

PROMOTING SAFETY INNOVATION AT TOC EUROPE 2023

The second instalment of **Safety Village** this June from 13th to 15th in Rotterdam – a unique initiative of **TT Club** and the **International Cargo Handling Coordination Association** – again set up a venue for workshops and panel sessions, providing opportunities for companies to showcase their innovative safety devices, processes, and services. Five two-hour-long, specially convened panel sessions, spread through three days, gave all aspects of safety in cargo handling an airing with the goal of advancing the cause of a more secure and sustainable environment for the goods and equipment featured in global trade. Click [here](#) to read the event's summary.



Photo: TOC Europe

INCREASING EUROPEAN PORTS' VIGILANCE AGAINST DRUG SMUGGLING

TT Club and its partners from **BSI Screen** are drawing the port industry's attention to the exponential growth in contraband drugs entering Europe. In April-May 2023 alone, reports included finding cocaine in containers of fruit going through the Port of Antwerp; in Rotterdam, narcotics were discovered in reefers carrying melons from Panama; ecstasy with a value of €1.5m was intercepted in a truck at Calais, while 133kg of marijuana and hashish at the Port of Motril in southern Spain (brought in from North Africa); and news came of smuggling gangs with links to Brazil operating in Lisbon and Oporto. "These are just fragments of the evidence that we have of the crucial role ports are playing in the illicit drug trade across Western Europe," comments **Mike Yarwood**, Managing Director Loss Prevention at TT Club. **Erica Bressner**, BSI's European Analyst, adds, "Increasing awareness, particularly the role of European ports in drug smuggling, is crucial to restricting this trade, especially as indications show that smuggling at ports may be increasing for certain key narcotics, like cocaine. Europol has reported record-setting seizures of cocaine every year since 2017, particularly in seaports [...]." She furthers, "In response, European port authorities have worked to implement additional security measures to combat this trade and its concurrent violence. However, the control of the criminal syndicates is such that they have the ability to adapt their smuggling routes to evade authorities. This includes a diversification of smuggling routes to target non-traditional ports of entry where security measures are less intensive." TT Club points out that criminals dispose of a sizeable toolbox of levers: from bribing transport & logistics workers, customs officials and police officers through threatening port workers and their families (often online and through social media) to online hacking to then set upon unsuspecting trucks drivers to steal the cargo unit with the contraband. Yarwood outlines one strategy, "Employee vetting and training both in terms of motivating them to be vigilant and loyal but also in terms of maintaining secure processes of documentation and online communication." He also advises, "Identifying the more common origin points of contraband cargo, such as South America and North Africa, and 'rogue' consignees and unexpected delivery points will help." A new 70-strong security corps was established in Antwerp, an increased number of CCTV surveillance cameras and drones got deployed in Rotterdam, and a specialist anti-drug trafficking police unit in the Netherlands was set up. "We are dealing with global crime syndicates. Efforts to combat their activities will be akin to squeezing a half-inflated balloon, we may constrict them in one or two ports, but they will find ways to exploit others. We urge all in our industry to be aware of the possibilities of drug importation and to take all steps they can to restrict this illicit trade," advocates Yarwood.

MACN HAS TWO NEW MEMBERS

TT Club has joined the **Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN)** – an over 180-member-strong global business network working towards the vision of a maritime industry free of corruption that enables fair trade to benefit society at large – in a move to underline further the mutual insurer's commitment to making the industry safer and more secure. "TT Club has long been aware of the issues surrounding corruption in the maritime transport industry. The insurer is dedicated to ensuring these corrupting effects on the overall integrity of freight transport worldwide are minimised, if not eradicated," the only non-P&I insurer to be part of MACN underscored in a press brief. TT Club will work with MACN in implementing its anti-corruption principles by raising awareness of corruption issues and promoting best practices to combat its effects. The insurer will also help the Network promote its drive for collective action with the aim of creating a more sustainable operating environment through anonymous reporting and data analysis. Moreover, through its experience and knowledge of shore-side operations, TT Club will widen the scope of MACN efforts to combat corruption beyond its current maritime focus. **Mark Argentieri**, TT Club's COO, commented, "At TT, we have aligned our ESG strategy with the UN Global Compact and its Sustainable Development Goals, becoming a signatory to the UN Principles for Sustainable Insurance (UN PSI) late last year. In now joining MACN, we are taking a further step in focusing on the issues that are most relevant to our Members, and where the Club is able to have a positive impact, cooperating with international institutions that are dedicated to ensuring increased transparency in maritime transactions and enhanced procedural integrity." The Helsinki-headquartered **ESL Shipping** has also subscribed to MACN. "Membership in MACN provides us additional tools to support our seafarers when they visit areas where the risk for bribery and corruption is high. Thanks to their large database, we will have a better understanding of what kind of issues might be expected in a certain port," explained **Kirsi Ylärinne**, the company's Operations & Environmental Director. **Mikko Rausti**, Sea Personnel, Quality & Safety Director at ESL Shipping, added, "When our vessel is to call a port where the crew is expected to face a risk of facilitation payments or other attempts of fraud or corruption, our safety function goes through the best practices according to internal and MACN guidelines with Master. Together they ensure that direct contact lines and procedures are established for each port call."

