

Coastlink

11 November 2011

Dear Coastlink Members and Friends

At a Board Meeting in Bilbao prior to the Bilbao conference, we discussed the future of Coastlink. This email is to explain how the Board sees the future of Coastlink.

The last two years have not been good from a financial standpoint as it is obvious that so many people have had their travel and conference-attending budgets cut. We would also have more members if financial constraints were not as severe as they are. To add a further complication, many people are simply too busy even to network; their day-to-day work keeps them extremely busy.

From an organisational point of view, finding dates for conferences is difficult too. Despite falling delegate numbers, organisers continue to run conferences and those with associated exhibitions seem still able to make a profit.

Because Coastlink has always been run on an informal basis, we see no point in pressing on just trying to stay in the conference business. It's not just a matter of profitability; we don't want to let delegates down by staging conferences that have low attendance levels. We want to give value and with recent conferences, we have come close to failing in this respect. If networking is to be worthwhile, you need a good level of attendance.

So how do we intend to proceed?

We want to continue but we will cut back and make some structural changes. Coastlink will not continue as a UK registered company and so there will no longer be a board of directors. We have however taken steps to retain the brand, the website (www.coastlink.co.uk) will continue and we will also maintain the Coastlink site on LinkedIn. We urge all of you who are interested in Coastlink to join the Coastlink Group on Linked in for news not only of our intended activities but also general news relating to shortsea/feeder shipping. Please also send us your company news and we will publish it on LinkedIn – or as LinkedIn members, you can put the news on the site yourselves.

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We still want our existing members to continue as members – but membership will be free. We also want new members. Members will have access to the members' area on the website and will receive direct mailings about forthcoming events. A membership form can be obtained from the Coastlink website.

We still intend to organise Coastlink conferences but only where sponsorship is guaranteed to cover our basic costs, eg venue and the various coffee breaks, lunches and the Grand Dinner. We hope to be able to announce the date of our first 2012 conference – probably in Zeebrugge - shortly.

Finally, we would like to resurrect the idea of one-day conferences in ports that are prepared to host Coastlink delegates for the day. For further information, please contact David Cheslin on:

Tel: +44 20 7345 5233

Email: davidcheslin@dunelmpr.co.uk

In future, Coastlink events will be managed either by David Cheslin (through Dunelm Public Relations) or Gavin Roser (through Pantrak Transportation).

Should you have any queries regarding the above, please contact David Cheslin or Gavin Roser.

Regards

The Board of Coastlink Network Ltd

David Cheslin (Chairman)

Gavin Roser (Deputy Chairman)

Gerard Jahoo

Miel Vermorgen

Stuart Sutherland (resigned October 2011)