EPCSA announces new chairman and vice chairman

The European Port Community Systems Association (EPCSA) is determined to keep its focus on the important issues and maintain close contact with officers and decision-makers in the European Commission, according to the association's new chairman and vice-chairman.

Alan Long, managing director of Felixstowe-based Maritime Cargo Processing (MCP), has been appointed chairman of EPCSA, and Piet Jan ten Thije, strategy and business director of Rotterdam-based Portbase, is the new vice chairman of the association.

"As we move forward, we must build on what we have started and already achieved," said Alan Long. "We will continue to develop our relationship with DG Taxud and DG Move, as well as with the United Nations, the World Customs Organization, the European Maritime Safety Association (EMSA) and other European and international organisations in order to get our message across."

The creation of EPCSA less than two years ago has given Port Community Systems a real voice in Europe. In essence, EPCSA's mission is to explain the vital role that Port Community Systems (neutral, open electronic platforms enabling intelligent and secure exchange of information) already play in the supply chain, and to ensure that European decision-makers do not 'reinvent the wheel' when moving towards a Single Windows environment for the electronic reporting of data.

For Alan Long, taking over as chairman of EPCSA coincides with 30 years of working in the Port Community Systems industry. In January 1983 he was part of the UK Customs project team that helped to lay the foundations for FCP 80, the predecessor of MCP.

"I am hoping to use my experience to support those looking to create a Port Community System," he said. "Our advice would always be – start small and develop

the system from there, ideally so that it can finance itself. Too many people want something very complicated straight away when they would be better off starting with something a lot simpler."

EPCSA's liaison with the EC is the most important and dominant priority, according to new vice chairman Piet-Jan ten Thije, who worked with P&O Nedlloyd and as global director e-commerce with Maersk Line before joining Portbase.

"We want to make ourselves THE credible party to refer to in all matters regarding Port Community Systems and also, in the discussion about maritime Single Windows, we need to press home Port Community Systems as the established way of doing business in Europe.

"There is simply a lack of knowledge in this area – we need to help the authorities understand what Port Community Systems already do, so they can avoid unnecessary duplications in development. They could otherwise end up bypassing Port Community Systems and spending millions of Euros of taxpayers' money that they don't need to spend."

EPCSA will also continue to develop its membership, said Piet-Jen ten Thije. He added: "It is vital that we stick to what we are here for and not get distracted by getting involved in peripheral topics."

The new chairman and vice chairman take over from Pascal Ollivier, director of corporate development at SOGET (France), who was EPCSA's founding chairman, and Evelyn Eggers, sales department director at DAKOSY (Germany), who was vice chairman.

Looking back on his time as chairman, Pascal Ollivier highlighted two major achievements by EPCSA: gaining recognition from international organisations of the importance of Port Community Systems in the Single Window environment and focusing strongly on communications with DG Taxud about ICS (Import Control System) phase 2 and Directive 2010/65 on ships reporting formalities.

"We started really from nowhere in terms of international organisations' understanding about Port Community Systems," he said. "The European

Commission, United Nations and World Customs Organization were our three main targets and in less than two years they all understand the value proposition of PCSs.

"At the end of 2011, the UN statement following its Global Trade Facilitation Conference in Geneva clearly recognised that Port Community Systems are a type of Single Window for the supply chain environment. That was a major achievement. Then more recently, at the European Union's e-Maritime conference in Brussels (November 2012), there was clear recognition from the EC that Port Community Systems could be the foundation infrastructure in the e-maritime environment."

Notes to Editors:

A Port Community System:

- Is a neutral and open electronic platform enabling intelligent and secure exchange of information between public and private stakeholders in order to improve the competitive position of the sea and air ports' communities;
- Optimises, manages and automates port and logistics efficient processes through a single submission of data and by connecting transport and logistics chains.

The European Port Community Systems Association (EPCSA) provides Port Community Systems with a common lobbying position at the European Union. EPCSA's members are working together to have a positive influence on new developments and initiatives.

EPCSA's mission is to influence public policy in the European Union level in order to achieve e-logistics throughout all European ports, operating as a key element of the EU maritime, shipping and logistics industry.

The six founding members of EPCSA are: SOGET (France), dbh (Germany), Maritime Cargo Processing (UK), Portbase (Netherlands), PORTIC (Spain) and DAKOSY (Germany). Since its formal launch in 2011, EPCSA has expanded rapidly, and membership continues to increase.

A Single Window:

A Single Window is a complex community undertaking which facilitates trade. Various business and functional models can be used for the design of a successful Single Window system. Whether implemented at the regional, national or international level, a major factor in accomplishing a Single Window project is a strong leading body to promote its benefits. These efforts, combined with strong political support and the appropriate project-centric organisation and resources, are the elements required for a Single Window project to succeed.

www.epcsa.eu

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Photographs

Photographs of Alan Long (Chairman) and Piet Jan ten Thije (Vice-Chairman) are available in Hi-Resolution on request to Richard Morton

Alan Long – Chairman   Piet Jan ten Thije – Vice Chairman