TANGIBLE BENEFITS FROM APPLYING MODERN SAFETY TECH

During a recent webinar, the **International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA)** and its partners stressed the need to keep the wheels of innovation spinning to provide transport workers with ever-increasing workplace safety. According to ICHCA, there have been over 350 shore-based fatalities, including 349 port workers and 20 truckers globally, since 2000. **Richard Steele**, the Association's CEO, urged in this context, "The key thing that industry can do is to agree on common good practice and then act as champions, role modelling those good values and creating the expectation of standards across the industry." Safety and sustainability advisors from **Rombit** explained that technology in a driver's cab that constantly reminds workers to perform their tasks safely could significantly reduce accidents (by as much as 80%). Maintenance, energy and repair costs were reduced by around \$5,000/vehicle/year from such innovations as the real-time digital coach. The company's CEO, **Evert Bulcke**, commented, "To be successful, you need training and procedures, supported by continuous training and alerting through digital tools." Another estimation, this time from the **US Occupational Safety and Health Administration**, says that around 70% of all lift and crane accidents could be prevented through training and the application of digital tools. Steele also agreed with **Steve Biggs**, Senior Assistant for the **International Transport Workers' Federation**, that changes to work practices must be agreed with staff, getting their 'buy-in,' as only then could new technological fixes and innovations in work practices be successfully applied. In a follow-up press release, ICHCA stressed that "safety rules need to be reiterated constantly, but that must be combined with visible and felt health and safety leadership from management to the shop floor. All of which can then be supplemented by tech that produces data and can monitor safety performance. In its continued campaign to encourage such innovation, ICHCA will once more launch the annual **TT Club Innovation in Safety Awards** on September 4th this year."

NCB HAZCHECK-WWF ANTI-ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE CO-OP

The company specialising in cargo screening has teamed up with the **World Wildlife Fund (WWF)** to tackle the pervasive issue of illegal wildlife trade to "[...] safeguard endangered species and protect global biodiversity for generations to come," the two said in a press release. By developing an industry source for historical data from past seizures that can be integrated into a container line's internal cargo screening solution, or an industry tool such as **NCB's** flagship software, **Hazcheck Detect**, WWF aims to enhance the screening efficiency of bookings and shipments. This data-driven approach will enable the detection system to accurately identify potential illegal wildlife shipments, bolstering the detection capabilities of carriers and contributing to the fight against illicit wildlife trade. "The current system and practice of cargo screening are not enough, and the shipping and maritime container industries need a shared technology solution to effectively screen shipments. And this is what the partnership aims to accomplish," underlined **Nicole Wong**, CEO of WWF Hong Kong.

PREPARING SEAFARERS FOR DECARBONISATION & DIGITALISATION

DNV has prepared ***The Future of Seafarers 2030: A Decade of Transformation*** report (commissioned by the **Singapore Maritime Foundation**), in which the classification society addresses the massive changes facing the shipping world, including new seafarer training and upskilling programmes to ensure operational safety. The study examines the implications of decarbonisation and digitalisation on workforce preparedness in the current decade. "New fuels and propulsion technologies, the growing importance of IT on board, ship-to-shore integration, and the emergence of shore control centres come with new challenges and opportunities for ship crews," DNV wrote in a press release. The class has also prepared **a slideshow summary** of the study into the future of seafarers.