

Brussels, 20th February, 2009

EMEG-CESA ANNUAL RECEPTION 2009: SUCCESS!

For further information, please contact: On the 17th of February the European Marine Equipment Council (EMEC) in cooperation with the Community of European Shipyards Association (CESA) hosted its annual reception at the Bibliothèque Solvay in Brussels. There were over 200 guests at the event, including representatives of the respective European Institutions and from the industries of the maritime cluster.

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The keynote speeches were given by EMEC's President Mr Jaakko Eskola (see attachment), the European Commission's Vice President Günther Verheugen and the Chairman of CESA Mr Kommer Damen.

In his speech, Mr Eskola discussed the effects of the current 'economic storm' the marine equipment industry has just involuntarily sailed into. He warned that despite the current crisis it is an environmental crisis in the future that we should be more concerned about. Therefore he placed an emphasis on the industry as a whole to invest in innovation of new technologies:

"Investment should now be made in this time of recession to maintain and develop a technological edge to safeguard the threat, the maritime sector faces, from overseas markets and to face up to the climate crisis that could happen in the future"

This would mean that when the 'storm' finally does abate the European marine equipment sector will be internationally well placed to deal with the important upcoming challenges.

Furthermore Mr Eskola mentioned that the role of public policies becomes more relevant in times of crisis and therefore *'the commitment of the EU vis-a-vis maritime activities through its policies and in particular the Integrated Maritime Policy is very welcome'*.

As a final statement it was said that EMEC intends to support the maritime industry with its sectoral capability of bringing forward solutions, through an increased positive cooperation with industry partners and regulators: *'Through this cooperation it can bring together added value to solutions in order to help the maritime industry as a whole weather out the economic 'storm' and restore a safe and secure environment'*.

He supported the event to be held in Prague on 27 April 2009 under the Czech Presidency and the European Maritime Day event to be organised in Rome on 20 May 2009.



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For further information, please contact: Vice President continued the theme of the economic situation and the possible difficult business conditions that the maritime industries are going to face in 2009. He would like to ensure that the EC policies create the necessary framework conditions to *'help industries...compete and thrive even in difficult times like these'*.

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However, despite the gloomy outlook of the maritime sector is facing as a result of the economic situation, Mr Verheugen was also keen to highlight some of the successes which have been achieved within the industry, for example: The ability of the European shipyards having specialised, with the cooperation of the marine equipment sector, in retaining a largely specialised market niches which should provide a buffer against the worst effects of the crisis. He also praised the advancement of research and design in Europe allowing the industry to maintain that competitive edge over competitors. These amongst other achievements show that the sun might not quite have set on the industry yet.

Most interestingly in his concluding remarks he singled out the work of EMEC and the good progress which it had made recently *'promoting the mutual recognition of certain classification certificates on which it [EMEC] has been active and effective'*.

Mr Damen concluded the speeches by also reiterating the importance of the current economic situation on the maritime cluster. He promoted the achievements of leadership saying that:

"We are in the lucky position to have the best possible platform for policy development already in place. This industry has committed itself to a truly European process and we will continue to do so. No individual Member States has the means to address these challenges effectively. They may be faster, but their reach is insufficient for the long-run".

Despite the talk of an 'economic storm' and looking to the future it did nothing to dampen the mood of the guests present at the reception

Definition of Marine Equipment

The term 'marine equipment' refers to all products and services supplied for the building, conversion, and maintenance of ships (seagoing and inland). This includes technical services in the field of engineering, installation and commissioning, and ship maintenance (including repair).

EMEC – European Marine Equipment Council The European Marine Equipment Council (EMEC), which represents the European marine equipment industry, consists of 13 European trade associations from Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (two), Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

The undertakings active in this important field, the majority of which are SMEs, are world leaders in many of the activities described in the definition above. They are responsible for 262,000 jobs directly and 436,000 indirectly, qualifying as the most important employer in the maritime industry. They generate a turnover of 26 billion Euro, 12 billion of which relate to the export market, contributing to European economic growth.

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