

**MINUTES OF THE
ECASBA PLENARY MEETING
HELD AT THE LINDNER HOTEL, ANTWERP
AT 9.00 a.m. MONDAY, 23rd MAY 2022**

Present:

Mr. M. Tak
Mr. A. Mantrach

Chair, ECASBA
President

Mr. M. Belaid	Algeria	Ms. L. Tropia	Italy
Mr. O. Brahmi	Algeria	Mr. I. Uba	Lithuania
Mr. Djaafar Khedoud	Algeria	Mrs. N. Beccera Poceroba	Mexico
Mr. J. Dulce	Argentina	Mr. M. Andrade Gomez	Mexico
Mr. J. Delfino	Argentina	Mr. N. Banovic	Montenegro
Mr. A. Mingo Jozami	Argentina	Mr. M. El Mezouar	Morocco
Mr. P. Campbell	Argentina	Mr. E. Pinzas	Peru
Mr. B. Ardhanari	Bahrain	Mr. J. Tyminski	Poland
Capt. S. Falati	Bahrain	Mr. R. D'Orey	Portugal
Mr. R. Troch	Belgium	Mr. A. Belmar da Costa	Portugal
Mrs. H. Bruggeman	Belgium	Mr. J. Silva	Portugal
Mr. E. Wouters	Belgium	Mr. G. Necmeskal	Slovenia
Mr. B. Silva	Cabo Verde	Mr. J. Fernandez Guillen	Spain
Mr. S. Mackenzie	Chile	Mr. J. Carrasco	Spain
Capt. J. Karmelić	Croatia	Ms. A. Ruiz Garcia	Spain
Mr. C.P. Papavassiliou	Cyprus	Mrs. B. Blomqvist	Sweden
Ms. S. Turkilla	Finland	Mr. B. Tonguç	Turkey
Dr. A. Geisler	Germany	Mr. E. Kaya	Turkey
Mr. J. A. Foord FICS	Great Britain	Mrs. J. Cardona	USA
Mr. A. Dobson FICS	Great Britain	Ms. K. Torpey	USA
Mr. A. Veneris	Greece	Mr. J. Kelly	USA
Mr. A. Mataragas FICS	Greece	Mr. M. Brattman	ITIC
Mr. B. Szalma	Hungary		
Mr. F. Carlini FICS	Italy	Observers	
Mr. S. Carlini MICS	Italy	Mr. P. Gray	Caribbean Shipping Assn.
Mr. V. Totorizzo	Italy	Mr. H-N. Edbo	Norwegian Shipbrokers' Assn.

In Attendance:

Mr. J.C. Williams FICS
Mr. F. Janssens

General Manager
ECASBA Brussels Representative

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**
The **President** welcomed all those present to this first plenary of the 2022 Annual Meeting and thanked NAVES and ASV for hosting.
2. **Welcome Address**
At the invitation of the **President**, Ms. Annick de Ridder, Vice Mayor and Alderman of the Port of Antwerp, addressed the meeting.
3. **Chair's Opening Remarks**
Mr. **Tak** also welcomed delegates to the meeting and expressed his hope that it would be interesting and informative. The **General Manager** reminded those present that the meeting was being held in accordance with FONASBA's Anti-Trust and Competition policy (see above).
4. **Minutes of the Last Meeting held in Miami on 1st October 2019**
No comments were received, the minutes **were approved**.
5. **Matters Arising**
There were no matters arising that were not otherwise covered in the agenda.

6. European Issues Update

The **Chair** introduced Mr. **Janssens** and welcomed him to his first meeting as ECASBA's Brussels Representative. He then asked Mr. **Janssens** and the **General Manager** to present an update on current issues of interest to members.

Mr. **Janssens** began with a short summary of his previous experience in European matters before providing a detailed summary of current developments in relation to customs and VAT. The topics covered included:

- Implementation of the Union Customs Code
- A brief overview of progress towards the introduction of ICS2 (this would be covered in greater detail under the next agenda point)
- An update on the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS)
- The Customs Single Window environment
- The recent "Wise Persons" report into the future of the European customs environment
- New developments in relation to e-Commerce
- The role of the European Prosecutors Office on customs matters

The **General Manager** then took the meeting through the following topics:

- The ECASBA Position papers
- Progress on the European Maritime Single Window environment
- Developments in the Schengen visa regime and introduction of the Entry/Exit System and the European Traveller Information and Authorisation System (EES/ETIAS) with specific reference to their impact on seafarers
- An update on plans for the European Shipping Summit 2023
- The ECASBA European seminar planned for late 2022

A copy of the presentation can be found in the Members' Area of the website.

