

**MINUTES OF THE  
ECASBA PLENARY MEETING HELD AT  
THE JW MARRIOTT CANCÚN HOTEL, CANCÚN, MÉXICO  
AT 9.15 a.m. ON MONDAY, 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

**Present:**

Mr. A. Belmar da Costa	Chairman
Mr. J. A. Foord FICS	President FONASBA
Mr. M. Tak	Vice Chairman

**In Attendance:**

Mr. J.C. Williams FICS	General Manager
Ms. V.L. Mott FICS	Assistant General Manager

Mr. R. Rodrigo	BSAA Bahrain	Mr. A. Mantrach	Morocco
Mrs. H. Bruggeman	Belgium	Mr. M. El Mezouar	Morocco
Mr. R. Troch	Belgium	Mr. R. D'Orey	Portugal
Mr. G. Gordon Findlay	Brazil	Mr. F. Martins	Portugal
Mr. M. Neri	Brazil	Mr. E. Bandelj	Slovenia
Capt. J. Karmelić	Croatia	Mr. J Fernandez	Spain
Mr. C.P. Papavassiliou	Cyprus	Mrs. B. Blomqvist	Sweden
Mrs. N. Nandkumar	Dubai	Mrs. M. Collins	USA
Mr. S. Gillie FICS	Great Britain	Mr. A. Jamieson	ITIC
Mr. R. Hill FICS	Great Britain		
Mr. B. Szalma	Hungary	<b>Observers:</b>	
Mr. A. Antunez	Mexico	Mr. A. Durot	WWSA
Mr. F. Carlini FICS	Italy	Mr. K. Neumann	WWSA
Ms. L. Tropa	Italy	Mr. H. Brussaro	WWSA
Mr. S. Carlini MICS	Italy	Mr. C. Mehrtens	WWSA
Mr. T. Iigaki	Japan	Mr. R. Anzola	WWSA
Mr. T. Saita	Japan	Mr. R. Meillon	WWSA
Mr. Y. Dohi	Japan	Mr. F. Rios	WWSA

This meeting was undertaken in compliance with FONASBA's Anti-Trust and Competition Policy and at no time were any discussions undertaken in relation to: fixing of terms, prices or rates, matters relating to particular customers or suppliers, boycotting or black listing particular customers or suppliers, dividing markets or customers or otherwise seeking to distort competition

**Item**

**Action**

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

The **President** welcomed all those present to Cancún and to this first Plenary meeting of the 2018 Annual Meeting, extending a particular welcome to Mrs. **Becerra**, Vice Chairman of AMANAC, to delegates attending for the first time and the observers from WWSA. He also thanked AMANAC for having organised the meeting.

The **Chairman** added his welcome to everyone at the meeting. He reminded delegates that this was his last meeting as Chairman before he handed over to his successor at the Council Meeting. He also thanked his present and former colleagues on the Executive Committee and the **General Manager** for their support since he became Vice Chairman of ECASBA at the Marrakech meeting in 2006.

The **General Manager** advised that apologies had been received from Bulgaria, Congo, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Panama and South Africa. He then reminded the meeting that it was being undertaken in accordance with FONASBA's Anti-Trust and Competition policy (see above).

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting held London, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017**  
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 agenda.

4. **Cooperation With Customs Authorities**

Mrs. **Bruggeman** made a detailed presentation on the role of cooperation agreements in enhancing relations between ship agent associations and customs authorities and the beneficial impact these could have on improving liaison between both sides, as well as potentially reducing the liability of agents for fines and other sanctions for misdeclaration of cargo. Using the example of the agreement recently signed between ship agents, other local port service organisations and the Antwerp Port Authority, she demonstrated how a positive approach to cooperation could benefit all parties. She also highlighted the recent exchanges between the FONASBA Secretariat and DG-TAXUD that indicated that in spite of some potentially onerous obligations on ship agents and other “declarants” under the Union Customs Code, there were a number of means by which those obligations could be mitigated, with clear and overt cooperation between the local agency sector and the customs authorities being a major factor. She therefore recommended that all ECASBA member associations made an effort to engage positively with their local authorities and to keep a record of all the actions undertaken to support the objective of assisting customs authorities in the prevention of fraud.

