

PRESS RELEASE

NAVIGATOR Shipping Consultants

14th "NAVIGATOR 2014 - The Decision Makers Forum"

Athens, Athenaem InterContinental Hotel, Athens

Thursday, 20 November 2014, 09:00-16:00

For the 14th year in a row, NAVIGATOR SHIPPING CONSULTANTS organized its annual high-level event, "The Shipping Decision Makers Forum". The Forum took place on the 20th of November 2014 and was attended by almost 500 personalities of the Greek Shipping Community.



Navigator Conference 2014 Ballroom View

Mrs. Danae Bezantakou, Managing Director of NAVIGATOR SHIPPING CONSULTANTS, welcomed the participants, presenting the company and introduced Next Maritime Greece by Navigator.

Capt. Dimitris Bezantakos, President of NAVIGATOR SHIPPING CONSULTANTS, at his opening remarks stressed the need to empower the voice of Greek shipping in the European Union and indicated its dominating role in Brussels and all major shipping organizations, a very good sign for the country in the challenging time for the Greek economy.

Despite Greece goes through a recession period with over-tonnaging, and volatile freight rates and reduced financing from the banks being its main characteristics, the greek-owned fleet has increased on DWT, as well as in number of vessels. Furthermore, the numbers of unemployment in the shipping sector has decreased and it has reduced the average age of the Greek fleet which dropped to 10 years old. Newly built vessels with high technology undoubtedly contribute to the protection of the environment ensuring cleaner seas. For all the above, Capt. Bezantakos highlighted that "Greece helps the European Union go round".

The Minister of the Hellenic Ministry of Shipping and the Aegean, Mr. Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, made the opening address of the Forum. The shipping minister highlighted the encouraging



results recorded by Greek shipping over the last year. He referred to the improved profile of the Greek shipping register, with 50 percent of the fleet under 10 years compared to 12.7 years, which is the average for the international fleet. Mr. Varvitsiotis noted that in comparison to the same period last year, the Greek shipping register has recorded a net increase in its total capacity and added that the majority of new

The Minister of the Hellenic Ministry of Shipping and the Aegean, Mr. Mitiades Varvitsiotis

registrations involve high valued newly ships, including new liquefied natural gas (LNG) carriers and VLCC tankers. In his speech, Mr. Varvitsiotis also added that according to data from the National Bank of Greece for the first semester of 2014, the revenue from shipping amounted to €7,45 billion, compared to €5,82 billion for the same period last year, which corresponds to a 28% annual increase.

As unique Platinum sponsor of the conference, the managing Director of MacGregor Greece Ltd., Mrs. Athena Kanellatou, had the opportunity to present the company and the solutions MacGregor offers for a wide range of maritime transports.

As a tradition established few years ago by Navigator, four foreign Ambassadors in Greece participated in a high-level panel untitled “Euro – Mediterranean Dialogue on Shipping”.

The Ambassador of Turkey, H.E. Mr. Kerim Uras and the Ambassador of Germany, H.E. Mr. Peter Schoof, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Jan Versteeg and the Ambassador of Egypt, H.E. Mr. Ahmed Fouad El Bidewy under the moderation of Mr. Francois Lafond, Executive Director of EuropaNova (Paris), presented their national strategies in order to support the shipping and shipbuilding industries. Mr. George Alexandratos, General Secretariat of the Hellenic Shortsea Shipowners’ Association was also among the panelists.



“The Euro – Mediterranean Dialogue on Shipping” panel

The Ambassador of Turkey, Germany and Netherlands discussed extensively about their national points of view regarding shipping and the new EU Integrated Maritime Policy.

In addition, the Ambassador of Egypt presented the Suez Canal Area Development Project.

Mr. Lafond stressed that the shipping community in Europe (and in Greece) is facing a very challenging competition from other countries where regulatory frameworks and economic conditions are not similar. The

panelists were asked to give their opinions and asked of what should be the best political and economic decisions to be proposed and to be taken in order to continue to promote this business and to develop its economic potential?

