

## 'e-Maritime' among the discussion points at FONASBA's Annual Meeting

The Federation of National Associations of Shipbrokers and Agents (FONASBA) held its 2017 Annual Meeting last week in Dubai. The meeting was attended by INTERTANKO's General Counsel, Michele White, who also gave a presentation.

INTERTANKO has for many years enjoyed a positive dialogue with FONASBA on issues of common interest and this meeting was no exception. For example, the meeting included discussions on how agents might assist owners with the requirements of the Ballast Water Management Convention to ensure that an owner had sent all the necessary reports to the correct maritime authorities in port. In this way, local experience is key in ensuring that the vessel is cleared without any problem.

A common discussion thread across the maritime industry right now is the use of technology and the move to all things 'e-maritime'. FONASBA keeps a careful eye on these developments and on how they might ease the burden of administration for both the ship and the agent. There was plenty of discussion about both the opportunities and the threats that e-maritime presents. In the new FAL Convention, which will come into force in January 2018, the ship agent is defined as:

*"The party representing the ship's owner and/or charterer (the Principal) in port. If so instructed, the agent is responsible to the Principal for arranging, together with the port, a berth, all relevant port and husbandry services, tending to the requirements of the Master and crew, clearing the ship with the port and other authorities (including preparation and submission of appropriate documentation) along with releasing or receiving cargo on behalf of the Principal."*

With that in mind, it is hard to imagine the replacement of the vital human touch that an agent provides. While procedures and paperwork may be eased by technology, there is no real substitute for the local knowledge and hands-on experience of an agent who will always be on standby in the event of a problem at port.

INTERTANKO was the first shipowner association to give its endorsement to the FONASBA Quality Standard back in 2007. This is a standard designed to ensure that port agents worldwide provide quality service to owners and operators in response to the demands commercial shipping places upon them. The standard requires the accredited agent to have financial standing/probity in accordance with local accounting standards, and a firm commitment to professionalism, education and training. The FONASBA QS has been adopted by 29 of the 56 FONASBA national members, with more in the pipeline. For more details see <https://www.fonasba.com/fonasba-initiatives/fonasba-quality-standard>. A list of FONASBA QS-accredited companies can also be found here: <https://www.fonasba.com/fonasba-initiatives/fonasba-quality-standard/accredited-companies>

INTERTANKO submits a regular report of its Documentary Committee work to the FONASBA Chartering and Documentary Committee. White gave a presentation to FONASBA which provided an overview of INTERTANKO, and a focus on the current work of INTERTANKO's own Documentary Committee. She also gave a preview of the forthcoming INTERTANKO Guide to Terminal Conditions of Use which it is hoped will be published before the end of 2017. [To view Michele's presentation, please click here.](#)

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