



EUROPEAN  
TUGOWNERS  
ASSOCIATION

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## 2014: the ETA moves on!

The ETA's Secretariat has moved its postal address to:  
Hertogstraat/Rue Ducale 67 B 2  
BE-1000 BRUSSELS  
TEL: +32 3 383 50 22  
MOB: +32 475 27 29 64.

New email addresses:

Hugo Callens, Secretary General : [h.callens@eurotugowners.com](mailto:h.callens@eurotugowners.com)

Liliane Faes, Secretarial Assistant: [l.faes@eurotugowners.com](mailto:l.faes@eurotugowners.com)

Secretariat: [info@eurotugowners.com](mailto:info@eurotugowners.com)

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### From the Chairman Mr Peter Vierstraete

Founded in 1963 our Association celebrated its 50th Anniversary in the beautiful surroundings of Opatija, Croatia.

There I had the honour to be elected successor to chairman Richard Knight, who during his two years mandate safeguarded the interests of the ETA and its members with full commitment. Our hosts from family owned operator Jadranski Pomorski Servis Rijeka deserve every praise and gratitude for having organised a memorable jubilee edition, offering a most interesting working programme and a generous welcome to an almost record number of delegates.

Professor Eric Van Hooydonk wrote an impressive history of the ETA's works and membership in his book "Fifty years of the European Tugowners Association: from London club to Brussels lobby". It describes indeed the long road which the Association travelled as an interest group to represent its members, big and small, as their sole voice in Europe.

While no worldwide representative organisation for port towage exists one may assume without diffidence that our Association is the sole lobby organisation worldwide making representation on a wide range of common concerns within Europe and beyond.

For many years the ETA and its members have striven to promote best practices enhancing smooth and safe operations in the European ports served by them.

A survey among our members has yet again made clear that the European port towage industry by no means waited for legislative initiatives by the European Commission to challenge competitors or to respond to them in ports offering viable market space for such competition.

As expressed in the ETA Position Papers, captured in the next article, they, like others, do not fix their market strategy upon instigation of legislative interventions, but base it on economic estimations and entrepreneurial initiative.

Therefore, the ETA in clear and resolute language opposes to this repeated attempt of the European Commission to press through a Port Package III on questionable factual grounds.

In times when the EU suffers from being accused of excessive interventionism, the ETA calls on the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament to stay on the path of "Soft Law", rather than trying to introduce legislation, which, though based on truly respectable aims, presumes wrong expectations on its contribution to growth and competitiveness of the European ports.

In the meantime environmental challenges in towage will be the main topics for our forthcoming Annual Meeting in Bourgas. I look forward to a great turnout and thank our hosts from Multiship for their efforts to prepare yet another great ETA event.

Peter Vierstraete  
Chairman



ETA Chairman  
Peter Vierstraete



Prof. Eric Van Hooydonk (left) hands over the first copy to Past Chairman Richard Knight of his Jubileum book "Fifty Years of the European Tugowners Association" during the 2013 Annual Meeting in Opatija, Croatia



Alexander and Željka Maras from hosting Member Company Jadranski Pomorski Servis

## EU PORTS POLICY

The ETA's Executive Committee has repeatedly rejected the European Commission's initiative to launch a "Port Package III" by way of a new Regulation proposal on market access to port services and financial transparency of ports.

In its 2013 Position Papers (click [here](#) and [here](#)) the ETA reflected the outcome of its 82 members' consultation operating in the TEN-T and other European ports within 21 European countries.

The ETA underlined the towage industry's continuous efforts to respond to the ever growing demands of its customers, the shipping industry and terminal operators by heavy investment in more powerful tugs, capable of handling ever larger vessels, requiring assistance from fewer tugs.

While European harbour towage providers are facing a very competitive environment in ports where the market size is large enough to attract several operators, the ETA members are firmly convinced that this legislative's intervention would not enhance competition but would put at risk the sustainability of their investments, inhibit further investment and consequently seriously threaten safe port operations.

In the meantime, over 540 amendments have been tabled. Discussions in the TRAN Committee on compromise amendments are ongoing and will be discussed on 17th March. The vote should follow on 18th March. The vote in the Plenary of the European Parliament is planned on 14th April 2014.



