



EUROPEAN TUGOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter December 2024

ETA held its Sustainable Conference 2024 in Rome

The ETA Sustainable Conference took place at Grand Hotel Flora, in Rome on the 12th of November. This year, the conference focused on the latest regulatory developments such as the new Lloyd's Open Form, the revised UK standard conditions for towage and the revision of the EU's Monitoring, Reporting and Verification Regulation (MRV Regulation).



The ETA Chairman, Alberto Dellepiane opened the conference underlining how the sector is adapting to the constantly changing legal environment and highlighted the importance of participating in the definition of these norms.

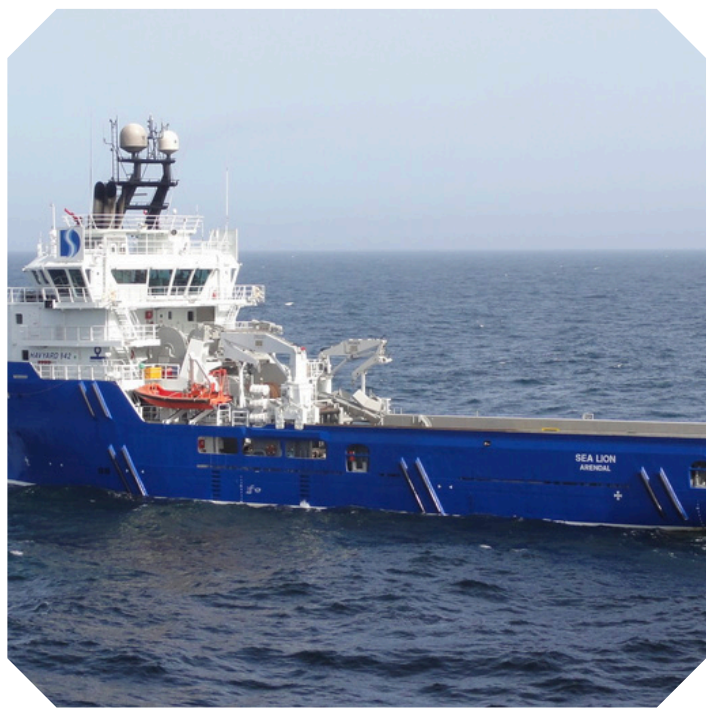
The first panel focused on the new Lloyd's Open Form. The speakers ([James Herbert, ISU](#), [Simon Tatham TugAdvise](#) and [Ben Harris, Shipowners' Club](#)) updated the attendants on the Form's changes and answered questions on the most controversial articles such as the scopic clause.

The second panel discussed the recently revised UK Standard Conditions for Towage. The document provides a framework of liability protection for tugs when assisting other vessels. The panelists, [Nick Dorman \(Targe Towing and Chair of the review panel\)](#), [Alexander McCooke \(Shipowners' Club\)](#) and [Simon Tatham \(TugAdvice\)](#) summarized one by one the document's 9 clauses and explained the main changes to the text.

The European Tugowners Association adopted a position on the matter which was submitted. The document points out the ambiguity of the Delegated Act when it comes to the term "offshore ships" as it could lead to various interpretations that may jeopardise the uniform application of the MRV Regulation, including within the towage sector.

Finally, the ETA Secretary General, [Anna Maria Darmanin](#) gave an update on the revision of the EU's MRV Regulation and its potential impact on the port towage sector. Ms Darmanin outlined the ETA's action to circulate the Association's position and help the EU's policymakers adopt a more coherent text.





Tugs are not included in the EU's new legislation for offshore vessels

The European Commission has finally adopted a delegated act complementing the Regulation on the monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions from offshore ships (MRV Regulation), which does not include tugs in the list of vessels obliged to report emissions.

