

# PRESS RELEASE

## Navigating into the future at the IVR Congress 2024

### IVR members gather in Frankfurt am Main for annual congress

27-5-2024, Rotterdam

The annual IVR Congress, which this year took place from Wednesday 15 to Friday 17 May in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, was once again a great success. Members, board and committee members of the association gathered in the city where it all started for IVR in the year 1877. IVR is a unique international platform that unites organisations and individuals from the inland navigation sector, transport insurance, and surveyors in Europe. It also includes related business areas such as lawyers, manufacturers and shipyards. With 225 participants from 11 different European countries, the congress offered an inspiring and informative experience. Over the course of three days, valuable insights were shared, networks strengthened and new ideas born, resulting in an unforgettable event.

#### **Board and committee meetings and Executive Dinner**

The congress kicked off on Wednesday 15 May at the prestigious Steigenberger Icon Frankfurter Hof. This beautiful hotel, which opened in 1876 (one year before IVR was founded), proved highly suitable for the meetings of the Executive Committee, the Board of Management & Advisory Council and the Loss Prevention Committee. In the evening, all board and committee members were welcomed to the hotel's Wintergarten restaurant for an aperitif and delicious 3-course dinner to thank them for their efforts for IVR. The meeting for the Legal Committee was scheduled for the following morning on Thursday, 16 May.

#### **Workshop “Navigating into the future, the value and versatility of inland waterways”**

On Thursday afternoon, 16 May, all participants were received at the registration desk of the Steigenberger Frankfurter Hof. After a buffet lunch, members were welcomed to the ballroom for the workshop ‘Navigating into the future, the value and versatility of inland waterways’. During the workshop, participants boarded a journey into the future, where we focused on the important role and versatility of inland waterways in the future of transport and logistics. Four inspiring speakers shared their expertise and insights from various perspectives.

The first speaker of the workshop was Mr Maurits van der Linde, policy advisor on Hazardous Substances and Safety at Royal Dutch Inland Shipping (KBN). He spoke about the context in which wheelhouse and bridge collisions occur. Mr Jan Eric Klonki, head of QEHS at HGK Shipping, then gave a presentation on safety culture in the inland navigation sector. After the coffee break, the third speaker Ignace Kroos, partner at Caluwaerts Uytterhoeven Lawyers, presented on the future of floating degassing and the associated legal frameworks and case law. Salih Karaarslan, senior policy officer for sustainable inland navigation at the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, delivered the final presentation where he addressed the topic of greening in inland navigation.

#### **Aperitif and dinner**

In the evening, the group of participants left together for the dinner venue. After a short walk through Frankfurt city centre, they arrived at the Logenhaus zur Einigkeit, which was founded in 1742. A

beautiful historical venue to jointly reflect on the workshop and all that connects us as an association. After a welcome aperitif, a so-called walking dinner was served for the first time in IVR congress history. The set-up of the walking dinner created a relaxed and informal atmosphere, with the idea of encouraging more social interactions and networking opportunities. A cocktail bar and DJ completed the picture and ensured a dynamic evening.

### **General Assembly**

The third and final day of the congress, Friday 17 May, started with the General Assembly on board the Maria Sibylla Merian, the newest addition to the Primus fleet. President Anneke Kooiman opened the meeting as the ship embarked on her first cruise down the river Main. Simultaneously on land, the partner programme took place, which involved a guided city tour of Frankfurt's historic landmarks. On board, Secretary General Frouwke de Vries looked back at IVR's activities over the past year. These included the cooperation with international organisations and institutions such as the CCNR and the European Commission, IVR's activities and ongoing projects, the vessel database and the increased focus on emissions and climate change.

Traditionally, the chairs of the Loss Prevention Committee, Ronald Koops, and the Legal Committee, Dr Martin Fischer, informed members about the numerous activities in their respective fields. A new member of the Board of Management, Mr Frans Niemeijer (TVM Insurance), was also appointed during the General Assembly. The meeting concluded with the announcement of the location of the next IVR Congress from 4 to 6 June 2025. This will take place in Vienna, Austria. At the end of the General Assembly, a closing lunch was served after a short stop on land, after which the ship once again made a short voyage, allowing members and partners to reminisce about the congress while enjoying the Frankfurter skyline. IVR expresses its gratitude to the participating members, guests, speakers and sponsors who all came to Frankfurt and therefore looks back on a very successful event.

A detailed report, presentations and photos are published at [www.ivr-eu.com](http://www.ivr-eu.com).

***IVR**, International Association for the representation of the mutual interests of the inland shipping and the insurance and for keeping the register of inland vessels in Europe.*

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