

Press release

## CHANGE OF PRESIDENCY AND SEMINAR 2014

EBU at its board meeting on 7 April 2014 nominated Didier Leandri, representative of the French member association CAF as its new president. Dr. Gunther Jaegers, representing the German member association BDB, was elected as vice-president.

At the following annual seminar EBU's president emphasized that it is time to implement the recently released EU-policies and to deliver. Olivier Onidi, Director of the European mobility network at DG MOVE, in his key note speech stressed the importance of inland waterway transport for the EU and the key areas to support the sector.

### EU-policies to support inland waterway transport

In the premises of the Dutch Permanent Representation to the EU the representatives of the inland navigation industry together with its guests and partners discussed the "Modal integration of inland waterways within the TEN-T multimodal corridor concept".

In his opening speech Didier Leandri, newly elected president of EBU, emphasized the potential of inland waterway transport towards the background of the challenges of the European transport policies. Given the benefits of this sector it offers enormous opportunities to meet the economic and ecological EU-targets.

Director Olivier Onidi, who is in charge of the European mobility network since a couple of months, highlighted the reasons of importance of inland waterway transport to the EU together with its challenges and key objective- shift more freight to inland waterways.

EBU welcomed the recent strategies of the EU, such as the revised TEN-T policy and the NAIADES II programme. They provide the necessary framework conditions to support inland waterway transport in order to remain the quality mode of transport, **however so far without concrete financial support to materialise the benefits of the sector.**

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## Greening of the fleet

Part of the NAIADES II program is the greening of the fleet for which currently a revision of Directive 97/68 on NRMM is in preparation. IWT is the most environmentally friendly mode of transport today. It has the lowest externalities in terms of CO2 emission, accidents and noise pollution. Besides it is congestion free and energy- and cost efficient.

Notwithstanding these positive effects of inland navigation, EBU encourages the greening of the fleet by installing new engines with the newest available technologies. However a sound balance between environmental protection and technical and economic feasibility must be kept in mind as the current NRMM revision is likely to be of highest economic importance for the sector in the next decades. Where the sector is committed to achieve a much lower emission standard regarding NOx and PM a new emission regulation needs to be based on realistic possibilities and guarantee a level playing field compared to other modalities covered by NRMM.

According to Mr. Leandri, EBU is **concerned that overly ambitious emission limits** could be detrimental to the viability of inland shipping. To set ambitious, but viable emission standards, **Mr. Leandri demanded the alignment with large market engine standards e.g. with US EPA and IMO (similar standards as for the rail industry) rather than introducing isolated standards for inland vessels in Europe.** Applying global standard to new inland vessel engines will lead to

- a remarkable reduction of air pollutants compared to the actual situation (equalling 80 per cent reduction of EURO VI in road transport, keeping the climate, accident and congestion advantages of IWT at the same time)
- the availability of engines for the industry at affordable prices.

EBU strongly opposes the introduction of a EURO VI standard for inland vessel engines due to the technical impossibility of the proposal which in fact would throw the inland shipping industry years back. It would be contra productive and against the European Commission's aim to boost IWT and increase its share in the overall transport volume as proposed under NAIADES II.

## MODAL INTEGRATION WITHIN THE TEN-T CORRIDOR CONCEPT

Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) is expected to take a much higher share in the overall transport volume in the coming years. To support this goal the European Commission in September 2013 released

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its NAIADES II communication to promote IWT in the single EU transport area. In this context also the new TEN-T concept will play a major contribution to materialize the full potential of IWT.

In the panel discussion EBU's secretary general, Theresia Hacksteiner, discussed with a number of high level panel members, how to organize the corridor in order to meet these expectations by focusing on the potential of Inland Waterway Transport within the multimodal transport chain.

The European Commission recently appointed European coordinators for the core network corridors of the trans-European transport network (or TEN-T). Inland waterways are part of seven of the nine core TEN-T corridors. The core network is intended to transform East-West connections, remove bottlenecks, upgrade infrastructure and streamline cross-border transport operations for passengers and businesses throughout the EU.

Due to bottlenecks and lacking maintenance of the waterways EBU's members in the past years suffered too long periods of non reliability and too huge losses. Examples are the insufficient navigability conditions on the rivers Danube and Elbe.

### **Conclusion**

At the end of the seminar the conclusion was drawn that the full integration of inland waterway transport into the corridors requires

- guaranteeing quality infrastructure and the reliability of the waterways
- providing reliable waterway conditions in order to act as reliable partner towards its clients
- deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise the oil dependence and mitigate the environmental impact of transport.

7 April 2014

The European Barge Union (EBU) represents the majority of the inland navigation industry in Europe. Its members are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators of meanwhile 9 leading European inland navigation countries.

EBU's main objective is to represent the interests of the inland shipping industry at a European and international level and to contribute to the development of a sustainable and efficient European transport system.

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