

An aerial photograph of a wide river, likely the Danube, flowing through a landscape of green fields and forests. A large barge is visible on the right side of the river, moving towards the viewer. In the background, a dam or bridge structure spans across the river. The sky is clear and blue.

DC 185 - Meeting of the working
group on technical issues
(Budapest, October 12 -13, 2023)

65th Conference of directors of Danube shipping companies - signatories of Bratislava agreement

- 65th Conference was held in September 2023 in Bratislava.
- Due to Covid-19 situation, there has been no Conference since 2019.
- Next conference - The 66th Bratislava Agreement Conference will be organized by Navrom Romania.

Reconstructions of the fleet - Shipyards and dry docks available on Danube

- Main focus of all ship-owners is to invest in their fleet, making reconstruction of pushers and barges with some members showed interest to buy/build new barges.
- Mutual thought is that there is lack of shipyards on Danube River.
- Most of parties involved are focusing of covering all open top barges with hatch – covers to be able to load all types of cargoes.

Situation in Ukraine ports and Constanta

- Very important route on Danube River is now grain corridor Reni/Izmail – Constanta
- Long waiting times for revision in Galati are now 2-3 days, this is caused by big congestion due to many vessels and convoy working on grain corridor, also there is not sufficient number of authorities, police, officers to perform revision.
- Current status in Constanta is over 600 barges daily present in Constanta. Port expanses are very high in Constanta due to many maneuvers and pilotage during loading/discharging operations, forming of convoy.
- Delays in Constanta port are caused by lack of pilots and port pushers.
- Security of barges is big problem, barges are being hit and damaged very often due to big congestion, ship-owners have to also deal with stealing of equipment from barges.

Maintenance of the Danube fairway

- Members noticed almost no activities from state authorities and EU regarding improvement of waterways
- Mutual idea is to make dragging in critical sectors on Danube, which should be covered/organized by one official authority.
- It is necessary to present problems to authorities and to have regular discussions about status of Danube fairway.
- Authorities should make long term strategy to keep Danube fairway safe and navigable.

Crew on ships

- Members agreed with lack of schools for crew in European countries, no interest of young people to study in the field of water navigation and people who study often choose passenger's ships or to sail on sea.
- Goals are to motivate young people to study in the field of maritime together in cooperation with schools, implement students into practice on ships during their studies.
- Another idea is to engage sailors from countries outside of EU – for ex. from Philippines, India, Pakistan.
- Each shipping company will share their knowledge in the field of hiring sailors from third countries.

Conclusions

- Shipping companies is faced with lack of shipyards and repair capacities on Danube
- Big congestion in Ukranian ports, Galati and port of Constanta
- Simplify regulations and increase the number of people in Galati and Constanta
- Short term solution for Danube fairway - dragging every year
- Long term solution for Danube fairway - dams and other constructions on the Danube according to projects made in 1970s and 1980s in order to ensure minimum depth of 2.5 m
- Crew problems - motivate young people/change system in schools/engage sailors form third countries
- Closer cooperation with the Danube Commission in order to find long - term solutions for problems on the Danube



Thank you for your attention