

“OVERVIEW OF THE CCNR’S RIS ACTIVITIES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE” SUCCESSFUL WORKSHOP ON THE RIVER INFORMATION SERVICES (RIS) FROM THE CENTRAL COMMISSION FOR THE NAVIGATION OF THE RHINE (CCNR)

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The CCNR staged the 5th RIS workshop in the Palais du Rhin in Strasbourg on 17 November 2017. The event provided an international and interactive platform for discussing the CCNR’s most important RIS activities of recent years, presenting other organisations’ work and experience in this field and expressing specialist groups’ and stakeholders’ expectations of RIS, with a view to feeding into the CCNR’s future work.

Attended by representatives of the European Commission and other international organisations, the RIS workshop brought together 60 inland navigation participants from nine European countries, encompassing inland navigation companies, carriers, application developers, equipment manufacturers and installation firms, administrative authorities and inland ports.

Fuelled by qualitatively outstanding speeches, this extended circle of participants was the setting for an exchange of views that was fruitful for being very open and at times controversial. The participants emphasised the positive influence of RIS on the safety and economic development of navigation, both on the Rhine and throughout Europe, and affirmed their willingness to act in concert. Moreover, the CCNR’s representatives assured participants that they will take their proposals and suggestions on board and incorporate them in the CCNR’s work.

Presentation of the findings of the evaluation of the obligatory fitting and use of Inland AIS and electronic charts

The CCNR introduced the obligatory fitting of Inland AIS devices and electronic charts with effect from 1 December 2014. Two years after this decision was implemented, the CCNR conducted an online survey in order to gain a better understanding of users’ practical experience and any difficulties and to afford the individuals and companies affected by these requirements an opportunity to contribute their own proposed improvements. The survey enjoyed extraordinarily high participation. The most important survey findings were presented and commented on by experts, for example the repair timescales for defective devices, the quality of installation of the various devices as well as discrepancies between requirements and practice. The survey findings were published in full and analysed at the beginning of December 2017 so that conclusions and recommendations for the CCNR can be generated during 2018. This work will also involve expert circles.

The experts also emphasised that Inland AIS and chart display systems in particular contribute significantly to safe navigation.

Extension of the electronic reporting obligation to vessels with fixed tanks on board

On 1 December 2018, the CCNR will introduce an electronic reporting obligation for all vessels with fixed tanks on board. This extension, affecting almost 2000 vessels, will mark an important step



by inland navigation towards further digitalisation in the provision of information. The experience gained in the context of the electronic reporting obligation for container vessels will assist the smooth implementation of this CCNR decision. Representatives of CCNR Member State shipping administrations explained how they will support tanker shipping in extending the reporting obligation. Shipping industry representatives emphasised the need for exceptions for bunker ships and similar supply vessels.

Future work, expectations and development of RIS: inland navigation develops its digital future

The workshop recalled that the future development of RIS will increasingly be guided by the service provision concept in the context of e-Navigation, based on intermodality, data harmonisation and the reduction of administrative tasks.

The development of digital data exchange platforms (Business-to-Business) was emphasised, which will connect land-based and inland navigation carriers as well as ports as an extension of the RIS terminals. These platforms are needed for automating data exchange between inland vessels and terminals and for integrating inland navigation with logistic chains. Data exchange requires close cooperation between the various players which, according to various participants, is not yet a given.

The workshop participants also called for digitalisation of data and document exchange between inland navigation companies and administrations based on Business-to-Administration platforms. The discussions also broached the question of the digitisation of on-board documentation (paperless navigation), which depends on guaranteeing their authenticity.

Finally, this workshop demonstrated that the protection of personal data, the harmonisation of applicable requirements and Internet security in general continue to be important concerns for expert circles and stakeholders alike.

One of the workshop’s conclusions “If you want to travel quickly, travel alone, but if you want to travel far, let’s travel together” illustrates the willingness

expressed by all partners to unite in forging the future of inland navigation – especially in the digital arena.

All the presentations delivered during this workshop can be downloaded from the CCNR website: <http://www.ccr-zkr.org/13020149-en.html>

ABOUT THE CCNR

The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) is an international organisation that exercises an essential regulatory role in the navigation of the Rhine. It is active in the technical, legal, economic and environmental fields. In all its areas of action, its work is guided by the efficiency of transport on the Rhine, safety, social considerations, and respect for the environment. Many of the Central Commission’s activities now reach beyond the Rhine and are directly concerned with European navigable waterways more generally. The Central Commission works closely with the European Commission as well as with the other river commissions and international organisations.



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