



The Association of European Vehicle Logistics

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PRESS RELEASE

ECG CALLS FOR ACTION ON (LOADED) TRUCK DIMENSIONS AND SULPHUR LIMITS IN MARINE FUEL

EU lawmakers hail ECG's contribution to policy debate

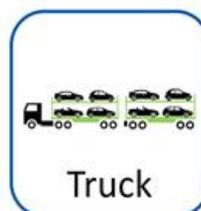
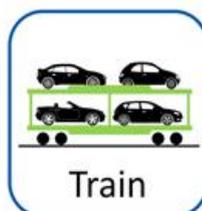
ECG called for harmonised rules on vehicle transporter weights and dimensions and more realistic regulations limiting the sulphur content of marine fuels at a Dinner Debate in the European Parliament on Tuesday.

Speaking to an almost 100-strong audience that included four prominent members of the European Parliament as well as European Commission officials, carmaker executives and logistics company executives, ECG President Costantino Baldissara said the association's approach on both issues "is part of a vision of sustainable transport that combines respect for the environment with an appreciation of economic realities. ECG celebrates its 15th birthday this year, and this approach has always been at the core of our mission."

ECG Vice-President Wolfgang Göbel argued that "harmonising loaded truck lengths across Europe to allow cross-border transport with at least 20.75m will improve economic efficiency by introducing uniformity where a patchwork of rules currently prevails within the vehicle logistics sector. More than that, by allowing more cars to be loaded per truck (while the size of the truck itself remains at 18.75m), it will inevitably reduce the number of trucks on the road and with it emissions, congestion and accidents."

ECG's position on the sulphur content of marine fuel also looks to protect the environment while accommodating growth, Baldissara said. "We believe that the tight new limits due to come into effect in 2015 in the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the English Channel will drive up marine fuel prices, powering a modal shift from sea to land in direct contradiction of EU environmental policy."

Lawmakers attending the Dinner Debate highlighted the importance of ECG's contribution to the debate on the future of European transport. UK Member of Parliament Malcolm Harbour, who hosted the event, described the automotive sector as a vital manufacturing industry for



Europe and outbound vehicle logistics as “a crucial transport sector in its own right.” He said he was determined to ensure that transport received the attention it merited in the deliberations of the Internal Market Committee (IMCO), of which he is chairman.

“There are twelve levers of growth in the single market programme accepted by all EU Heads of State and Governments, and for the first time there is a transport lever in that programme, so we are making some progress,” he said. “We need to make sure we get that lever pulled.” He cited, in particular, “the issue of sustainable transport and how to make it work more efficiently. We are liberalising markets so we don’t have empty transport around.”

In response to questions, Harbour also pledged to look into the issue of vehicle masses and dimensions, and specifically proposals that truck heights might be capped at 4m, and that the draw bar be calculated into the 12m permitted length of a trailer, reducing trailer capacity by one car per load. These issues are particularly sensitive in the UK market.

MEP Boguslaw Liberadzki, a member of the transport committee and former Polish Transport Minister, argued that the internal market will always be a work in progress adding that “liberalisation is a tool not an objective. The objective is to have an efficient transport system with companies that can make money and grow.”

While shunning protectionism, he added that “as the European Union, we are interested in your success, not in the success of those outside the EU.” He advocated “rules of the game that give you a feeling of stability, an umbrella under which you can grow.”

That meant rationalising a system in which transport companies can pay as many as 67 different taxes and fees and investing in infrastructure, perhaps using revenues from a future financial transaction tax.

Other speakers also spoke up for intermodalism. Andreas Karl Faergemann, transport attaché at the Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU, said that under the current Danish presidency, “the emphasis is on the most efficient use of all modes of transport.” Among its top priorities was the revision of the TEN-T (Trans-European Transport Network) guidelines and the recast of the first railway package opening up rail markets.

Magda Kopczynska, head of unit for maritime transport and logistics at DG MOVE, acknowledged that “as regards the internal market, there are issues still unresolved that need to be tackled. Certainly, there is a question about access to the market. Certainly, there are legal and technical barriers to access. Certainly, there are distortions created by taxes and regulations.”

She argued, however, that “there is a need for an alliance to ensure the missing links in the transport system are put in place.” Efforts to make transport more sustainable would help provide that opportunity through technology and innovation.

“European investment in transport R&D runs to €44bn, she said, of which the private sector provides 90%, member states 8% and the EU 1.4%. “Horizon 2020, the framework programme for research and innovation, is being discussed now. You have to tell us how to spend that funding.”

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ECG holds its annual dinner debate in the European Parliament each March to debate subjects of current interest to the sector.

For the final 2012 programme, please access:

[http://www.ecgassociation.eu/Portals/0/Documentation/Dinner%20Debates/ECG%20Dinner%20Debate Programme FINAL 12.03.20.pdf](http://www.ecgassociation.eu/Portals/0/Documentation/Dinner%20Debates/ECG%20Dinner%20Debate%20Programme%20FINAL%2012.03.20.pdf)

For the 2012 presentation, please access:

[http://www.ecgassociation.eu/Portals/0/Documentation/Dinner%20Debates/12.03.20 ECG%20Presentation%20Dinner%20Debate final.pdf](http://www.ecgassociation.eu/Portals/0/Documentation/Dinner%20Debates/12.03.20%20ECG%20Presentation%20Dinner%20Debate%20final.pdf)

Background for the Editors

ECG, the Association of European Vehicle Logistics, has been the voice of the Finished Vehicle Logistics industry in Europe since 1997. ECG represents the interests of almost 100 member companies, from family owned SMEs to multi-nationals, and is the major champion of the European vehicle logistics sector. We represent all transport modes at EU level.

ECG Members provide transport, distribution, storage, preparation and post-production services to manufacturers, importers, car rental companies and vehicle leasing operators in 25 Member States, Turkey and Russia. They own or operate more than 373 car-carrying ships, 13,000 purpose built railway wagons, 22 river barges and 17,600 road transporters. As a major employer, the industry plays an important role in contributing to the economic success of the European Union. Today, ECG members have an aggregate turnover of €16.2 billion and their economic impact on companies associated with the sector is estimated at €34 billion. More than 64,700 people are employed directly by the vehicle logistics industry and an additional 160,000 are indirectly employed in this sector.

