



**THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF  
SHIP BROKERS AND AGENTS**  
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Thursday, 21 February 2013

Mr. A. Šemeta, European Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union  
Mr. S. Kallas, European Commissioner for Mobility and Transport  
Mr. H. Zourek, Director General, Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union  
Mr. M. Zielinski – Director, Unit A, Customs Policy, Legislation and Tariffs  
Mr. J-M. Grave – Head of Unit A2, Customs Legislation  
Mr. M. Harbour CBE, Chair, European Parliament IMCO Committee

Dear Sirs,

**UNION CUSTOMS CODE – AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 77**

The European Community Association of Shipbrokers and Agents, (ECASBA), is the sector organisation representing shipbrokers and ship agents in 22 Member, applicant member and EEA Member States. Our ship agent members are responsible for making the significant majority of customs entries for vessels arriving at European Union ports and as a result we maintain a very close interest in the ongoing process to develop and implement the Union Customs Code.

One issue of particular importance to our members is the proposed deletion from the UCC of the guarantee waiver and level 2 simplifications for RSS vessels, a development that would, if implemented, significantly increase the cost burden and liabilities on shipowners transshipping third country goods, potentially to the extent that this trade would be significantly reduced.

Clearly the impact would be felt most in all those countries where transshipment to third countries comprises a significant proportion of the total maritime trade, a group that will only expand as the size of oceangoing vessels increases. Finland is a case in point, where the government and industry have estimated that the additional direct costs would be in the region of €4 million and the additional liability for carriers under a reintroduced guarantee scheme would be approximately €200 million per annum. Through dialogue with our Finnish association, ECASBA is aware of the proposals by the Finnish government to include a new paragraph in Article 77 (6a) of the UCC to ensure the retention of the guarantee waiver and level 2 simplifications. We also very pleased to note that this amendment is also supported by all the EU Member State administrations as well as by trade organisations such as the World Shipping Council, whose members would be most directly affected by the removal of the waiver.

The purpose of this letter is therefore to express in the strongest possible terms our support, and that of our member associations, for the above-mentioned amendment to Article 77 (6a)

and thus ensure the continuation, under the Union Customs Code, of the guarantee waiver and level 2 simplifications for Regular Shipping Service vessels.

Yours sincerely,



**ANTONIO BELMAR DA COSTA**  
**ECASBA CHAIRMAN**

CC:

Mr. Brian Simpson, Chairman, European Parliament Transport and Tourism Committee  
Vice Chairs and Coordinators, European Parliament IMCO Committee  
Secretariat, European Parliament IMCO Committee  
Secretariat, European Parliament Transport and Tourism Committee