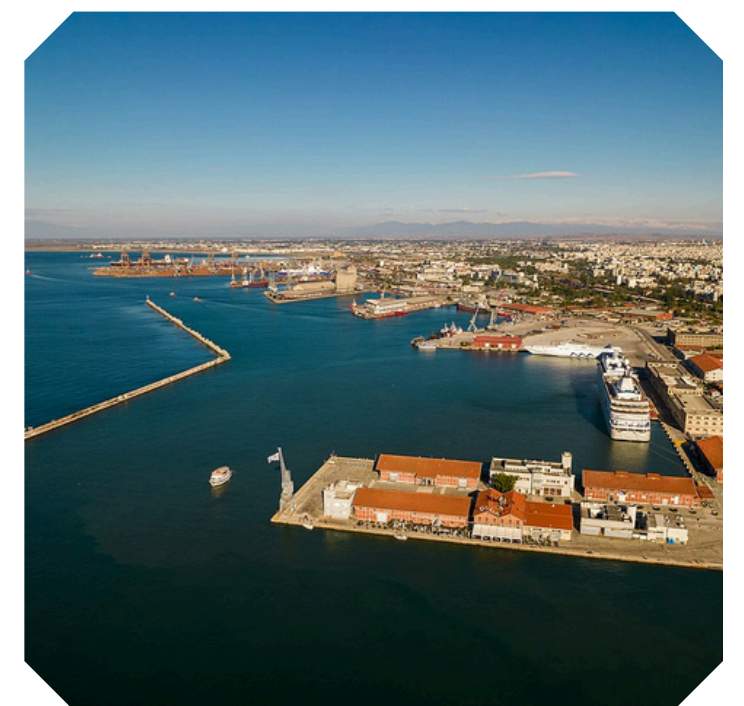
According to this EU law, the Regulation should apply, from 1 January 2025, to offshore ships above 400 gross tonnage in respect of the greenhouse gas emissions released

during their voyages to, from or within the European Union. A draft of the delegated act complementing this legislation contained a list of types of boats that are covered by the legislation, and initially this list included offshore tug/supply vessels. This could generate extra administrative burdens and red tape to some companies that have tugboats classified as offshore tugs but carry out harbour towage and do occasionally offshore jobs.

The ETA Secretariat, together with an ad hoc member's group and in constant communication with ECSA and the Belgian and Dutch Shipowners Associations, coordinated a response to the delegated act, highlighting the inconsistencies it would generate if it included the mention to "offshore tug/supply vessels" in the list of covered boats by the Regulation. Furthermore, the Secretary General could discuss this list with EC officials and present the ETA's case directly.

Finally, the adopted delegated act only mentions anchor handling tug supply vessels and offshore supply ships.

The European Commission and the Greek government agree on the revised tonnage tax



The European Commission has announced its support to the proposed review of the Greek tonnage tax scheme. The measures included in this revision will align the tax system with EU State aid rules. Nevertheless, the proposed adjustments allow Greece to retain the tonnage tax, a system that lets shipping companies calculate taxes based on fleet size rather than corporate profits, offering predictability and fiscal advantages while complying with EU standards. The updated legal framework includes:

- The removal of certain tax advantages, such as benefits on dividends and capital gains for shipping companies, as they are incompatible with EU market rules.
- The exclusion of tax exemptions related to inheritance laws, which were previously part of the scheme.
- Limiting tax benefits to companies directly involved in maritime transport, in accordance with EU's Maritime Guidelines.

In December 2015, the Commission sent a set of proposals to Greece to ensure that state support to the maritime sector in Greece complies with EU state aid rules, and in particular with the Maritime Guidelines. These allow Member States to support their shipping industries, but the aid must be narrowly targeted to ensure fair competition within the Single Market.

Next events

European Shipping Summit
Brussels 19-20th March 2025

Tugtechnology
Antwerp 20-21 May 2025

European Tugowners Association
Rue des Colonies 11/ Koloniënstraat 11
Brussels 1000



Tel: +32 25 17 60 26
info@eurotugowners.com
www.eurotugowners.com