

**MINUTES OF THE
ECASBA PLENARY MEETING HELD AT
THE HILTON DOUBLETREE HOTEL, LONDON SE16 5HW
AT 2.00 p.m. ON TUESDAY, 18th OCTOBER 2016**

Present:

Mr. A. Belmar da Costa Chairman
Mr. G. Gordon Findlay President FONASBA

In Attendance:

Mr. J.C. Williams FICS General Manager

Mr. J. Dulce	Argentina	Mr. M. Hennebry	Ireland
Mr. E. Vanfleteren	Belgium	Dr. Y Sebba	Israel
Mrs. H. Bruggeman	Belgium	Mr. F. Carlini FICS	Italy
Mr. R. Troch	Belgium	Mrs. G. Reghellin-Carlini FICS	Italy
Mr. E. Wouters	Belgium	Mr. V. Totorizzo	Italy
Mr. W. Rocha Jnr.	Brazil	Mr. A. Banchemo	Italy
Mr. A. Zanin	Brazil	Ms. L. Tropia	Italy
Mr. M. Neri	Brazil	Mr. S. Carlini	Italy
Capt. N. Hristov	Bulgaria	Capt. M. Dalabieh	Jordan
Capt. J. Karmelić	Croatia	Mr. M. El Yaman	Lebanon
Mr. R. Tsanos	Cyprus	Mr. B. Sultana	Malta
Mr. A. Varnava	Cyprus	Mr. P. Tesch	Mauritania
Mr. E. Kouzapas	Cyprus	Mr. A. Mantrach	Morocco
Mr. T.D. Paulsen	Denmark	Mr. M. Tak	Netherlands
Mr. J. Vikström	Finland	Mr. E. Bandelj	Slovenia
Mr. G. J. Heinonen	Finland	Mr. T. Jamnik	Slovenia
Dr. A. Geisler	Germany	Mr. N. Warner	South Africa
Mr. J. A. Foord FICS	Great Britain	Mrs. B. Blomqvist	Sweden
Ms. E. Kassotaki	Greece	Mr. A. Jamieson	ITIC
Mr. B. Szalma	Hungary		

Item

Action

1. President's Welcome, Chairman's Opening Address

The **President** welcomed all those present to London and to this first Plenary meeting of the 2016 Annual Meeting. He thanked the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers for having organised the meeting and also extended a particular welcome to those delegates attending for the first time.

The **Chairman** also welcomed delegates to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held Vitória, 13th October 2015

With no comments having been received, the minutes **were approved**.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not otherwise covered in the agendum.

4. European Policy Update

At the request of the **Chairman**, the **General Manager** and Mrs. **Bruggeman** gave a presentation on the European maritime policy issues that had been addressed by ECASBA during the previous year. These included:

- The work of the Digital Transport and Logistics Forum
- The review of the Port Reception Facilities Directive
- The REFIT analysis of the Reporting Formalities Directive
- ECASBA's actions to extend the inspection-free period for transshipment containers of cargoes of animal origin

- The proposed 2017 Shipping Package
- The Mid Term review of Transport Strategy to 2018 and
- Customs Developments after the introduction of the Union Customs Code

A copy of the presentation is available for download from the Members' Area of the website.

5. **Recognition of the Ship Agent**

The **Chairman** opened this permanent agenda item by reminding members of the constant need to ensure legislators, regulators and policy-makers at national and European level were aware of the role of the ship agency sector and its importance to the maintenance of effective and efficient movement of goods. He therefore urged all associations present to maintain their efforts in this regard, just as ECASBA would continue to work at EU level. He then invited comment from the floor on developments or issues at national level.

