



# ECSCA Newsletter

European Community Shipowners' Associations

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## MARITIME TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2009-2018

***ECSCA welcomes this sound and balanced strategy paper.***

As advised in last year's Newsletters one of the key action points of the Commission Communication on a future maritime transport policy of October 2007 is the exercise on a future maritime **transport** policy towards 2018 which was launched by Vice President Jacques Barrot in 2008.



Vice President and transport Commissioner Antonio Tajani presented this maritime strategy 2009-2018 on 21 January 2009. As mentioned in the Commission's press release the purpose of the comprehensive strategy plan for the next decennium is to promote safe, clean and efficient shipping. The long term competitiveness of European shipping and related maritime services in world markets and the adaptation of the entire seaborne transport system to challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are at the heart of this strategy plan. During the process the Commission has consulted High level experts of Member States and an independent Group of senior professionals.

The comprehensive strategy paper touches upon a wide range of basic

elements such as: the competitive position of European shipping in global markets, human resources, seamanship and maritime know how, quality shipping as a key competitive advantage, working together on the international scene, exploiting the full potential of short sea shipping and sea transport services for business and citizens in Europe and Europe as a world leader in maritime research and innovation.

ECSCA welcomes the strategy paper as a sound basis for the European shipping policy. The Commission has acknowledged in the future strategy the de facto global charter of European shipping and takes this into account on all fronts particularly in respect of the global competitive position of European shipping, safety and environment and the need for high quality maritime know how.

ECSCA commends Vice President Tajani and the Commission services for this sound and balanced strategy paper and offers the cooperation of the European Shipping sector in the process of applying these principles in practice.

## EUROPEAN MARITIME TRANSPORT AREA WITHOUT BARRIERS ***We are not yet there.***

On 21 January the Commission also issued an Action Plan on a European maritime transport space without barriers. The plan includes short term and medium term measures, including a legislative proposal aimed at simplifying administrative formalities based on Community regulations. It also includes recommendations to Member States for reducing the administrative burdens imposed on shipping companies. These recommendations cover issues such as coordination of inspections conducted by various administrative services in ports and awarding of pilot exemption

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certificates (PECs) to experienced captains.

The Action Plan also points at the need to simplify customs procedures and other reporting formalities. In this respect it should be noted that a proposal for a Directive on reporting formalities for ships arriving in and departing from Community ports is annexed to the communication. Measures simplifying customs procedures will be adopted at the beginning of 2009 and guidelines aimed at accelerating plant and animal checks will be published in 2009.

The Action Plan also refers to discussions that are ongoing under the Modernised Customs Code, such as simplifying the formalities for Community shipping routes which include a stop in a neighbouring country, on which measures will be proposed at a later stage.

As mentioned in the press release the creation of the single market in 1993 has helped to streamline the administrative formalities for land-based transport to a great extent. Maritime transport, however, remains often subject to complicated administrative procedures. Though further discussions will take place in 2009 we are not yet there.

During the consultation process ECSA has made concrete suggestions based on logic thinking and established practices in shipping and customs procedures to arrive at a workable regime. Community goods and non community goods are manifested separately and should be dealt with as such separately. The term infected vessel does not make any sense in this context.

As mentioned above, discussions will continue in 2009 to find solutions with added value whilst respecting customs' philosophy. The aim should be to abolish administrative burdens for Community (intra EU) cargoes and not create new burdens for non Community cargoes. ECSA is ready to actively contribute in the exercise towards a solution.