

Brussels, 12th February, 2008

2008 Annual Reception: President W.M. Van Gulpen keynote address

For further information, please contact: Since last annual reception we are happy to notice that many issues related to the maritime industry generally have moved forward. I take this opportunity to thank all those involved with our sector in the different institutions and within the industry.

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EMEC has grown and matured: its action has proved to be effective in raising awareness of the role played by the marine equipment suppliers and manufacturers in the maritime cluster.

Marine equipment industries have also proven to be one of the four pillars of the world wide shipping industry (together with ship owners, shipbuilders and yes, also classification societies).

This would never have been achieved without the possibility of contributing to the increasing political initiatives in the sector. A few examples: the holistic approach of the 'Green Paper', the development of maritime safety through the 'Safety Package' and its specific proposals including the so-called 'Class Directive', the FP7 and the Waterborne technology platform; the SMEs policy and innovation programmes; 'LeaderShip 2015' and its related activity like the IPR study on shipbuilding.

Shipbuilding is an industry in which marine equipment is playing a vital role for its development in terms of innovation, technology and leadership. Equipment suppliers originated in a national model with strong cooperation with the domestic shipbuilders within each country. The evolution in particular from the mid 1990s brought the leading European equipment suppliers to expand their international sales. However, it remains the opinion of the European marine equipment industries that a strong European maritime cluster is needed to maintain its pre-eminence and leadership.

The European legislator can surely help this process like the presence of the representative of the Vice-President in charge of Transport, Mrs Kerstin Jorna, shows at this reception.

Shipbuilding and shipping are complementary sides of the same coin. If we consider European shipping maintains its key role in global transport with a substantial share of (more than 40%) the global merchant fleet, we remain convinced that cooperation among European ship-owners, shipyards, Classification societies and marine equipment industries is of utmost importance.

We thank our colleagues of CESA for the good cooperation we yearly show by organising this annual reception together and by supporting each other in some of the important policy issues related to the sector. This is possible thanks to an evolving path towards a renewed TRUST among the European yards and equipment suppliers. We would like that TRUST to improve and embrace the overall European Maritime Cluster. MIF, the Maritime Industries Forum has been the only platform in which the overall maritime industry has tried to develop a similar path of trust among the different major players in the shipbuilding and shipping industries.

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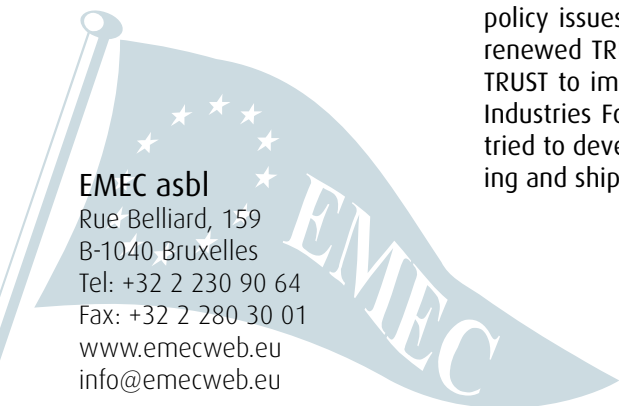
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European Marine Equipment Council

EMEC: serving the European Marine Equipment industry

Marine equipment intends to play its role. We consider we are fully shipbuilding but we are also fully shipping and the link is QUALITY and SAFETY. This has become more evident because of specific legislation like the Marine Equipment Directive and more recently the proposal for a 'Class Directive' in which EMEC has supported the European Commission and the European Parliament requesting higher harmonisation of standards and more efficient certification.

If we translate this legislation into 'relationship' terms among the players in the maritime cluster we can say that the more sophisticated is the marine equipment the more important are the ship owners. European equipment makers therefore derive great strength from strong and technologically aware European owners as well as by a more efficient cooperation with class societies and shipyards in the light of a renovated partnership.

The development of maritime safety at the highest safety standards is strictly linked to the commitment to 'quality shipping'. Marine Equipment Suppliers are leading technology drivers; they are the ones that can introduce the majority of new innovations providing solutions for environmental issues and safety standards. 'Quality shipping' cannot be achieved without 'quality shipbuilding'. Thanks to a more cooperative maritime cluster, Europe can be at the forefront of this process.

Thank you for your attention.

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.

EMEC President, W.M. van Gulpen

W.M. van Gulpen, Commodore (E) RNLN (Ret.) has been an officer in the Royal Netherlands Navy from 1967 to 2000, covering many postings on board of most types of ships and a number of functions ashore.

From 1990 he directed the Royal Netherlands Navy Dockyard, first as a deputy director responsible for production, repair and overhaul and then as director.

After a 6-month NATO defence course in Rome, in 1997 he was promoted to the rank of Commodore and worked in MOD, as a Deputy Director of Material, responsible for maintenance and in service support of the fleet.

In 2000, Mr. van Gulpen left the Royal Netherlands Navy and was elected Chairman of Holland Marine Equipment (HME) and Vice President of EMEC, becoming Chairman of EMEC in the year 2006.



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