- **Italy** reported that the national ship agency law was currently under review and at the time it was not possible to determine what changes, if any, this would have on recognition by the Italian authorities. It was speculated, however, that there could be some amendments to the application of the agency fee scale.
- In **Portugal** the legislation now reflects the requirements of the Commercial Agents Directive. This legislation was not as extensive as previously but the recognition still existed, as did the liabilities of agents to port authorities. It was, however, still possible for almost anyone to be a ship agent in Portugal as the required levels for pre-existing knowledge and experience remained low.
- The **Malta** association reported that it had been invited to draft a new agency regulation and the intention was to ensure that sufficient limitations were in place to ensure anyone operating in the sector was adequately trained and the companies were properly established and able to meet their commitments.
- In **Jordan**, all ship agents were required to be members, and comply with the rules, of the Jordan Shipping Association.
- The Irish Ships Agents Association had been asked in 2006 to work with the authorities to regulate the profession in **Ireland** but had decided not to take up the offer at that time. That they did not was now cause for regret but the association was currently looking at alternative means by which they could raise the level of recognition.
- In **Cyprus**, the CSA was working to raise the standards for ship agents and increase professionalism within the sector. The association asked if ECASBA was able to set minimum standards Europe-wide but the Chairman said that this was no longer possible under EU competition law so alternative methods would require to be used. Mr. **Vanfleteren** said that this was a major issue and the inability of ECASBA to take action on behalf of its members at EU level would require associations to continue to work nationally to seek local solutions. The **President** once again reminded delegates that the FONSBA Quality Standard remained a useful tool to secure increased recognition of professional agents.
- In **Ukraine**, the Shipbrokers Club was working with the authorities to secure official recognition.
- Dr. **Sebba** recommended that national associations work to engage their governments and national authorities in supporting initiatives such as the FQS. He said that in Israel, government ministers attended many of the Chamber's events and the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure had presided over the ceremony to present certificates to the first group of FQS-approved companies.

Closing this item, the **Chairman** reminded delegates of the need to continue to work on securing official recognition whilst at the same time raising standards of professionalism.

6. **External Relations**

The **Chairman** confirmed to the meeting that ECASBA continued to work with all relevant external organisations including the institutions of the EU and colleague associations in the European maritime sector. This enabled ECASBA to keep up to date on all relevant issues and therefore to comment at an early stage on those that affect the membership. He also said that the

information sharing agreement with ECSA continued to work well and the close cooperation between both organisations was another benefit to members.

7. Young ECASBA Group

Mr. Simone **Carlini** introduced a new initiative which he hoped would bring ECASBA closer to the younger members of the European shipping community. He said the plan was to exchange information between associations on events of interest to the younger members, for example the Hamburg Young Shipbrokers event, and to put the various groups in contact with each other so that an effective network could be built up. As a first step therefore, he would be making contact with all associations to ascertain if they have a young members group and then put together a directory to enable the exchange of information amongst them.

8. ECASBA Seminar / European Shipping Week 2017

The General Manager gave a short presentation on the programme for European Shipping Week 2017 and the seminar that would once again be ECASBA's contribution to the event. A copy of the presentation is available for download from the Members' Area of the website.

9. ECASBA Post-Brexit

The **Chairman** summarised the outcome of the discussion at the Advisory Panel held earlier that morning on ECASBA's options for its continued representation in Brussels after the United Kingdom leaves the European Union. He also noted that the elections in 2017 in France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands could similarly change the situation so developments may also be influenced by other actions elsewhere within Europe.

He said that broadly speaking the realistic options were to have ECASBA domiciled in Brussels but represented from London or to have some form of exclusive representation in Brussels on a part of full time basis. The idea of having ECASBA represented by another organisation had been rejected as being a retrograde step that would undo the recent achievements in ensuring ECASBA was recognised as an individual member of the European shipping community. Having ECASBA domiciled in Brussels but operated from London would require agreement to be reached with another organisation that would "host" ECASBA and thus give it a Brussels address. This had already been broached with ECSA who had agreed it was feasible. It could also be achieved within the current budget. The second option would be more expensive and in order to ascertain the cost and benefits the Advisory Panel was looking at three scenarios based on varying options in terms of the level of experience of the representative and the time that they would be required to work for ECASBA. He said that these options would be further investigated and members would be kept updated as the options were studied further.

In closing, the **Chairman** said that ECASBA knew where it wanted to be in terms of its Brussels but work was now needed to determine how to achieve it.

10. Any Other Business

With no other items put forward for discussion, the **Chairman** reminded delegates that the term of the current Advisory Panel would end at Council on Friday 21st and a new Panel would be appointed thereafter. He therefore thanked the current members for their input, in particular thanking Mr. **Vanfleteren** for his excellent support as Vice Chairman.

11. Date and Place of Next Meeting

The **Chairman** thanked all those present for their contributions to an excellent and productive meeting. He then advised that the next Plenary Meeting of ECASBA would take place in October 2017 in Dubai, with the date to be confirmed in due course.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman brought the meeting to a close.

JCW/02.2017