

IVR GENERAL ASSEMBLY 8.10.2021 MARIOTT HOTEL GHENT REPORT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

How happy am I to finally meet our members in person during the congress in Ghent. After postponing multiple times, we can definitely say third times a charm.

The years under review, the year 2020 and 2021 were undoubtedly marked by the outbreak of the global pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic had a big impact on IVR, including the cancellation of our annual congress last year, and the world around us and on our members.

COOPERATION IVR WITH INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Ever since our founding in 1874 and re-establishment in 1947 we are closely cooperating with the CCNR and its Member States. While cooperating we are able to focus and collaborating to achieve the objectives of the association.

I already informed you last year during the digital General Assembly that following the IVR congress in Prague 2019 the call for further investigation on the human factor root causes of accidents led to a big research project. IVR, together with the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water management, and the inland waterway sector (IWT platform), joined forces in conducting a research carried out by Interigo in order to find these root causes. The results of the first study (phase 1) were already shared with you and I am happy to share the results of phase 2 with you in the very near future. Hopefully by the end of this month.

To get back to the cooperation with international institutions, IVR, as observer is contributing to the development of these standards and closely involved in the works of CESNI with a focus on the technical standards that are exceptionally important for our members.

Besides IVR has been strongly involved in the elaboration of international agreements under the umbrella of the CCNR in the field of private law aspects, mainly the Budapest Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway (CMNI) and CLNI 2012, the Strasbourg convention on the limitation of liability in inland navigation.

To the benefit of its members IVR is promoting the ratification of these conventions by the very states. Thanks to the specialist know-how and extensive experience IVR is able to maintain a database of publications on relevant international conventions and decisions with respect to the international conventions CMNI and CLNI.

STRATEGY

Five years ago IVR adopted a new 5-years strategy with a focus on

1. strengthening the **main tasks**,



2. **increasing the forum role** and
3. **modernizing the visibility & communication**

of our association. All areas have been accompanied by targeted goals to support their realization. As we are on the brink of the 150th anniversary of our association, the new mission, vision and strategy will have a slightly different focus without losing the unique independent and neutral position of our association. Anticipating on the challenges related to the path to zero emission in 2050.

1. Main Tasks

IVR's main objective will still be the observation and representation of the **common interests** of the involved industries on the network of the major European inland waterways. It is coping with all topics within the common sphere of interests of its members which more concrete translates into

- Loss prevention
- Legal harmonisation and unification
- Maintaining a vessel database

However, as the sector is on the eve of a major transition, our association should also focus on the important unavoidable aspects of greening and energy transition. For the upcoming period the activities should take into account the consequences of alternative fuels, taking the aspect of Loss Prevention into account. Also the aspect of insurability is a very important issue to keep in mind.

It is therefore that IVR took, together with other organizations, to form a reporting point "bio fuel" to make sure that shipowners could inform the market about their experiences with the use of bio fuel. As an independent and neutral organization it was encouraged to also include positive experiences.

Within the described context the IVR committees have intensely continued the work and consultations in their respective fields in order to achieve the objectives of the association.

The chairs of our committees will inform you in detail about their activities following this speech. If course, you have been already informed about some of their activities during the year by receiving the IVR reports.

From this we can take that they have been very successful in realising their goals for which I would like to express my sincere thanks to the chairs and committee members.

Vessel Database

The IVR vessel database continues to offers online access for users and ship owners to the technical details of more than 20.000 vessels. The IVR Ship Information System is well known and used as an important source of information on both micro and macro level. It is daily updated and facilitates the publication of the statistics on the development and renewal of the fleet. The most recent statistics have been published in the released Annual Report 2020.



Fleet development in 2020

As we can see from these statistics the inland fleet is still renewing substantially. In 2020 108 newly built vessels were added to the Western Europe fleet (Belgium, Germany, France, Luxemburg, Netherlands and Switzerland). Part of these 108 new buildings are 55 tank- and 30 dry cargo vessels. The passenger fleet increased by 20 new vessels showing the importance of this booming business on European waterways. It is very unfortunate that especially the passenger fleet is suffering from the current pandemic with many ships in lay-up.

On the other side in 2020 35 vessels of the Western European fleet have been scrapped, amongst them 9 tank- and 21 dry cargo vessels.

The modernisation of the fleet is equally demonstrated by the increasing number of double hull tank vessels sailing on the European rivers and thus contributing to the high level of safety of the carriage of dangerous goods.

Green Award 2020

Included in our Online Ships database is an overview of the ships that have a Green Award, at what level it is classified and until when it is valid. What this shows is that the vast majority of ships are rated at a Green Award Silver level, and that a large part of them have been upgraded from a Bronze certification. Most Green Awards are awarded to tankers with 451 tank vessels, but what is interesting to know is that the Green Award is also on the rise in passenger shipping (59 ships compared to 50 ships last year, and even 19 vessels in 2019).

It is good to see that more and more attention is being paid to green, clean and sustainable shipping. A topic which will be most important given the ambition on the road to zero emission in 2050.

Greening

It is because of the transition to a more sustainable fleet that we will make sure the IVR Ships Information System is adapted to the needs of the users. It is that we will focus on the engines, use of alternative fuels and other instruments (for example emission label).

2. Forum role

IVR is known as the **unique international platform** at which national organisations of inland navigation, insurance industry and surveyors as well as individual companies and persons from these and related areas such as brokers, lawyers, manufacturers, yards etc. are represented.

One of the unique selling points of our association is its broad European network. This allows the exchange of experience between the various sectors and industries involved from many European countries. It is my goal to keep expanding our European IVR family from Amsterdam to Zagreb and to include more related sector to broaden and enhance our network.



3. Modernization of visibility & communication

During the pandemic, more important than ever, was to inform our members via other ways than our regular meeting in persons. Therefore we increased the amount of IVReports per years to up to 12 times informing our members about the various activities we undertake. As part of the current communication strategy we also intensified the use of new media, like LinkedIn. We already see the first results of our new communication strategy. Other parties, being non-members, find their way to the IVR secretariat more easily.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this year, I expressed my sincere hope that I was able to meet our members in person. As I was finally able to see and meet you over the course of the last couple of days, I want to express my sincere thanks to all members present today. Another sincere thanks goes to the board of directors and the committees for their contribution to the works of IVR in the past year.

IVR is on the brink to celebrate her 150th Birthday in 2024. It goes without saying that this milestone will not pass by unnoticed. Although IVR is confronted with some challenges, I am sure that also for the upcoming decades, IVR will keep continue to be the unique and independent European Association as she already is today.

To conclude, I want to thank you again for your attendance today and look forward to a great continuation of our event. As unfortunately I did not have yet had the opportunity to speak to everyone in person, please do not hesitate to contact me for a cup of coffee/lunch after this event. I would love to continue building on the solid foundation of IVR.

Frouwke Klootwijk-de Vries
Secretary General
8 October 2021

