



Letter of Commitment

European Port Inspectors Partnership in the Field of Occupational Safety and Health in Port Work Intensification of Cross-Border Cooperation

Employers and employees in European sea harbours have to comply with similar EU legislation on working conditions. The framework for a common strategy and thus also the orientation for each Member State's inspection concept is defined through the European Community strategy on wellbeing at work.

While complying with the EU legislation, each Member State is given ample opportunities for national differences in form and method. Supervision and enforcement are national responsibilities and are organised in equivalence with national supervision structures, legal proceedings and priorities.

In 2009, the Meeting of European Port Inspectors has taken place for the first time in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. There the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) agreed to closer cooperation in the European sea ports.

This letter of commitment lays down the common aim and objectives for that cross-border partnership in the field of Occupational Safety and Health in European sea ports.

At the present time the partners of the partnership are the following: Belgium, Bremen, Estonia, Finland, Hamburg, the Netherlands and Sweden.

Aim and Objective

The aim of the "European Port Inspectors Partnership" is

- to bring European port inspectors together and give the opportunity to build up a 'network'
- to familiarise themselves with each other's working methods
- to exchange practical information and experiences
- to achieve more similarity and closer coordination in work
- to improve and strengthen the international dimension during inspections.

Harbours, like no other sector, operate on a broad international scale. Most companies involved are not local players, but are operating on an international platform.

The same storage and transport companies are situated in different harbours. A 'level playing field' is considered as an advantage for every party involved.

Not only for the companies, but also the EU commission and other organisations such as SLIC emphasize the importance of a more equal playing field.

The participants of the first meeting were enthusiastic for a continuation of a similar initiative. The following agreements have been made:

- An Internet platform will be established where inspectors can exchange information. Initially this starts on the internet site of Hamburg. At a later stage this forum will be placed on the SLIC site.
- An inspectors meeting shall take place every year. It shall be elaborated that way to invite, step by step, even more European port inspectors and/or other EU port member states.
- A seminar / training workshop shall take place during the annual meeting and will be organised based on practical cases.
- A common port strategy shall be developed. This will be announced on the internet forum and will be discussed further with all the stakeholders. Condition is that it must be about a small, practical and realistic issue.
- Communal training events will be organised in the near future in order to get a similar outlook/approaches on inspection methods.
- Bilateral network contacts shall be used for consulting and working visits.

The next step to a more equal 'level playing field' in harbour inspections on port work is to be expected!

We hope that this partnership can guide EU port inspectorates in finding new ways of cooperation between inspectorates on a cross-border level.

Hamburg, 25. November 2015

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|  ★ FI Halme |  ★ NL Oostrom |  ★ SE Roos |
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