

# Coastlink

## Press Information

24 July 2009

### **Coastlink to play it cool in Dunkerque Coastlink Annual Conference 2009 Chambre de Commerce, Port of Dunkerque 24 & 25 September 2009**

In association with the Port of Dunkerque, Coastlink will be staging its Annual Conference in the French port on September 24/25. There is expected to be a strong emphasis on transport links between the North of Europe and the Mediterranean and for the first time, the potential market for the reefer container in European supply chain systems will be examined in depth.

Other issues to be discussed include French port reform, collaboration between shippers to encourage more shortsea/multimodal services and the development of new shortsea and rail services between North Europe and the Mediterranean.

Coastlink's Chairman, David Cheslin, believes that Dunkerque will prove a popular location given that so many companies have cut travel budgets to the bone:

“Most delegates coming from France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany will probably drive to Dunkerque. We expect UK participants to do the same, taking advantage of the competitive rates being offered by the ferry operators.

“Hotels in Dunkerque are reasonably priced and there are no charges for parking on the street.

“Other travel options include rail and air with good rail connections from Amsterdam, Brussels and Paris airports to Dunkerque via Lille.”

Coastlink conferences are noted for the networking opportunities they provide and the programme will allow ample time for delegates to meet. Furthermore, the Port of Dunkerque has extended an invitation to all conference delegates to participate in its Annual Golf Day, to be held on Saturday, 26 September.

There are however five conference sessions that offer a range of presentations that should be both informative and controversial.

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Session One is entitled “A time of change” and will review progress on French port reform. How will the changes affect port users? Will they provide investment opportunities for private investment, perhaps from global terminal operators like Hutchison, PSA, APM Terminals and ICTSI?

Session Two continues the “Collaboration” theme, which started at Coastlink’s Gothenburg conference 12 months ago and continued in Tallinn in May 2009. Progress is being made on this front, notably in the UK, but conference delegates will also hear about examples of collaboration between shippers and other collaboration initiatives where ports are acting as catalysts.

Session Three will focus on the growing number of refrigerated containers now moving on shortsea and multimodal services, especially out of the Mediterranean region. There is a great deal of innovation taking place in this sector with multimodal and shortsea services actively competing with each other and against road hauliers, assisted by the use of new 45ft palletwide reefers.

The fact that more and more temperature controlled cargoes are moving in reefer containers using shortsea/multimodal services is a testimony to the increased reliability of these transport modes. As many shippers whose cargoes are far less time sensitive still worry about the reliability of multimodal/shortsea transport, Coastlink believes that everyone involved in European transport, not just those for whom the reefer business is important or even relevant, will benefit from hearing these case studies.

Session Four also sees Coastlink looking southwards. Shortsea links between the Mediterranean and North Europe appear to be on the increase again after a period of decline. Parallel to this is the development by established shortsea multimodal operators of new rail routes between Northern Europe and East Mediterranean destinations such as Greece and Turkey. How do the rail and sea alternatives compare?

Session Five looks at port developments as they affect shortsea shipping. The challenges related to mixing shortsea, deepsea and feeder vessels on the same terminal, is certain to be a focus point.

The Coastlink Annual Conference 2009 programme will be finalised shortly and will be published on [www.coastlink.co.uk](http://www.coastlink.co.uk) before the end of July.

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