



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Second Joint Meeting of the Inspection Bodies of the Member States of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine and the European Union Wroclaw, 8-10 May 2012**



**Strasbourg, 16.05.2012.** The second Joint Meeting of the Inspection Bodies of the member States of the EU and the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) was held in Wroclaw from 8 to 10 May 2012. Almost 80 experts from the States bordering the Rhine, States in the Danube basin, and the Czech Republic and Poland answered numerous questions on the practical application of the technical prescriptions for inland navigation vessels and took part in an intensive exchange of opinions and experience at several rounds of discussions. The conclusion reached by the participants was positive – the event had been extremely useful and should be repeated as soon as possible.

The Secretary of State at the Polish Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, Anna Wypych-Namiotko, welcomed participants at the meeting. She emphasised her Government's desire to promote inland navigation in Poland, and said that uniform technical requirements laid down by the EU and the CCNR would contribute to this. In his introductory address, CCNR Secretary General Jean-Marie Woehrling outlined the development of the technical prescriptions for inland navigation vessels in Europe and recalled that the EU had been keen to adopt the technical prescriptions of navigation on the Rhine because they represented the highest level of safety. Mr Woehrling welcomed the fact that the instrument of the joint meeting of the inspection bodies, developed by the CCNR some decades ago, was now being used at EU level. The representatives of the European Commission reported more specifically on the work carried out to adapt Directive 2006/87/EC to technical progress, and on application of the Directive for older vessels. The meeting was chaired by Henk Croo, Rhine Commissioner of Belgium, whose knowledgeable and efficient handling of the meeting ensured that all the questions of the inspection bodies were not just tabled, but also answered.

An important innovation for this second joint meeting was that participants were divided into small groups to work on the questions. This made it possible for experts from different countries and navigation areas to get together for intensive specialist discussions. All those who took part felt this was a worthwhile improvement, particularly as it ensured that by the end of the three days answers had been produced as far as possible for all of the 53 questions raised by the European inspection bodies. The CCNR will enter the questions and the answers produced in its database on the technical prescriptions.

The meeting also allowed enough time for personal exchanges with counterparts from other countries, and the Polish hosts had arranged an impressive outline programme in Wroclaw, a city with a special atmosphere. The contacts made or renewed at the meeting will without any doubt promote international collaboration among the experts.

Contact:

**Gernot PAULI**

Chief Engineer

Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine

[G.Pauli@ccr-zkr.org](mailto:G.Pauli@ccr-zkr.org)

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