Mrs. **Bruggeman** then went on to discuss the new PIF Directive on protecting the financial interests of the European Union, to outline the main points of the new ICS2 Import Control System scheduled for introduction across the EU by 2024, as well as an update on guarantee waivers for temporary storage obligations.

Having thanked Mr. **Bruggeman** for her presentation, which is available for download from the Members’ Area of the website, the **Chairman** opened the floor to input from ECASBA member associations to ascertain their actions to enhance cooperation with customs authorities. Most of the associations present indicated that they already had good relations with their national customs authorities and a number of them were directly represented on customs/trade consultation bodies and therefore fully engaged in discussions on mitigating the agents’ liability. It was agreed however, that in spite of such agreements, difficulties did arise at local level, often as a result of decisions by individual customs offices or a failure to accept the concept of “as agents only”.

The **President** and **General Manager** then took the opportunity to remind the meeting of the various initiatives undertaken by FONASBA that could be used to enhance cooperation with customs authorities; including the MOU with the World Customs Organisation, the FONASBA Quality Standard and the Code of Conduct. The intention to reach agreement with BASCAPS, the organisation established by the pharmaceutical industry to combat the trade in counterfeit products would further enhance these current actions. Mr. **Gordon** Findlay also reminded delegates of the supporting information available in the Port Procedures Survey. Securing WCO or EU AEO status by individual companies was also recommended.

5. **ECASBA Position Papers**

The **General Manager** made a presentation on the development of short, concise papers outlining ECASBA’s position in a number of policy areas. These were intended to provide a clear and consistent message on these issues and would be used by ECASBA and member associations to inform authorities, their own members, the press and other relevant parties at international, regional and local level. Copies of the position papers drafted to date would be sent to ECASBA members for review and comment ahead of them being formally published. The **General Manager** also invited member associations to nominate other topics that could be covered in additional papers and appealed for assistance from member association experts in developing some of the more complex specialist papers covering topics such as customs and VAT.

**6. Trading With The EU – An Exporters’ View**

The **Chairman** advised that due to a short-notice change of schedule, the speaker designated to present on this item was unable to travel to Cancún and so the item would have to be postponed to another meeting.

**7. The European Maritime Single Window**

The **General Manager** made a presentation on the current status of the European single window project in which he highlighted the issues for agents and the questions that still needed to be answered by DG-MOVE before the project could make substantial progress. He also confirmed that ECASBA remains fully engaged with the Commission and trade associations on the European single window project and that it would continue to express its support and concerns as appropriate. He also confirmed that a visit to Brussels to discuss the issues directly with DG-MOVE was a priority for the incoming ECASBA Chairman. The presentation is available for download from the Members’ Area of the FONASBA website.

**8. Member Issues**

The **Chairman** advised that a request had been sent to all ECASBA members to nominate issues for discussion under this item but none had been put forward.

**9. Any Other Business**

With no other matters having been nominated or coming from the floor, the **Chairman** took the opportunity to address the meeting. He said that having taken the decision to represent itself in Brussels, rather than use another organisation, the profile of ECASBA as a major European maritime industry organisation had risen significantly and so had ensured that the views of ship agents and ship brokers were now heard in all the relevant DG’s and the association could hold its own within the European maritime community. That, said, there was still plenty of work to do and he wished his successor every success in taking ECASBA to the next level. He said that the organisation faced a number of challenges in the coming years but he was ready and willing to continue to support the incoming Chairman and Advisory Panel in their efforts to ensure ECASBA remained active, engaged and relevant.

In closing he thanked Mr. **Tak**, the **President** and the members of the Advisory Panel for their support during his extended term of office. He also thanked the **General Manager** for his support and for his company during the visits to Brussels and elsewhere, which the **General Manager** heartily reciprocated.

Mr. **D’Orey** then proposed that FONASBA record a motion of thanks to the **Chairman** which Mr. **Mantrach** seconded, and the meeting enthusiastically endorsed with a standing ovation.

**10. Date and Place of Next Meeting**

The **Chairman** advised that the next Plenary Meeting of ECASBA would take place on Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 in Miami.

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

**JCW/12.2018**