



The Association of European Vehicle Logistics

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PRESS RELEASE

ECG delegation holds promising talks with EC Commissioner for Environment

Sulphur, Waterborne “Toolbox”, Abatement equipment back on the agenda

An ECG delegation met yesterday with the European Commissioner in charge of EU environmental policy, Janez Potočnik, and his Cabinet to discuss issues vital to maritime logistics services providers.

As of 2015, the 0.1% sulphur limit is due to come into effect in the Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECAs) comprising the Baltic Sea, North Sea and the English Channel. Meeting this limit poses enormous challenges for the shipping companies operating in these areas but the reality is that Europe’s new legislation is just a transposition of what Member States previously agreed within the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

Commissioner Potočnik stood firm on his position as an environmentalist, pointing at the latest analysis which estimates 420,000 premature deaths were caused by air pollution in the EU in 2010. He stated clearly that it is unrealistic to alter the sulphur legislation since these new limits have been known to the industry as early as 2008. Nevertheless, the Cabinet remained open to the views of the ECG members when they presented their case on the current technical issues with abatement equipment (namely exhaust gas ‘scrubbers’), exorbitant fuel costs and the clear risk of modal shift from sea to land.

The outbound logistics sector can look to Brussels with some hope. After the adoption of the Multi Annual Financial Framework (covering the EU budget for 2014-2020), the Sustainable Waterborne Transport ‘Toolbox’ will hopefully contain supporting measures. ECG has been reassured that even though no delay or exemptions are likely, the European Commission will make all efforts to support and assist the maritime industry in achieving the 2015 targets.

The Commissioner was very clear in his aim to grant fair conditions and predictability to the sector. Hence, the studies and the on-going public consultation pertaining to the Air Quality Review - all results will be made public during 2013 – “the Year of the Air”.

The high-level meeting concluded with the ECG President thanking the Commissioner and his Cabinet for the exchange of views on these critical issues. It was agreed to continue the dialogue on ways to develop and operate an efficient, clean and competitive maritime transport system.

ECG’s delegation to the meeting comprised representatives of 3 shipping lines headed by ECG President, Costantino Baldissara of Grimaldi with Per Marzelius from DFDS and James Dempster of EML as well as ECG’s Mike Sturgeon and Gabriela Caraman.

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 420 car-carrying ships, 18,100 purpose built railway wagons, 85 river barges and 18,500 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 €22 billion and their economic impact on companies associated with the sector is estimated at €55 billion. More than 70,000 people are employed directly by the vehicle logistics industry and an additional 170,000 are indirectly employed in this sector.

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