The panel’s moderator referred also to the dramatic economic situation that Greece has been the last five years, and underlined that Greece has almost two good reasons to speak in a more positive way of this country: the shipping activities as an economic growth driver and the geo-strategic location in the Mediterranean sea of Greece giving then the European Union a real asset in the Eastern part of Mare Nostrum.

An interview followed between Mrs. Danae Bezantakou, Managing Director of NAVIGATOR SHIPPING CONSULTANTS and Mrs. Danae Markopoulou, Second Mate of M/T Maran Centaurus, which was under Somalian Piracy for 50 days. For the first time in a shipping forum a crew member shared with the audience the experience of being held hostage by pirates.

The session of “The Shipping Market Issues” was moderated by Mrs. Christina Anagnostara, Director of Seanergy Maritime Holdings Corp. With a stellar panel consisting of Mr. Jeff Horst, Commercial Director of Foss Maritime US WEST COAST, Mrs. Joanna Koukouli, Deputy Claims Manager, SCB (Hellas) Inc. Piraeus Office, The American P&I Club, Mr. Dimitris Memos, Managing Director of Marine Traffic, Dr. Konstantinos Rokkos, CEO and Managing Director of TST International S.A., Governor in the International Propeller Club of the United

States, International Port of Piraeus, Greece and Mr. Imran Vohra, CEO of DIABOS, UAE and INDIA, Christina gauged panellists views on some of the latest shipping trends running across the industry. The panel focused on the different challenges that the owners, service providers, commercial managers and insurance agents are facing in the current market environment as well as the importance of minimizing vessel operating expenses and the role of technological innovation in maritime industry.



Shipping Market Issues Panel

The importance of technology in monitoring operational expenses and improving efficiency especially in light of the challenging environment of volatile freight rates and limited financing was also analysed.

The panellists discussed also the current outbreak of Ebola in West Africa and its impact on shipping. A rigorous discussion took place on how to handle the fear of Ebola and how risks and responsibilities are allocated in

charterparty agreements for vessels calling or having called an Ebola-affected country. From an insurance perspective, infection is treated in the same way as any other infectious disease.



The "Making Green Pay" panel

The "Making Green Pay" panel was moderated by Mrs. Helena Athoussaki, Chief Strategist of International Maritime Environmental Management and consisted of Mr. Michael Lund, Deputy Secretary General of BIMCO, Mr. Christos Matsikoudis, Account Manager Greece – Shipping Meteo Group, Mr. Kostas Seretis, General Manager of SRH Marine Hellas, Mr. Thanasis Sourlagkas, Member of the Steering Committee of HEMEXPO, Director of the Marine Industry Solutions Department of Raycap S.A. and Mr. Kostas Vlachos, Chief Operating Officer, CMM – Consolidated Marine Management Inc.

Following a presentation of the IMO 3rd GHG study, the technical panel "Making Green Pay" was dedicated to discuss the current environmental regulation framework and examine its practical implementation during such an economic turmoil. The panel consisted of technology, ship management and chartering representatives, who had a strong debate on a number of issues such as:

- What are the drivers for a shipping company to invest in green practices, mainly commercial, with the charterers occasionally sharing the cost for green measures or paying more for ECO ships?
- The economical, performance and safety benefits of implementing communication, weather routing, ECDIS but also risk failure systems on board, were highlighted by the technology representatives. With an air of skepticism on crew responding competently, the panelists agreed that a certain training is needed.

- Shipping companies stressed the difficulties in monitoring the energy performance of a vessel and highlighted the risk of managing all this information efficiently for effective decision making.

Despite the time restriction, the panel managed to raise some critical issues and provide its audience with significant food for thought about the future of sustainability.

Hydra was the honoured island for the NAVIGATOR 2014 Forum and the President of the Hellenic small islands network, Mr. Eleftherios Kehagioglou, referred to its huge maritime history in an inspired speech.

After the Forum, Mrs. Valia Papadimitriou, social entrepreneur & proud co-inspirer of” Bring Them Back” campaign did a presentation about the Greek determination to bring the Parthenon Marbles Back.



Navigator Conference 2014 Ballroom View