

EBA General Assembly April 2018

The spring 2018 General Assembly of the European Boating Association was held in Gent, Belgium on the 21 and 22 April 2018. 17 Members Organisations were represented at the meeting.

The General Assembly formally approved the accounts for 2017, appointed auditors for 2018 and confirmed adjustments to the 2018 budget.

The EBA position statement on the International Certificate for Operator of Pleasure Craft (ICC) had been in place for five years and was therefore reviewed by the General Assembly to ensure it remained valid. With some minor amendments the EBA Position Statement was re-approved by the General Assembly. The substance of the Position Statement remained unchanged.

A draft position statement on Portable Radio Device Licensing was presented to the General Assembly for consideration. The purpose of the Position Statement is to highlight to regulators that the radio device licensing regime has not kept up with technological developments and in terms of the equipment that needs to be licenced on recreational craft it is no longer fit for purpose. The EBA Position on Portable Radio Device Licensing was adopted by the General Assembly and has been published on the [position statements page of the EBA website](#).

The EBA has been considering how changes in ownership and use of recreational craft may mean that boat clubs need to adapt. The EBA has been sharing best practice and ideas through discussion and member presentations.

The GA concluded that the EBA should:

1. Be alert to the changing ownership models and the need to evolve in parallel with changes to the way people do their sailing;
2. Encourage clubs and other organisations to facilitate new forms of membership; and
3. Share experiences within the EBA, to help EBA members become sufficiently flexible.

Presentations sharing best practice were received from two members at this General Assembly and a further three presentations are planned for the next meeting.

An update on the EBA's submission to the European Committee for Drawing Up Standards in the field of Inland Navigation (CESNI) was given by the Secretariat, which had attended the CESNI meeting in April 2018. The EBA had put forward the proposal that amendments to the rules relating to recreational craft (Chapter 26 of ES-TRIN) should be included in the CESNI Work Programme for 2019 – 2021.

The General Assembly discussed plastic pollution. Although it is acknowledged that boaters are not the primary source of plastic pollution, it was agreed that recreational boaters could still adjust their behaviour to help to reduce pollution. The General Assembly agreed on [best practice advice](#) which has since been [published in the environmental section of the EBA website](#).

Concerns surrounding the Port Waste Reception Directive were also discussed, in particular how the draft directive applied to vessels under 45m in length. Noting that the issue related to the facilities the recreational craft were using rather than the craft themselves, the General Assembly agreed that the definition of “port” was too loose; it could be interpreted to mean a house with a jetty. This was clearly not the intention of the Directive and it was suggested that the author of the Directive had not appreciated that there were facilities without a Harbour Authority, a Harbour Master and/or a regulatory jurisdiction which would fall within the definition of a “port”. The definition of a port appeared to have been carried over from the old directive where it hadn’t caused an issue. With the changes to the obligations introduced by the new directive, the definition had become a problem. The General Assembly considered how this could be addressed and agreed actions.

The impact of Brexit on European recreational boaters, as distinct from UK recreational boaters, was discussed. Concerns surrounding border controls and the customs status of Union goods were considered and it was agreed that the EBA should take steps to represent the interests of recreational boaters in the remaining EU27 to the EU’s negotiators.

The EBA Communities of Common Interest met and discussed matters that had arisen specific to their corresponding geographical areas of interest and recommendations were made to and adopted by the General Assembly.

The NE Atlantic and North Sea CCI was asked to address the availability of information regarding the rules and restrictions for navigation through windfarms.

Further steps to promulgate information and share best practice on how to avoid hull fouling being a transit vector for non-native species were considered and the NE Atlantic and North Sea CCI was asked to develop a strategy for this.

The Inland CCI was asked to take steps to address issues relating to the application of the EU TRIVW Directive, in particular the application of the directive to vessels with a length of less than 20 metres because the product of their length, breadth and draught is a volume of 100 cubic metres or more.

Updates on other subjects of interest were received by the General Assembly, including the recycling of old recreational craft, the Union Customs Code Proof of Union Status System, the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive, SafeTrx and a Marine Weather Tutorial App. The General Assembly also received reports on the various international meetings (e.g. IMO, UNECE, HELCOM, OSPAR) that had been attended in the preceding 6 months.

Information on the work of the EBA is available on the EBA website and the criteria and cost of membership, for potential new members is available on the EBA website at <http://www.eba.eu.com/membership>.

Next EBA General Assembly meeting: 19-20 October 2018 Helsinki, Finland.