our anniversary with this seminar.**

Starting with members from 6 European countries meanwhile national associations of barge owners and operators from 9 European countries have joined EBU.

It is my great pleasure to welcome our **new member** association, which only joined as from 2012, the industry representation FEDIL from Luxemburg. This means that today the industry associations from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland and as from 1st of January from Luxemburg are represented.

But let me first of all thank the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine for hosting this memorable event in its premises. It is an honour to celebrate our tenth anniversary in this historical building, hosting the secretariat of the supranational organisation which can be considered as an EU avant la lettre by introducing the principle of free movement and navigation on the Rhine in 1868. This, as we all know, lead to the prosperous development in the whole Rhine area where numerous economic centres emerged and leading multinationals developed.

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EBU from its very beginning has been involved in all kind of policy debates related to its various fields of activities. Ever since then EBU is closely cooperating with the various international institutions like the European Union, the UNECE, ITF. Obviously its work is closely related to the work of the River Commissions, where EBU is granted observer status and is closely involved in the committee works. Another important relationship is with the River protection commissions which play an important role as regards the implementation of the various environmental protection rules. Also in this field EBU is closely involved in the works. **As one of the last actions should be mentioned the implementation of the waste treaty CDNI.**

The most important part of activities is based upon its committee works which reflect the main fields of activities. In the past decade this committee work, where the national experts in the various fields share their specific knowledge in favour of the industry, has led to quite concrete results.

Let me briefly emphasise a number of them.

2. HIGHLIGHTS

Important Step In Social Dialogue

Recently and after long negotiations, we achieved a sectoral agreement regarding the organisation of working time with our social partners from ETF and ESO in the sectoral Social Dialogue Committee. Within the framework of this agreement we have also succeeded in formulating adequate provisions with regard to seasonal work in the passenger transport industry, which is considered a major step forward!

While the draft text for the working time agreement is currently under final juridical examination it is expected to be signed under the supervision of the Commissioner Mr László Andor, responsible for employment, social affairs and inclusion on 15 February 2012.

I would like to thank our colleagues from ETF and ESO for the very constructive cooperation in this field!

Safety Above All

Safety and security are basic requirements for a proper development of each transport mode. Due to its quality characteristics and high safety standards the inland waterway sector can claim to be the leading performer in these respects. This target was achieved by a system of highly advanced and internationally recognized rules for the transport of dangerous goods. The EBU's Dangerous Goods Committee (DGC) is deeply involved in the permanent process of improving and updating this worldwide exemplary system of rules.

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The most significant and far-ranging work during the behind us laying period was the elaboration of the plan to replace one-hull-tank barges by double hull tank barges in a three-step-process 2012 / 2015 / 2018. EBU proved to be a competent and comprehensive partner towards authorities and representatives of other concerns. The proposals lead to the most important economical and technical challenge ever for the tank barge industry in a feasible way affected.

Carbon Foot Print Discussion

Alternative fuels high on the agenda

Inland navigation is known as the most energy efficient and low carbon mode of transport. However different measures need to be taken in order to maintain this leading position in the field of sustainability. Therefore the sector is also actively working to make an even greater contribution to cutting down on global warming and reducing pollution.

As a matter of fact inland navigation as from 2010 is already sailing on **low sulfur fuels**.

Liquefied Natural Gas (**LNG**) however is one of the alternative fuels that could have a promising future in the sector. In different countries various partners have joined forces and are currently working on a short term implementation which meanwhile resulted in the first LNG vessel “**MV ARGONON**” being operational.

The **adaptation of the actual fleet** to this and other alternatives (such as retrofitting) also means a huge investment for the sector for which we count on financial support under the NAIADES programme and national fundings.

These are only a few issues to emphasise from the important results of the committee’s work which shows the active involvement of our members in various fields.

I would like to take the opportunity to **express my gratitude to the chairs, members and secretaries of the committees** for their extremely important work!

3. PREVIEW

Cooperation

This leads me to some previews on the future development of both our association and the inland navigation policy.

Reflecting on the results of the past 10 years I would like to express my thanks to our colleagues from ESO and INE, with which we have cooperated successfully in the past years.

Taking into account earlier efforts we would like to repeat our invitation for an even closer cooperation with our sister-organisation ESO in the benefit of the represented industries. We would

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be pleased to reopen the negotiation talks with our colleagues to realise one strong inland navigation representation in Europe.

Transport Policy, NAIADES Follow Up and TEN-T

We all are aware that inland waterway transport serves huge industries and plays an increasingly important role in both the carriage of goods and passengers.

The environmental and social challenges as expressed in the new White Paper can be much better addressed by making full use of environmentally friendly modes and potentials such as inland waterway transport. A prioritisation and rebalance of cargo flows must lead to a better use of the existing resources in a more efficient and effective way.

The EU transport patterns are at a turning point. The adequate policy framework will make or break the course towards a competitive and sustainable economy. Moving inland navigation higher on the political agenda through establishing a permanent inland navigation policy by a successor of **NAIADES** with adequate financial support will be one of the main elements to realise the overall European policy goals.

We welcome the Commissions' recent **TEN-T guidelines** and new approach as regards the future infrastructure development. We strongly support the clear frame and call upon the Member States for their strong commitment in realising the core network until 2030 and the complementary network until 2050.

Inland navigation needs quality infrastructure to sail ahead!

Having said so I would like to give the floor now to **MR. WOEHLING** before inviting **MR. PAQUET**, Director European mobility network at DG MOVE of the European Commission to deliver his key note speech.

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Dear Mrs. BELLIARD, President of the CCNR

Dear Vice-President KALLAS,

On behalf of the European Barge Union I am pleased to welcome you – again- to our annual seminar. Celebrating our 10th anniversary we decided to organise this event at the seat of the CCNR which is the appropriate framework to discuss how to strengthen the future institutional cooperation.

Institutional cooperation

The aim of the European transport policy as highlighted in your recently released new White Paper is to establish a sustainable transport system that meets society's economic, social and environmental needs. Growing transport and supporting mobility while reaching the -60 % emission target is an ambitious goal. This implies the support of cleaner modes and more intelligent and efficient use of less congested infrastructure. The new policy calls for new and maybe unorthodoxly approaches without delay. Just **to illustrate the urgency of the problem**: the damage occurred to carriers due to congestion last year in one of your Member states, the Netherlands, amounted some 400 million EURO, not having taken into account the costs for the depending industry which could even amount some 900 mio to 1,2 billion EURO!

Therefore a stimulation policy is needed in favour of those modes that contribute most to the realisation of this policy. The waterways in Europe, which mostly are existing natural rivers, dispose over capacity to absorb a much higher volume of transports. In connection with the positive effects in terms of safety, energy efficiency and external costs a switch to inland navigation offers a double advantage.

To fully benefit from these natural advantages – apart from other measures - calls for **intensified cooperation between all stakeholders by establishing a permanent, structured and intensive cooperation between the competent institutions leading to a strong institutional framework in favour of inland navigation.**

May I now invite our key note speakers in the second part of our seminar to address the audience on this extremely utmost issue.

André Auderset
President

17 January 2012

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