

PRESSRELEASE EBU EVENT 9.3.2017

At the annual EBU event President Dr. Gunther Jaegers in his key note speech emphasised the need for a well maintained infrastructure to tap the full potential of inland waterway transport. Inland waterways are an important asset in relieving the congested roads and contribute to an emission low transport. Investment in inland waterway infrastructure is well spent money and proper maintenance of the waterways much cheaper than roads and rails.

EBU's President besides called for financial support for an engine renewal program. Given the huge societal benefit of the emission reduction this is expected to create a win-win situation for society and industry.

Infrastructure bottlenecks

At the annual inland navigation event EBU discussed recent developments and challenges with some 100 representatives from the European Commission, Member States, Parliament and stakeholders.

Towards the background of the recently released 2nd Workplans of the TEN-T coordinator EBU's President emphasised the need for more support to properly maintain the waterways and solve a number of still existing bottlenecks. Special attention was paid to the dramatic situation on the Elbe and the Danube, where due to a lack of maintenance and dredging the draught is reduced year by year and endangers the reliability of this mode. With limited effort and financial means the Danube could absorb a twentyfold of the actual volume and contribute to the economic development in the region.

Innovation fund to speed up voluntary engine renewal: a win-win situation for society and industry!

EBU strongly supports and encourages innovation in the sector and is committed to keep its environmentally friendly profile. The President emphasised that EBU members are forerunners in terms of innovation, such as use of alternative fuelled vessels.

According to a study commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment a significant greening of the fleet however needs a clear intervention by the Public authorities. NRMM stage V engines are expected to be much more expensive compared to CCNR stage 2 engines because of additional after treatment equipment needed (SCR/DPF) and/or a conversion to LNG fuel. Furthermore, as a result of the long lifetime of engines, these engines are expected to be used for another 20-40 years and many ship owners are expected to overhaul the engines rather than renewing them to avoid the high investment costs.

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EBU expects that this will bring innovation in IWT to a standstill. To speed up the innovation in IWT in line with the European policies a clear intervention by public authorities in terms of funding is legitimate to support the IWT owners/operators to innovate on a **voluntary basis**. Following the results of the above quoted studies the financial needs of such funding are relatively low compared to the societal benefits that would be realised by a quicker transition towards new standards rather than avoiding innovation in the sector and thus create a win-win situation for society and industry!

Notes to the editors:

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