

## **BIMCO insights on the Future Maritime Policy for the Union**

BIMCO has joined other industry groups in submitting views on issues that the organisation feels deserve the attention of Commissioner Borg's Task Force in the development of the Future Maritime Policy for the Union.

In its submission to Commissioner Borg, BIMCO outlined comments related to five key points, namely:

- 1) Manpower and Expertise
- 2) Port Capacity and Transport Harmonisation
- 3) Regional Environmental Regulation
- 4) Harmonized Management of the Maritime Domain in the Union, and
- 5) New technology

BIMCO presented its views from the perspective of an international shipping association, as the decisions and policies relating to Maritime Policy will impact shipowners and operators situated far beyond Europe's borders, and has offered to continue to provide expert advice and guidance as the policy is developed.

### **BIMCO: 5 key points Towards a Future Maritime Policy for the Union**

#### **1) Manpower and Expertise**

BIMCO is concerned with the difficulty the industry faces in attracting and retaining qualified manpower both in seagoing and shore based positions.

The training and education of seafarers should be improved with a view to formalise career paths leading to shore based shipping positions in both the public and private sectors. This would contribute to the future availability of a qualified workforce having the necessary skills for positions such as pilots, port state control officers, VTS operators, training academics and shipping executives, all of which are prerequisites for a competitive shipping industry.

With respect to expertise, recognised international fora exist within areas such as ship design and pollution response. BIMCO feels that a policy contributing to an effective and competitive Maritime Cluster must aim at recognising, complementing and fully utilizing such existing expertise to the benefit of the public maritime administrations, the industry and the public at large. Additionally, BIMCO as the provider of training programmes at all levels, has expertise on planning and providing shipping related education for shore based positions, which expertise we will happily make available.

Every five years since 1990 BIMCO and the International Shipping Federation have conducted manpower studies. The data and conclusions reached in our latest study may be useful to the Task Force in addressing manpower and training issues, therefore BIMCO would be pleased to provide the Commission with the findings of the latest study.

## **2) Port Capacity and Transport Harmonisation**

With respect to port capacity the policy should address measures to facilitate, streamline and improve transportation throughout the Union. An efficient integrated transport system, supporting the smooth flow of commerce is a key factor in achieving the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. The continuing difficulties that European ports are experiencing in maintaining sufficient capacity to keep pace with increasing trade volumes should be recognized as a challenge that must be addressed.

BIMCO is of the view that Short Sea Shipping must play a key role in expanding the Union's transport capacity. When addressing this issue, we firmly believe that the scope should not be limited to regular liner services but should also include ships that do not operate on fixed schedules or routes. Furthermore, programmes initiated to enhance European Short Sea Shipping should not distort free trade or competition, nor should they restrict market access. As BIMCO's aim is that of free trade, access to markets, trade facilitation and harmonisation, we also fully support the philosophy demonstrated in the ports liberalisation directive.

A key parameter is the capacity of inter-modal transfer points and the use of internationally agreed standards and procedures regarding cargo movement and packaging. Such standards must be universal rather than regional in order to achieve tangible economic benefits for the industry and consumers.

Transportation between continents should be compatible with transport within the Union, and different transport modes should likewise be aimed at compatibility. BIMCO supports efforts to establish compatibility throughout the inter-modal transportation network.

## **3) Regional Environmental Regulation:**

BIMCO recognizes that also the industry has an obligation to protect the maritime environment and the Maritime Policy should therefore reflect the need for a close dialogue with industry stakeholders in connection with the development of new environmental regulations.

There may be both regional and global environmental concerns that must be considered, and it should be addressed how this is best achieved within the context of internationally applied regulations. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) must continue to play a key role in the development of such regulations. It should also be specified how environmental concerns are dealt with in respect of achieving the general growth objectives of the Union, as outlined in the Lisbon Strategy.

## **4) Harmonized Management of the Maritime Domain in the Union**

BIMCO supports the efforts to establish harmonized application and enforcement of Union regulations affecting all stakeholders in the maritime domain, including the industry, the public at large and the Member States.

The primary and tangible benefits to the shipping industry of such harmonization would be the facilitation and expedition of maritime emergency response and decision making; the collection of data e.g. in connection with casualty investigations and the consistent enforcement of obligations of Member States in relation to issues such as port state control, reception facilities and places of refuge.

BIMCO therefore believes that the relevant EU authorities enforcing maritime regulations should be expanded and strengthened in order to achieve this consistent enforcement of regulations throughout the Union. Such uniform and consistent enforcement of maritime regulations benefit and facilitate trade to the ports of the Union.

## **5) New technology**

BIMCO supports the development of new and user friendly technology which should be applied to make shipping lanes safer and more effective. Co-ordinated Vessel Traffic Services taking full advantage of developments in AIS and LRIT are examples of initiatives that can contribute towards these goals. Measures should assist in ensuring that stakeholders such as shipping, fisheries, recreational sailors, wind mills etc., using the ocean areas of the Union can make use of the seas without conflict, and at the same time such measures can contribute to the provision of the prerequisite data for facts based decisions.

*BIMCO is the world's largest international shipping association, with approximately 2,500 members situated in 123 countries. The owner-members of BIMCO control a fleet of about 525 million deadweight tonnes, thereby representing 65% of the world's merchant fleet. BIMCO is accredited as an observer at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Customs Organization (WCO) and as a liaison with the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO).*