7. ICS2 and the Shipping Agent

The **Chair** introduced Mr. Klemen Oven, Head of Sector, Risk Management and Security (Unit A.3) at DG-TAXUD, who provided a detailed presentation on ICS2, covering the reasons behind its introduction and the implementation timetable, the anticipated benefits in terms of customs reporting and the impact on ship agents in the European Union and internationally. A copy can be downloaded from the Members' Area of the website.

Following the presentation, the **Chair** opened a customs discussions panel with Mr. **Janssens** and Mr. **Oven** that covered a wide range of topics including:

- The likelihood of sanctions being harmonised across the EU – *the Commissions is keen to do so but there is a lack of political will at national level*
- Whether phase 3 of ICS2 (for ship agents) would be introduced on time – *phase 1 (for air express parcels) was introduced on time so TAXUD is cautiously optimistic phases 2 and 3 will also meet their targets*
- How the involvement of forwarders and shippers in the customs reporting chain would streamline the process – *the new reporting obligations require more data than the carrier can provide. Agree that involving other parties may result in data being overlooked between parties*
- Concerns that the planned recast of the Union Customs Code would increase the workload on ship agents – *there is acknowledgement that the new obligations will not streamline the process or reduce the administrative burden. They will however increase security, particularly by improving identification of the parties in the reporting chain*
- Recognition that the involvement of forwarders/shippers in the reporting chain will relieve some of the burden of proof from the ship agent – *whilst the requirements of the Entry Summary Declaration continue to place the burden of proof on the declarant, national interpretations will continue to govern the direct responsibility of the parties*

At the conclusion of the panel discussion, the **Chair** thanked Mr. **Janssens** and Mr. Oven for their contributions to the discussion, which he said had been interesting and informative. He also advised that he and the **General Manager** would be visiting Brussels in June and would have further discussions with Mr. Oven, and other Commission DG's, on the subjects covered in the previous two items.

8/9. Group Discussions/Feedback

At the request of the **Chair**, the meeting broke into four groups, each led by a member of the Advisory Panel and covering topics of relevance to ECASBA. After completion of the group discussions, the leaders or their nominated representatives reported their findings, which are summarised as follows:

- **Criminal Activities Impacting on Ship Agents (Mrs. Bruggeman/Mr. Balaji)**
Actions to reduce or mitigate the impact of criminal activities relies to a significant extent on the agent knowing the parties with whom they are dealing, and therefore the exchange of information between ship agents is vital. So too is having a detailed working knowledge of all relevant regulations and developing close and cooperative relations with local and national authorities. The role of the national association in fostering and enhancing these measures was therefore of significant importance.
- **The impact of the Green Deal (Dr. Geisler)**
Communication of the requirements of the EU initiatives was very important in ensuring ship agents and their customers were aware of their obligations and liabilities. At the same time, the authorities should be made aware of the impact of their proposals on the ship agency sector. Communication should therefore be structured along three lines, namely:
 - Through FONASBA and ECASBA at international and European level, both with regulators and other industry bodies
 - Locally, from the associations and the member companies to their clients and customers to explain how the initiatives will impact on costs, service delivery and other practical considerations
 - Ascertaining whether the new measures will provide business opportunities for ship agents and ship brokers and if so, how best to maximise them
- **Restoring an efficient logistics sector post-COVID (Mr. Szalma)**
The sector is currently suffering from a lack of available vessels, equipment, and people, which are impacting on the ability of the sector to respond to increased demand from customers. This is to provide opportunities for the larger, vertically integrated companies to continue to expand their market share, based on their ability to guarantee supply chain integrity. Smaller operators will therefore be forced to collaborate or merge to provide competitive economies of scale and full-service provision. Automation will also continue to drive developments in the sector.
- **The impact of the Ukraine conflict on the logistics sector (Mrs. Blomqvist/Capt Falati)**
Based on experience from other similar situations, such as the conflict in Iraq, it is anticipated that opportunities will emerge for the development of new trade routes and markets to compensate for the closing of those operating previously. Despite interventions by governments and supra-national bodies such as the European Union and UN agencies, the market should be left to determine the best ways of overcoming the difficulties.

The **Chair** thanked all the participants for their contribution to an interesting and active discussion. He would take the main points away and discuss within the Advisory Panel how ECASBA can contribute to support members in resolving issues and maximising opportunities. He also said that some of the issues would be discussed further during the ECASBA seminar.

10. Any Other Business

No issues were raised for discussion.

11. Date and Place of Next Meeting

The **Chair** thanked all those present for their contribution to a very interesting, informative, and active meeting. He also urged members to take the information gained and lessons learned at this meeting back to their national associations for further action locally.

He then advised that the next ECASBA plenary meeting would take place in Bahrain on **Monday 16th October 2023**, and he looked forward to welcoming everyone to that meeting. He also thanked NAVES and ASV for the excellent organisation of this meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chair brought the 2022 ECASBA Plenary Meeting to a close.

JCW/08.2022