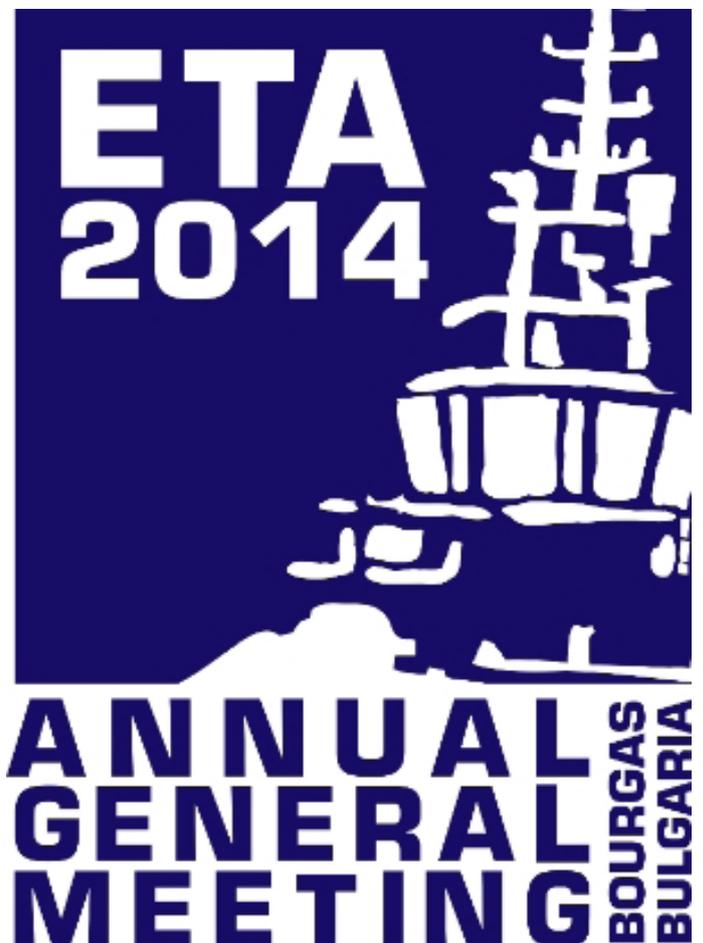
EU Vice-President and Commissioner for Transport Siim Kallas gets the ETA's 50th Anniversary Jubilee book from ETA Secretary General Hugo Callens. Hopefully convincing literature and evidence of the Association's representativeness for the towage industry.

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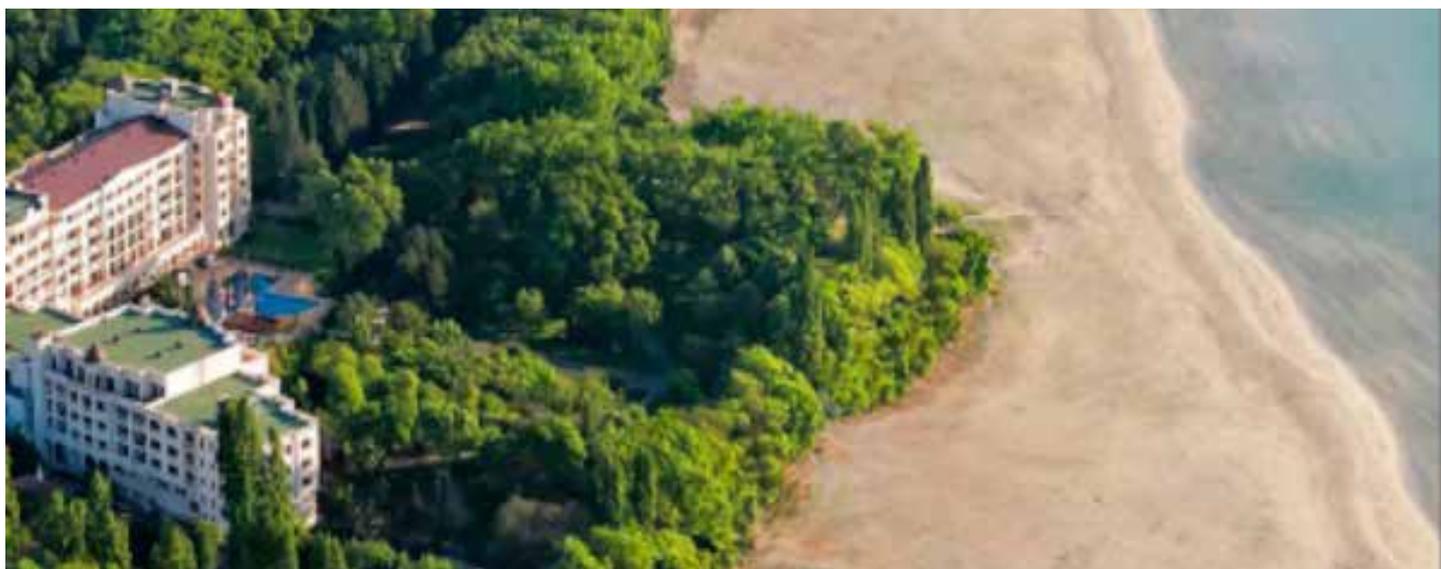
## **51st ANNUAL MEETING IN BOURGAS BULGARIA 21st-23rd MAY 2014**

