

ECTA Annual Meeting 2017

Key points from ECTA's 2017 Meeting in Düsseldorf

On 23 November 2017, president Andreas Zink opened ECTA's annual meeting, the 20th anniversary celebration of the association. A full day of interesting topics and concerns in Europe's chemical transport were dealt with in a packed conference room at the Hyatt Regency, Düsseldorf.

Bernhard Kunz, CEO of HUPAC, asked the audience whether they were ready to deal with the current and future challenges of intermodal transportation within the chemical industry. He started with the positive note that substantial investments are taking place in Eastern Europe. Rail traffic is growing even though rail systems are suffering the vicious circle of low rail performance - low profit - low performance. The positive note is that 60% customer satisfaction is being achieved by private rail transport companies. Another positive is the growing international cooperation triggered by a number of system disruptions last year, leaving companies no other option than to seek solutions from each other. Kunz stated that combined transport is the unavoidable solution, taking responsibility for 30% to 50% of transport by 2050 provided the framework conditions keep pace.

What can chemical carriers learn from IKEA's transport strategy?

Christophe Leclercq and René Horsch (IKEA Global Transport) discussed IKEA's agenda to decarbonise its transport, going for short-sea as a major solution combined with LNG fuelled vessels and targeting for 2019 40% multimodal transport.

Peter Devos, MD of ECTA, gave an update on the e-ECD project and how digitalisation helps to facilitate collaboration between shippers, carriers



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and cleaning stations. His opening statement is that the e-ECD project is not just an ECTA one, but made for the benefit of the entire audience concerned with Responsible Care. ECTA, with EFTCO and the Belgian ESSENSCIA on behalf of Cefic, have been discussing ideas and looking for the right concepts and strategies to develop a plan in view of a demo-pilot. Given the three million or so ECD forms being produced every year, the objective is to channel the data via a centralised pass while also securing the data considered to be in private ownership.

The business model is a non-profit scheme that will recover the investment costs of €360M of the project and an estimated €760M of the running cost

Resources in European transport are declining with a lack of infrastructure, no up to date legislation, a shortage of loading/unloading equipment and the consequent waiting hours



(2018-20). Fair membership fees and a cost per e-ECD not exceeding the printing cost of today are projected to be feasible and to be acceptable for all stakeholders. Their interests will be formalised in an international non-profit association. The path has been prepared to do so this year. The time for action is now with the next working meeting already scheduled

Luc Renier, DOW's EU Transport Safety and Security Leader, addressed the issue and the emphasis of SQAS sustainability now and in the future in a presentation titled: CO₂ being a parameter to be focused on.



A Q&A session at the 2017 ECTA Meeting

Evert de Jong, RC Coordinator for ECTA, highlighted the association's 2016-17 results and the challenges for 2018. The first half of 2018 is set for revisions to the SQAS questionnaire. As for KPIs (key performance indicators), two issues will be focused on in depth. Lost time injuries will focus on the unloading side where performance is down, while the CO2 methodology of calculation needs to be changed since the results so far generate biased information.

Bernhard Haidacher, director at LKW Walter, addressed the issue of team driver availability and competency. In ten years, nothing much has changed in the transport market, although demand is increasing for a number of reasons. For instance, in Ukraine, consumer behaviour is changing due to the likes of Amazon and Zalando with their rapid deliveries and returns. At the same time, the automotive sector is reshaping its supply chains. Moreover, resources in European transport are declining with a lack of infrastructure, no up to date legislation, a



shortage of loading/unloading equipment and the consequent waiting hours.

Following these concerns a panel discussion on driver availability and

competency moderated by Peter Mackay of HCB Publishing turned into a lively interchange of the real-life, daily experiences of the panellists. The conclusion is that drivers continue to look for the easier jobs. It is even doubtful if better pay would solve the problem of driver availability. One transporter put forward that the daily reality of a driver is that they spend 50% of their time on the road, and the other 50% at a standstill wasting time, 40% of which is during loading/unloading. The driver's pay is about half of the operators' at these premises, and this is of course commonly known.

ECTA President Mr Zink closed the annual meeting thanking the audience for the high level of participation in number and in response. ■

Images provided by ECTA

For more information:

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