The 51st Annual Meeting, hosted by Multraship Towage & Salvage will take place in the Bulgarian port city of Bourgas. The venue is [the Grand Hotel & Spa Primoretz](#).

The working programme will include a Conference on the themes of Safety, Training and Certification as well as response to environmental challenges..



# PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME



Grand Hotel Primoretz, the venue of the 51st Annual Meeting in Bourgas, Bulgaria

## DAY 1: 21 MAY 2014

**12.30:**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS LUNCH  
at the Hotel, Salini Restaurant

**15.00-17:00:**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
at the Hotel, Casino Meeting Room

**19.00:** WELCOME DRINK

at the Pier on the beach

**20.00:** WELCOME DINNER

at Restaurant Vodinitza



## DAY 2: 22 MAY 2014

**10.00-12.45:**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of FULL MEMBERS  
at the Primoretz Hotel

**13.00-14.30:**

LUNCH ALL MEMBERS and ASSOCIATED  
MEMBERS and INVITEES  
at Restaurant Primoretz

**14.30:00-16.30:**

CONFERENCES: FULL, ASSOCIATED MEMBERS  
and INVITEES

**19.30-:**

GALA DINNER

at Restaurant Neptun



## DAY 3: 23 MAY 2014 : SOCIAL DAY

9.30:

GATHER IN THE LOBBY

10.00 -13.00:

EXCURSION TO NESSEBAR ISLAND

13.00-

LUNCH

at Restaurant "Captain's Meeting"/"Kapitanska Srehta"

16.00:

RETURN by bus



from the right: Mr Dimitar Nikolov, Mayor of the Municipality of Bourgas, Mr Peter Vierstraete (Smit Northwest Europe), ETA Chairman, Mr Pepijn Nuijten (Multraship host)

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## NAUTICAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Chaired by Peter Lindenau from Hamburg based operator Petersen & Alpers, this technical committee works on an update of the Joint ETA-EMPA Guidelines on Design and Layout of Harbour Towing Equipment. To view these click [here](#).

Further members are Raymond Bartolo from Tug Malta, Leendert Muller from Multraship and Michael Stauffeldt from URAG.

The appendix to the Joint Guidelines will be presented and commented at the Bourgas Annual Meeting after previous publication.

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## PORTOPIA

The ETA together with other maritime stakeholders became associated partner in this EC funded project, aiming at creating an integrated knowledge base and management system of port performance.

It will be measure/map:

- market trends and structure
- socio-economic performance
- environment and occupational health and safety and security
- governance and finance and user perceptions of quality

The project will run over a 4 years period. ETA's Secretary General Hugo Callens said: *"our Association's active contribution to this project will instigate us to professionalise the necessary data collection on the state and performance of the towing industry in Europe, a necessary tool to make representation on behalf of the sector. Moreover it should allow our members to measure their own performances by using a valuable and scientifically underbuilt benchmarking tool."*

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Our mailing address is: European Tugowners' Association - Hertogstraat/Rue Ducale 67 B2 - Brussels B-1000 - Belgium - [info@eurotugowners.com](mailto:info@eurotugowners.com)

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